

Seniors Entering the Rental Market

Tips from the Residential Tenancies Tribunal

Making the decision to downsize and move to an apartment can be bittersweet. For many, you have spent a lifetime raising your family and collecting things in a home that you carefully selected to meet your needs of that day and the last time you rented was in university. Now, you find yourself in this new phase of your life, although this can be exciting and stressful all at the same time, there are some things you should consider when looking for a rental premises.

1. Expectations

Remember, others live there too. You can expect to hear regular noise that you may not be accustomed to; such as doors closing, voices in the hallway or car alarms going off in the parking lot.

2. New Location – New Surroundings

You have likely lived in the same location for most of your adult life, moving to a new location could mean different street noise, power lines, rail lines, nearby highway noise. Painting – you've had the luxury of deciding the color of the walls; now you must seek permission and return it to original state before leaving. Smoking – does that mean everyone?

3. Ask around

See what others think of your potential Landlord.

4. Put it in writing

Protect yourself by having your lease, inspection report and any other issues documented in writing.

The best advice I could give to a new renter would be "PROTECT YOURSELF". Take time to understand the law; and understand the contents of your lease. I wish I had known the importance of this before moving in...

- Tenant, Fredericton, NB

During my tenancy, when an issue arose, it was helpful to know the 5 Steps to Resolving a Dispute. The Residential Tenancies Officer was able to explain my rights and obligations and resolve the issue!

- Tenant, Dieppe, NB

5. Restrictions

It's so important to understand your lease and what is and is not included. Most municipalities do not allow BBQ's on apartment terraces. Guests are fine but your children or grandchildren may not be allowed to move back in.

6. Parking

There are a number of things to consider; is parking included? How many spots do we have? Are the spots assigned? Can I walk that far?

7. Don't forget the notice period

You must give advance written notice to move out. Check your lease if you can't remember how much.

8. Access and Accessibility

Consider the security of the building and if it satisfies your needs. Stairs vs. elevator, in the event of a power outage, can you do the stairs? Will it meet your future potential accessibility needs?

9. Security Deposit.

If you pay one, you should receive a certificate of deposit from the Residential Tenancies Tribunal within 4 to 6 weeks.

