

Tenant and Landlord Rights and Responsibilities

You may wish to download and review the [guide from the State of Michigan \(pdf\)](#) prior to signing any lease or rental agreement. Other things to consider carefully before deciding to live off campus include:

- Who is your landlord? Where does s/he live? How accessible is s/he if there is a problem? How should I contact him/her?
- When is your rent due? What happens if it is late?
- When is trash pickup? Is there a separate charge? Do I purchase city tags?
- What other utilities are covered or not covered in the monthly rent? (Electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, phone, cable, Internet, etc.)
- If there is a mechanical problem in my house or apartment, whom should I contact?
- Where can I park my car? Do I need to register my car in order to park on the street?
- During breaks, who is going to watch the property? How will I secure any valuable items I leave there?
- How do I contact police, fire, or emergency medical services?
- Is the unit unfurnished, semi-furnished, or furnished? What furniture and appliances will I need to purchase, rent, or borrow and move to the unit?
- How much renter's insurance do I need?

Be advised that your future employers and/or graduate/professional schools or affiliations may want to contact your landlord to determine your residential history. Your actions in the community may be reflected in the information the landlord reports to your employer and others who inquire. Also, your credit history is starting to build now; late rent payments, late bill payments, and similar financial lapses can have a lasting effect beyond your college years. In order to establish good relationships in your new community, consider the following hints:

- Introduce yourself to your neighbors when you move in.
- Let your neighbors know who to contact and how to contact that person, should they have concerns about your house or apartment.
- Talk with your landlord and ask for information about the neighborhood community before moving in. Usually a landlord can offer helpful hints about your new neighbors, as s/he is often familiar with the surrounding area.
- Keep your apartment or house in good shape and show you care about it. Make it your home!