

RENTER'S TIPS SHEET

1. All **Leases** must be in writing.
2. **Month to month agreements** can be in writing or oral. However, it's always a good idea to request a written copy of any rental agreement.
3. If a **"Fee" or a "Refundable Deposit"** is collected, the agreement **MUST** be in writing.
4. It's a good idea to fill out a **Checklist** before you move in, noting the conditions of the apartment. Keep a copy of this and give a copy to the landlord. When moving out, you will have a record of the conditions of the unit when you first moved in.
5. Pay your rent on time. Get a receipt for the payment. Keep your receipts as proof of payment.
6. You must be notified **IN WRITING** at least **30 days** in advance if the landlord is raising you rent.
7. The landlord must give you **48 hours' notice** before entering your apartment, except for an emergency.
8. If your unit needs repair, there are several steps you must take:
 - a. You must be current on your rent.
 - b. You must notify your landlord **IN WRITING** and deliver it by mail (return receipt) or in person.
 - c. **Keep a copy of the letter for yourself.**
 - d. You must give the landlord a "reasonable" period of time to start the repairs.
 - **24 hours** for no hot or cold water, no heat, no electricity or for a condition imminently hazardous to life
 - **72 hours** for repair of refrigerator, range, oven or major plumbing fixture
 - **10 days** for anything else.
 - e. If the landlord **fails to START** repairs in the time given above, you may choose to:
 - Give written notice and move out immediately
 - Use an attorney to sue the landlord to make the repairs
 - Hire someone else to make the repairs and deduct that amount from the next month's rent (with restrictions)
 - Make the repairs yourself and deduct the cost of materials and labor from next month's rent (with restrictions)
 - You may also contact City of Tukwila Code Enforcement for assistance (206-431-3670) after you have notified the landlord in writing and waited the appropriate length of time.
9. Raising you rent within 90 days of a complaint by you **MIGHT** be considered as retaliation and is against the law.

10. It is not legal for anyone to rent unities which are condemned or unlawful to occupy due to code violations. Some examples of illegal unities include: illegally converted garages; some basements are not legal if the windows aren't large enough for emergency escape. All rooms used for sleeping **MUST** have an emergency escape window. If you think a unit may not be legal to rent as an apartment, you can call the City of Tukwila Code Enforcement to ask (206-431-3670).
11. Except for single-family homes, the landlord is required to provide you with garbage containers and garbage removal frequently enough to not permit the garbage to accumulate.
12. The landlord is required to provide you with working smoke detectors. It is the tenant's responsibility to replace the batteries as needed.
13. You must not allow too many people to live in the apartment. Generally, two people per bedroom plus one more person is the maximum number of occupants permitted.
14. Keep the inside of your unit clean and undamaged. If you accidentally break something, be prepared to fix or replace it. Help keep the outside and common areas tidy by disposing of litter in the garbage can and not on the ground.
15. Respect your neighbors – no noisy parties!
16. Do not flush disposable diapers, sanitary supplies, or paper towels down the toilet.
17. If you want to move out, be sure to give your landlord proper notice, in writing, at least **20 days** before the end of the rental period.
18. All **evictions must be IN WRITING**, signed and dated by the landlord and must specify the type of notice you are receiving.
19. The landlord has 14 days to return your deposit, or give you a written statement why all or part of the money is being kept. You must restore the unit to the same conditions as when you moved in. Use your Checklist!

More information:

City of Tukwila Code Enforcement	206-431-3670
The Tenants Union	206-723-0500
King County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service	206-267-7010