



CRIME FREE MULTI-HOUSING PROGRAM

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION • NEW WESTMINSTER POLICE SERVICE

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Tenancy Agreement – An Important Document

The Tenancy Agreement between a landlord (or landlord’s agent/manager) and tenant is a very important document. If any disagreements arise, it is this document that will be referred to by an arbitrator to base their decision. Having the terms and conditions of the tenancy clearly identified right from the beginning is important.

Agreements must be in writing and contain terms that outline the rights and responsibilities of both parties. The Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) requires the tenancy agreement to include legal names of the landlord and tenant(s), amount of rent and amenities included, address of the residence, security deposit held and contact information for the landlord. The agreement must be written in a manner that is easily read and understood and both landlord and tenant must sign. A copy of the written tenancy agreement must be provided to the tenant within 21 days after the agreement is entered into. If a landlord fails to provide a copy of the agreement within that time, the tenant may withhold rent until a copy is provided.

The landlord is responsible for ensuring that any residential tenancy agreement entered into complies in all respects with the *Tenancy Agreement Regulation*. The regulation states that specific terms, whether included or not in the written tenancy agreement, are deemed to be part of the agreement.

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New Residential Tenancy Act

As of January 1, 2004, the B.C. Residential Tenancy Act is changing. The new laws include:

Suite Inspections

- Tenants and landlords will be required to inspect the rental unit and sign condition reports at the start and end of each tenancy. Failure to do so will result in the landlord being unable to claim damage against the security deposit or the tenant losing the right to the return of the deposit.
- Landlords can inspect the rental unit monthly with proper notice.

Pets

- Landlords will be able to prohibit or restrict the size, kind or number of pets
- A pet deposit may be collected.

Rent

- Landlords can require post-dated cheques for rent.

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Crime Free Workshop for Managers & Owners of Rental Property

February 11, 2004 – Phase One CFMH Program

* Role of Police * Identify Illegal Activity

* Applicant Screening Techniques

* Residential Tenancy Act * Security Tips



These stickers, which attach to the inside of glass doors, are available for \$5.00 each.

Contact the Crime Free Coordinator at 604-529-2494 to order signs and register for workshop.

Congratulations New CFMH Members!

Since September 2003, the management of the following properties have successfully completed all three phases of the CFMH Program, promoting safer apartment communities:

Park Lane Manor – 315 Hospital Street
Rosemont Manor – 230 Eighth Street
Tipperary Apts – 220 Manitoba Street

For a complete list of fully certified Crime Free properties go to: www.nwpolice.org/cfmh.html

Benefits in joining the CFMH program include: regular communication on criminal activity in your neighbourhood, crime prevention tactics, security meetings with residents, and discount on renters insurance. Property owners also experience improved property values, stable and satisfied resident base, increased demand for suites from desirable residents, and lower maintenance and repair costs. To find out if your property is ready to be certified, contact the CFMH office.



Tipperary Apartments combined the first Crime Free Resident Safety Social with their annual Christmas gathering.

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The provincial Residential Tenancy Office provides sample tenancy agreements on their website (www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/rto/) to assist landlords to meet the requirements of the Regulation. Use of the sample agreements is not mandatory. Landlords are free to develop their own tenancy agreements, as long as the key required terms are included. The website also provides the following forms and applications for easy access.

- Application for Arbitration
- Breach Letter for Late Payment of Rent
- Mutual Agreement to End a Tenancy
- Notice to End a Residential Tenancy
- Request for Correction of an Error or Omission, or to Clarify the Decision or Order of an Arbitrator
- Notice of Rent Increase
- Sample Tenancy Agreements

Additional Terms

Addendums, or additional terms, may be added to the residential agreement *at the time the agreement is entered into*. Additions may include: the *Crime Free Lease Addendum*, parking requirements (such as requiring insurance on all vehicles), balcony restrictions (barbeques, items stored), policies on pets and adding new tenants (requiring approval from landlord before moving in and defining a reasonable time limit on guests and when they might be considered permanent living partners). The terms and conditions of the Residential Agreement may be changed only if both landlord and tenant agree in writing.

Identifying Possible Stolen Vehicles

Through the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) website at www.cpic-cipc.ca unidentified vehicles that you may find sitting in your parking lot can be queried to find out if they have been reported stolen. The site is updated daily and allows you to search the entire national database of over 185,000 stolen vehicles and 485,000 articles. In the event you get a positive "stolen" response to your search, contact the New Westminster Police at 604-525-5411.

The site also provides links to Phonebusters (fraud related information), RCMP, and National Crime Prevention Centre.

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- Tenants who have not paid overdue rent within 5 days of receiving a notice ending their tenancy will no longer be able to apply for an extension.

Security Deposits & Fees

- Additional security deposits may be collected for things such as electronic garage door openers and pets.
- Tenants must provide a forwarding address for return of security deposit after which the landlord has up to 15 days to return or file claims against the deposit. Failure to do so will entitle the tenant to collect double the amount of deposit.
- Landlords are not permitted to charge application or processing fees.

Ending Tenancy

- **Illegal Activities:** Landlords will be able to end tenancies for illegal activity that has, or is likely to cause damage to the landlord's property; or adversely affect the quiet enjoyment, security, safety or physical well-being of another occupant; or jeopardize the lawful right or interest of the landlord or another occupant.
- If a tenant repeatedly pays rent late.
- Failure to pay utility charges owed to Landlord.
- Tenancies will end at 1 p.m. on the last day of the tenancy, unless otherwise specified.

For complete details on the new legislation, contact the Residential Tenancy Office or website www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/rto.



NEW WESTMINSTER CRIME CORNER REAL CRIME INCIDENTS

Apartment suite break-ins are an ever-present danger. Most thieves gain entry into easily accessed suites through windows and patio doors. Some, though, look for more creative ways.

Using Natural Ladders

Two above-ground suites were broken into when suspects climbed a tree adjacent to a balcony and pried open the patio door. They then climbed up to the balcony above and gained entry to the second suite through the same method. Their exit appears to have been down the same tree.

They Came From Above

A third floor suite was broken into when, apparently, the thief (or thieves) dropped down onto the balcony from the roof. The patio door had been left open, as it was assumed by the occupants that their suite was not at risk.

Bush Offers Cover

A bedroom window on a ground level suite was the point of entry. The window was jimmied with such force that it bent the window frame. The surrounding landscaping may have provided cover for the culprits.

From these incidents, it is imperative to check your property with a critical eye (ie: use a "criminal eye"), looking for any opportunities that a thief may seize. Look for landscaping that may have grown bushy, too high, or begin to cover windows and balconies; trees that may be growing too close to the building and provide a natural ladder to the suites above; lights that may be covered by landscaping, burnt-out, or inadequate. Also any entry points that you may previously have discounted as "too unlikely" may now be a viable option for someone to take advantage. Remind your residents to put lights on timers and leave a radio on when out. Patio and window locks should be inspected to ensure they are functioning properly and offer the best protection.

The Crime Free Multi-Housing Program reviews apartment properties for security, offering advice on areas that may pose a risk. Call the CFMH coordinator for more details.



Look for trees growing close to balconies and windows that may act as a natural ladder.

Fund\$ Available for Senior Home Safety

Do you have seniors living in your building who require adaptations to continue to live independently? Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) – the Government of Canada’s national housing agency – has funds to help low-income seniors make their homes more comfortable, safe and accessible to live in and is actively seeking applications from qualified individuals.

CMHC’s *Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence (HASI)* program provides low-income seniors and landlords with senior tenants with financial assistance of up to \$3,500 to make minor home adaptations to improve a home’s accessibility as well as security. Some of the many adaptations include: installing a ramp to improve accessibility, lever handles on doors, grab bars in bathrooms, and lowering kitchen cupboards. To improve home safety, seniors can add security bars on windows, reinforce doors, and replace locks. The Program does not cover installing a security system.

To qualify for HASI funds, the occupant of the dwelling to be adapted must meet the following criteria:

- be 65 and over;
- have some difficulty with daily living activities;
- have a low total family income; and
- ensure the adaptations will be done to a permanent residence.

Assistance is in the form of a forgivable loan of up to \$3,500. This loan does not have to be repaid provided the recipient agrees to occupy the dwelling for the duration of the loan forgiveness period – 6 months. If the adaptation work is being done on a rental unit, the landlord must agree that rents will not increase as a result of the adaptations.

CMHC is actively seeking new qualified applicants for its HASI Program. To determine eligibility, please contact CMHC’s BC and Yukon Regional Office at (604) 731- 5733 (ask for the HASI Department) or toll free at 1-800-639-3938. Or, visit our website at www.cmhc.ca

**CMHC -
helping to improve housing quality, affordability
and choice for Canadians.**

**New Westminster Crime Free Multi-Housing Program
604-529-2494**



The Crime Free Multi-Housing Program is designed to help owners, managers, and residents of multi-unit rental property work with the police and other agencies to keep illegal and nuisance activity off such property. The result of this team effort is a safer, more habitable environment in which to live.

The program consists of three phases:

Phase One: Residential Managers attend an 8-hour workshop

Phase Two: Meet minimum requirements from a Security Assessment

Phase Three: Management hosts an annual Resident Safety Social.

Following completion of all three phases, the management will earn the privilege of posting signs on the property and using the CFMH Program logo in advertising.

For more information, contact:

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