

HOUSING TIPS & INFORMATION

**STUDENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

COMMON TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

- Eviction: When you are forced to move out of your room/apartment (probably because you broke one of the lease agreements or failed to pay rent).
- Furnished/Non-Furnished/Partially Furnished: A furnished room/apartment is already equipped with most of the furniture and other supplies you may need. A non-furnished room/apartment will be completely empty. A partially furnished room/apartment will have some items provided. Ask your landlord to find out!
- Landlord: A property owner is renting a room.
- Lease: A lease is an agreement you sign with your landlord. It will explain all of the expectations and details of the rent.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

- **Security Deposit:** Extra money that you pay when you sign a lease. If you obey all the rules in your lease, the money will be returned to you when you move out. The money may also be used by your landlord to repair damages you make to the room/apartment.
- **Utilities:** Services such as water, gas, and heat.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A ROOM OR APARTMENT

- What floor (level) is the room/apartment on?
 - *Apartments on the 1st floor may be less safe
 - *Apartments on higher floors will require more stairs/climbing
- Are there laundry facilities available? Will I have to use the public laundromat (self-service laundry)?
- Will I have access to a kitchen?
- How close is this room/apartment to VIU? How close is it to public transportation (Metro, bus stop)?
- Is the room furnished? Will I have to make large purchases (bed, sofa, etc.)?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A ROOM OR APARTMENT

- Have there been insect, rodent, or bed bug problems in this room/apartment in the past?
- Is the room/apartment in a safe neighborhood?
- Is there parking available for my car and/or guests' cars? Is there designated parking for guests?

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE

- Are utilities included in the rent? If not, how much do utilities usually cost?
- Do all the appliances work? Will the landlord pay for repairs if large appliances break (refrigerator, stove, etc.)?
- What repair or maintenance costs will I be responsible for?
- What is the total amount of money I will need to move in? Will I have to pay a security deposit and the first rent payment? What forms of payment are accepted?
- Is the price negotiable?

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE

- Am I allowed to paint my walls?
- Can I have a pet?
- What is the length of the lease agreement?
- What happens after my lease is over?

*After your lease, you may be able to sign for another long-term period of time or begin making month-to-month payments. You may also have to move out at the completion of your lease agreement.

- What events could cause me to be evicted?

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE

- What events would allow me to get out of my lease?
- What is the monthly amount I must pay for rent? What day of the month is my rent due? What happens if I pay my rent late?
- What happens if I move out early or break terms of my lease?
 - *Many times you will not be refunded your security deposit. You may also be charged other fees.
- Under what conditions can my landlord enter my apartment?
- Always look at the room/apartment before signing the lease!
- Take pictures of any damage in the room/apartment before you move in so that you cannot be blamed for the damages when you move out!