



Having a successful tenancy builds a refugee's and newcomer's rental history.

Without understanding a lease and legal responsibilities, a refugee and newcomer can easily violate it. This may result in a bad rental history. Below are key items in a lease that one should review and understand before signing:

Landlord Information

At times, the point of contact for the property you seek to lease is listed with a property management company. It is essential to know who your actual landlord is in case of any issues that may arise.

Break Lease Clause

Lease agreements typically include a "break lease" clause that is in place to protect landlords if a tenant decides to break a lease. It often outlines the circumstances for a lease to be broken, and includes certain fees you may be required to pay.

Maintenance and Repairs

As a tenant, you'll want to know what type of repairs or upkeep you are responsible for and who is responsible for routine maintenance (i.e. upkeep of smoke detectors, changing air filters, or lawn care).

Pets

If you have pets, you need to know if they are allowed in the rental property and if there is a pet deposit required on top of your regular deposit. There may be strict policies regarding what pets are and are not allowed.

Additional Fees

Within the lease agreement, there may be other fees to be aware of (i.e. when a rent payment is considered late, and what kinds of fees go into effect when there is a late payment).

Renter's Insurance

Landlords may require a tenant to obtain renter's insurance. Typically, a lease agreement will reveal if renter's insurance is required and what needs to be covered in the policy.

Utilities

Sometimes utilities are covered in the monthly rent, but many times they are not covered. For example, sometimes utilities like water and trash removal are covered, but internet service is not typically covered.