

# Renting an Apartment



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for



# 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  $\frac{1}{3}$  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:

- Arizona Department of Housing/Social Serve:  
<http://www.socialserve.com/tenant/AZ/index.html>

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

- Southwest Fair Housing Council:  
<http://www.swfhc.com>
- Arizona Center for Disability Law:  
<http://www.acdl.com>

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# Resources

If you have questions about this presentation, contact:

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