

SIGNING A LEASE AND MOVING IN

Things to look for as you sign a lease and move in to your new home

Signing a Lease

Once you have found a place you like, it's time to start the process of signing a lease.

- Many landlords will require you to complete a credit and/or background check. This is not unusual and will usually require you to pay a fee. Those who don't have good credit, or who lack a substantial credit history, may be required to have somebody co-sign the lease to financially guarantee that rental payments will be made.
- Read through the lease to make sure all terms are well defined and written in clear and concise language. Look up terms you don't understand and ask questions about parts that do not make sense to you. This is a legally binding contract and it is very important that you understand the terms to which you are legally agreeing.
- Things that should be covered in the lease:
 - The amount of rent, when it is due, and how must it be paid (in person, by mail, electronically, etc.)
 - The length of the rental period
 - The amount of the security deposit and process for getting it returned
 - Who is responsible for paying utilities and initiating/ disconnecting services
 - Who is responsible for repairs and for cleaning at the end of the lease
 - Whether subleasing is allowed, and under what terms
 - When a landlord may enter your rental unit
- Other considerations that should be in the lease in applicable:
 - Is a pet deposit required?
 - Are rooms rented individually or is the entire property leased as a whole?
- Make sure that any agreements you make with your landlord, whether it be the lease itself or changes that were made to it, are in writing and signed by all parties involved.
- Once the lease is agreed upon and signed, make sure you get a copy signed by you and the landlord.
- More information about signing a lease and your rights and responsibilities as a tenant can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/ColoradoLandlordTenant>. *The information presented here should not be considered legal advice. Legal advice can only be provided by a licensed attorney.*

Moving In

Moving in to your new place can be an exciting and stressful time. Here is some helpful information to make the process easier.

- **Before Moving in your Belongings**
 - Schedule a walk-through of the unit with the landlord. Point out any issues or damages you see. If the landlord is unavailable, do this on your own and take pictures/video instead.
 - Immediately notify the landlord about any of the following issues:
 - Overall unit filthiness
 - Doors or windows that won't open/close and/or lock
 - Missing window screens
 - Broken window covers (blinds, curtains, etc.)
 - Non-operational appliances (oven, stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, heating/air conditioning, exhaust fans, washer/dryer, hot water heater)
 - Non-working lights or electrical outlets
 - Missing or non-operational smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors
 - Signs of pests (insects, rodents, etc.)
 - Document all known damages and deficiencies
 - Thoroughly complete a unit condition form (if not provided by the landlord, many examples are available online), noting any and all damages or deficiencies

Example: Living Room South Wall: approx. 10 nail holes
 - This documentation prevents you from being charged for these damages upon move out. Within two days of taking possession of the unit, take pictures of any damages or deficiencies and email these to yourself to document the date and time. Submit your unit condition form to the landlord within two days of taking possession of the unit to document the damages or deficiencies. Ask for a signed copy of this form upon submission.
- **Purchase Renter's Insurance**
 - Renter's insurance financially protects you in the case of damage (floods, fires, accidents) or theft to your belongings. It also protects you from damages you might cause. Check with parents/guardians to see if you would be covered by their homeowner's insurance policy, if applicable.
- **Move In!**
- **Let everyone know that you've moved:**
 - Verify your new address in WebAdvisor
 - Update your voter registration information
 - Forward your USPS mail to your new address
 - Update your address with credit card companies, cell phone providers, etc.