

# RENTAL SEARCH CHECKLIST

## BUDGET

**Consider how much you can pay for rent AND utilities + one time security-deposit!**

- ☐ Calculate 30% of your total income, this is ideally how much \$ should go towards your monthly housing costs. For example, if you make \$3000/month, your housing budget should be around \$900.

## RENTAL SEARCHING

**What are your priorities in a rental unit? Pay attention to these details when searching.**

- ☐ Safety is the #1 priority!
- ☐ Are any utilities included? (ex. Garbage, Water, Electricity, Wifi)
- ☐ Are pets allowed? (ESA or Service-animals do not count as pets)
- ☐ What is the length of the lease?
- ☐ What amenities are there? (ex. Backyard, Laundry, Dishwasher, Heater/AC, Parking, Storage, etc)
- ☐ How close are you to campus? Consider your transportation options!
- ☐ Write down anything else that's important to you!

## TOUR THE PROPERTY

**Pictures can be deceiving. Be sure to visit prospective housing in-person, look around, and ask questions!**

- ☐ Check for mold, mildew, unpleasant smells, pests, etc. Make sure windows and doors can open/close/lock.
- ☐ Check water pressure/flush toilets.
- ☐ Test light switches, appliances + outlets.
- ☐ Make sure there are functioning smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- ☐ Check for leaks in kitchen and bathroom.
- ☐ Ask about neighbors and neighborhood!

## SIGNING A LEASE

**Do not sign a lease without reading and understanding it!**

- ☐ Contact the landlord if something is unclear/missing.
- ☐ Contact Off-Campus Housing for support!

## ROOMMATES

**Are you choosing to live with roommates?**

- ☐ Discuss your collective budget and housing priorities before searching.
- ☐ Discuss boundaries and chores.
- ☐ Be transparent about your personalities and habits!
- ☐ Create a Roommate Rental Agreement (recommended)

## APPLYING

**Landlords will typically ask for these documents to apply.**

- ☐ Complete application (and fee if applicable)
- ☐ Proof of Income (ex. Financial Aid, Pay Stubs, W2s, etc)
- ☐ Rental History/References (if you lived on-campus, contact Housing for your rental history)
- ☐ Credit Report
- ☐ Co-Signer (typically if you do not meet the income qualifications, usually 2-3x the rent)
- ☐ Identification (Driver's License, ID, Social Security #)  
**Note: Be careful sharing your social security number and look out for red flags when applying for housing.**
- ☐ Renter's Insurance (recommended)
- ☐ Create a Rental Resume or Pet Resume
- ☐ (recommended)

## Helpful Definitions

**Rent:** A tenants regular payment to a landlord for the use of property.

**Lease:** A contract by which a landlord conveys property to a tenant for a specific period.

**Security Deposit:** A sum of money that a landlord holds in case the tenant causes any damage to the rental unit or breaks the lease and doesn't pay rent

**Co-Signer:** A person – such as a parent, family member, or a friend – who adds their information, including income and credit record, to the loan application and pledges to pay back the loan if you're unable to

**Utilities:** A service such as electricity/gas, water, sewage and garbage.

**Renters insurance :** Property insurance that provides coverage for a tenant's personal property and liabilities

**Credit Report:** A statement that has information about your credit activity. Landlords are looking to see whether you have a history of on-time payment, and that you don't have excessive debt that may limit your ability to pay rent.