

LANDLORD & TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

LANDLORD AND TENANT Responsibilities

You must know your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. The tenant/landlord relationship is a two-way street. The key to success is responsiveness by each party and respect for the other party. Below is a list of landlord and tenant responsibilities:

Landlord responsibilities: Provide facilities for hot water, heat, gas, and electricity (unless the tenant agrees to provide them in the lease); Provide receipts for rent payments, dated and signed, when requested; Avoid interference with tenant's quiet enjoyment of the premises, provided the premises are used lawfully (i.e. no unscheduled and unnecessary visits to the apartment); Return of security deposit, if granted, at an appropriate time when moving out; Premises must have a warrant of habitability (approved for occupancy).

Tenant responsibilities: Pay rent and, if required, a security deposit; Avoid damaging the premises; Inform the landlord as soon as possible of needed repairs; Avoid interfering with the neighbors' environment and living conditions; Inform the landlord of your plan to move out in a timely manner, depending on the stipulations of the lease.

For a quick law/legal dictionary visit: <http://dictionary.law>.

TO PREVENT PROBLEMS WITH YOUR LANDLORD:

READ EVERYTHING BEFORE YOU SIGN IT.

- Notify your landlord about any problems or complaints in writing. Remember, your landlord is not a psychic.
- Send all correspondence by registered or certified mail, return receipts requested to insure delivery to the proper person. Keep the receipt that you receive from the post office.
- Keep a file of all written correspondence between you and your landlord.
- Pay your rent and utility bills on time.

- Make sure you work out your budget and how bills will be paid.
- Keep your residence clean and orderly.
- Get copies of any state or local laws that require safety devices, such as deadbolts and window locks.
- Check out the property's vulnerability to intrusion by a criminal, and learn whether criminal incidents have already occurred on the property or nearby.
- Do not make any alterations without the landlord's permission.
- Notify your landlord about intentions to vacate the residence and cooperate with the landlord in his/her attempt to rent to other prospective tenants.
- Arrange with the landlord to inspect the property together before you surrender your keys.
- Complete a final checkout with the landlord.
- Know when to fight an eviction notice — and when to move. If you feel the landlord is clearly in the wrong, you may want to fight the eviction. But unless you have the law and provable facts on your side, fighting an eviction notice can be short-sided.
- Inform your landlord of your new address to have your deposit money and other communication forwarded to you.

If you ever have any questions regarding your lease, landlord or stipulations, please contact Eastern Illinois University's Student Legal Services at (217) 581-6054 or visit their website at <http://www.eiu.edu/~sls/>.