

# Tips for Tenants

*Whether you are a first time or a frequent renter, there can be many questions and concerns that you may have before signing a lease. This guide has been compiled for your use as a renter to lend a hand. We have tried to address some of the frequent concerns that a renter may have. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Village of Mount Prospect Environmental Health Department at (847) 870-5668.*

## Be wary of landlords that do not screen tenants:

The screening process demonstrates an owner's intent to provide a safe building and ensures good neighbors. This process entails background checks, which may consist of reviewing credit history and references.

## Inspect the building and apartment before signing the lease:

- Inspect intercoms, door and window locks, and lighting for the stairway and parking lot.
- Open all closets, and cabinets. Plumbing leaks and pest problems are found in these areas. Turn on the faucets and stove and check the heating or air conditioning controls to see that they work properly.
- Check wall switches and outlets. Outlets filled with paint can be dangerous.
- Check window frames and bathroom walls by the shower and toilet. These areas are frequently damaged by moisture and mold.



- Check the laundry and utility room. It should be clean and maintained.
- Find and check the smoke detectors.
- Visit the complex during the night as well as the day to check lighting, noise, and security.
- Ask current residents about the property and neighborhood.



## At the signing of the lease:

- Carefully read over your lease to be sure you understand each point listed (i.e., security deposit, cleaning responsibilities, parking, etc.) If you have a question consult legal counsel.
- This is the time to request changes or add riders to the lease. **Important - all agreements need to be in writing.** If reasonable modifications to the lease cannot be made in writing be wary.
- Copies of the Mount Prospect Tenant Landlord Rights summary and emergency telephone numbers are to be provided by the owner or management with the lease.



## Moving in/out :

- A written inspection should be made at move-in and move out. Maintain a copy for your records.
- Use a camera to document any damages to avoid any dispute on damage charges.
- Mount Prospect requires the management or owner to honor all requests for a move in or out inspection.
- A reminder - the security deposit cannot be used as last month's rent. In the event of a serious dispute consult an attorney before taking such action.



## While living in the apartment:

- Report any maintenance issues you encounter to the management or owner immediately. Never attempt to make repairs without owner's permission.
- Regularly clean and maintain your apartment. These actions ensure a healthy environment for you and your neighbors.



## Apartment Security Suggestions

- Always report suspicious activity by dialing 9-1-1.
- Do not prop open doors with carpets or other objects. This allows intruders into your home.
- Report burnt out light bulbs and broken door locks to maintenance.
- Remember, practice security, and lock all doors and windows when leaving your apartment, even if only for a short time.
- Drinking of alcohol in the common areas may be against the law in your complex. Check with your management before any outdoor consumption of alcohol products.
- Remember to lock your vehicle doors and roll up the windows when leaving your vehicle.
- Remove all valuable property from your vehicle or place it out of site. Visible items like c.d.'s, radar detectors or other valuables are regularly taken when left in plain site.
- Whenever possible, park your vehicle in well-lit areas of the parking lot.
- Never BUZZ someone into the building unless you know who it is. You may be inviting a disaster into your home.

*For more information on home or personal safety or a free security survey, call the Crime Prevention Unit at 870-5650.*



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