

UKRAINIAN TOOLKIT

Step-by-Step Guide to Securing Housing



Finding the appropriate housing requires knowing what steps to take.

Pre-Search Tasks

For a successful housing search, you must first take steps to ensure you have the necessary knowledge and support. Preparing yourself for a safe search, finding a support system, selecting your housing budget, and determining your location are a few of the steps that must be taken.

- **Find Support**
 - Beyond your U.S. sponsor, other groups can help you look for a place to live. Connect with a local resettlement agency for additional support, resources, and possible financial support. Many Resettlement Agencies have Ukrainian/Russian speaking case workers. Community groups and faith-based organizations, such as [churches](#)* and [synagogues](#)*, may also be able to help you in your housing search.
- **Budget**
 - “Affordable” housing is usually between 20-30 percent of a tenant’s monthly income. But, for newcomers, it is often more: 40 percent or even half. So, remember this when you are applying for jobs and know the average cost of housing in your area. Some states and cities have higher rental rates than others, be aware of this when deciding on a city to resettle in.
- **Determine Location**
 - If you have school-age children, or have begun a job, you will want to focus your search on those locations. Besides local rent costs, be sure to consider proximity to grocery stores, community centers, and public transportation as well.
- **Avoid Scams**
 - Be aware to not share any personal information with landlords or property managers before securing your lease. It is rare to pay a fee before signing a lease, or that you will be asked to sign a lease before seeing a property. If you are able, get your local resettlement agency or sponsor to help you in the housing search and verifying landlords. Here is a government resource for [avoiding housing scams](#).*

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Housing Search

You can find housing through a variety of platforms, but it is important to search through reputable websites and connect with people you trust. Your sponsor, resettlement agency, or local community groups can assist you with making safe and appropriate housing decisions from the start of your housing search.



• In-Person Search

- Connect with resettlement agencies, community groups, and churches or synagogues for support in finding open rental units. If you work with local resettlement agency or community group from the start, they will know landlords who are willing to rent to newcomers. You can also contact a local realtor who has experience finding affordable rentals. Explain that you are a newcomer, and that locating housing is a challenge for you.
- If you need public housing assistance or want specific information about public housing programs such as housing choice vouchers. [Connect to your local public housing agency.](#)*

• Online Search

- Consider your budget when searching for a place to live and choose homes within your budget long-term. Search for housing on trusted websites. This allows you to get a good idea of what average rents are in an area. [List of rental websites and search tips.](#)*

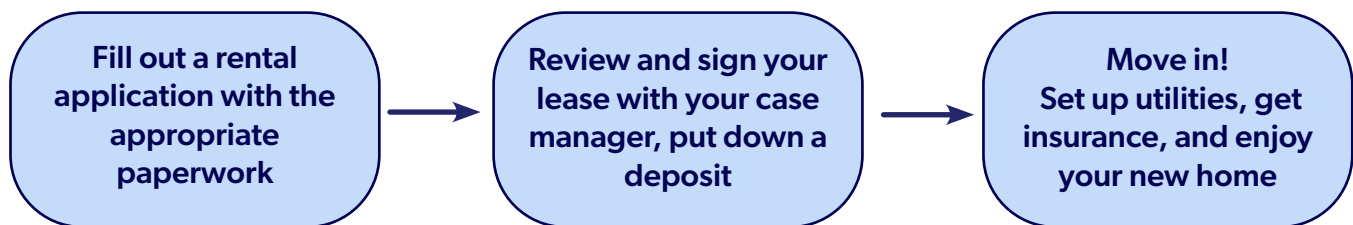
• Tour Apartments or Houses

- Be sure to tour available rentals before signing a lease to ensure that the location is safe and in good condition. Bring your case manager or sponsor with you for support. Prepare questions you may have about the lease terms before touring and take notes. [Walkthrough checklist.](#)*

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Application, Closing, and Move-In

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• Application

- If you are interested in renting an apartment house, you should apply right away. Some tenant applications have a fee, typically between \$25-\$50. Typically, newcomers do not have the standard documentation landlords need to screen tenants. It is important to tell a landlord or property manager this early to be sure they know what documents you will be providing. For example, a promissory note from a resettlement agency, or a letter describing the support you receive may help when applying for rental housing. [How to get an apartment with no rental history.](#)* [Tips for getting an apartment without a credit check.](#)*

• Signing a Lease

- If possible, ask a resettlement agency, sponsor, family member, or community and faith group to help you to read and understand your lease. Before signing it, inspect the rental unit and document the conditions in writing. You will also have to put down a deposit with signing a lease. [Understand Rental Requirements and Newcomer Documents.](#)* [Understand your lease agreement.](#)*

• Move In

- Once you move into your new home, be sure to [set up your utilities](#)*, get renters insurance, and find furniture and other necessities for your home. Community groups, faith organizations, and online marketplaces may have free or affordable furniture and home goods for your new home. Refer to this [home set-up guide.](#)* [Ways to become a good tenant.](#)*

**Many of the articles linked in this guide are written in English, download a translation plug-in or copy and paste information into a translator to read the information in Ukrainian or Russian.*