



## Checklist for New Renters

- ✓ **Carefully Research Options:** Avoid potential scams on Craigslist and elsewhere (try word of mouth and Facebook groups). If you are told to send in the deposit without actually seeing the unit or confirming whom the property owner is, be aware that it could be a scam.
- ✓ **Be aware** that if joining or in an existing group with the last original tenant departing, your rent can be increased to “market rate rent” (often \$500 -\$1000 more a month).
- ✓ **Have information ready** for application: Including credit score or info for credit check, co-signers, letters of reference, screening fee, and security deposit.
- ✓ **Carefully Read** anything that you sign. Application and lease must have included that the screening fee is refundable if not spent, with list of ways that the fee was used.
- ✓ **Ensure security deposit** does not exceed twice the rent (for unfurnished units) or three times the rent (for furnished units).
- ✓ **Conduct a thorough walkthrough** in the apartment before moving in. Note any damage or lack of cleanliness, confirm in writing to property owner and save pictures or video.
- ✓ **Consider buying** a Renters’ Insurance policy (many policies are less than \$20 a month).
- ✓ **Oakland law:** (1) Restricts rent increases to a cost of living increase (the CPI) for most tenancies and (2) Provides eviction protections (property owner must have at least one of eleven Just Causes to evict). It is NOT just cause to evict if your property owner wants to sell the property, or if the lease expires.

**Come talk to a Rent Adjustment Program Housing Counselor for more information on your rights. You can reach us in person or by phone at (510) 238-3721.**

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