Renting an Apartment

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for

SONORAN UCEDD
Center for Excellence
In Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service
What is an apartment?

• A place that is owned by somebody else, who is usually called the owner or landlord
• You pay to live there, usually once per month
• You sign a contract with the landlord, called a lease
What is an apartment?

The lease says:

• how much you will pay
• when and how to pay it
• what the landlord will provide in return
Decide What You Want First

Before looking for an apartment, you will need to decide some things:

– Where do you want to live?
– Close to family or friends?
– Close to school or work?
– Close to a bus line?
Decide What You Want First

• How much can you afford to pay each month?
  – A good rule of thumb is about 1/3 of what you earn in a month should go toward rent.

• Write down what you decide as a reminder during your search
Start Your Search

• If you know the neighborhood you want to live in,
  – Go with a friend or family member
  – Drive or walk around that neighborhood looking for “For Rent” signs
Start Your Search

• You can look in newspaper’s classified ads for the “Apartments for Rent” section

• You can look at websites that offer apartment rental listings
  – Craig’s List
  – Arizona Department of Housing/Social Serve website
Be Prepared

When you have chosen an apartment where you want to live,

• Go for a visit
• Ask for a tour.
• Take notes during your tour to help you remember for later
Be Prepared

You may want to ask yourself these questions while you are there:

- How clean is the property?
- Is anything broken?
- How friendly are the staff?
- Do the neighbors seem friendly too?
- Is it quiet enough for you?
- Do you feel safe visiting there?
What Happens Next?

You will probably have to:

• Fill out a rental application
  – Give information like your name
  – How much money you make
  – How many times each month you get paid
What Happens Next?

You may also need to:

– Give the names of people who can give a reference about you

– Make sure you ask those people first before giving their name and phone numbers out!
What Happens Next?

You might need to provide:

– Copies of paycheck stubs (if you are working) OR
– Your Social Security statements to prove you earn enough money to pay your rent

• The application CAN NOT ask you about your disabilities
When Your Application is Accepted

• You will be invited to sign your lease
  – Read it carefully before signing
  – Ask questions if there is anything in it that you don’t understand!

• You may also be responsible for water and sewage or trash fees in addition to your rent
When Your Application is Accepted

- You will probably have to pay a security deposit
  - Usually one or two months of rent
  - You cannot move in until you pay this
- Your landlord should tell you the total amount you need to pay before you move in
Before You Move In

• Walk through your new apartment with your landlord
  – make sure it is clean
  – Make sure that nothing is broken

• Ask the landlord to make sure anything that needs to be cleaned or fixed is done before you move in
Before You Move In

Make sure you have plenty of people handy to help you move into your new apartment!
After You’ve Moved In

You are responsible for:

• Making sure that your apartment stays clean

• Telling your landlord about anything that breaks - as soon as possible
After You’ve Moved In

Be respectful of your neighbors:

• No loud parties
• Do not watch your TV too late at night!
Know Your Rights

It is illegal for a landlord to refuse to rent to you or to evict you because of your disability

– A landlord can only consider your ability to pay your rent on time
Know Your Rights

If you require a service animal,
- The landlord must allow that even if they have a “no pets” policy
- You are still responsible for the care and behavior of the animal
Know Your Rights

Contact:
The Southwest Fair Housing Council
or
Arizona Center for Disability Law

for help if you think a landlord has discriminated against you
Resources

For finding an apartment:


If you feel you have been discriminated against in your apartment search:

– Soutwest Fair Housing Council: http://www.swfhc.com
– Arizona Center for Disability Law: http://www.acdl.com
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  http://www.socialserve.com/tenant/AZ/index.html
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If you have questions about this presentation, contact:

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