
HOUSING TERMS

Appliances

This can include any of the following: fridge, stove, dishwasher, and washer/dryer.

Application to Director

An application to the director is filed with the Residence Tenancy Office at Access Nova Scotia for two reasons:

1. To determine a question arising under the Residential Tenancies Act
2. When alleging a breach of lease of the Residential Tenancies Act.

There is a \$10 fee for this application and you will be assigned a hearing date and time where you will present your evidence to the Tenancy Board. You are also responsible for serving documents to the Respondent (s) and obtaining proof of service. Service may be in person, registered mail or courier. Additional information is available from Access Nova Scotia or the Off-Campus Housing Office.

Bachelor

A one room apartment, that consists of a bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom. Some bachelor apartments have shared bath and kitchen facilities with other tenants.

Condo

An apartment that is privately rented as opposed to being rented out by an apartment agency.

Cosigner

Depending on your income, you may be asked to provide a co-signer for the lease. This person by signing, agrees to accept full financial responsibility should you fail to make your rental payments.

Deposits

Often you will be required to pay a certain amount of money to the landlord to cover damages to the property you might cause. The "damage deposit" can not exceed half of one month's rent and is normally paid when you sign the lease with the landlord or rental agent.

Since the "deposit" is your money, the landlord may pay you interest at the going rate while it is in his or her possession. The money must be held in a trust fund. If there are no damages when you move out, it will be returned to you with interest within 10 days.

Fixed Term

When you sign a lease with the landlord he/she is giving you the right to live on their property for a specific length of time. If the lease is for a fixed term, this means that the lease specifies when you will have to move out and you are not required to give the landlord a "notice to quit".

Flat

A flat is an apartment that takes up a floor in a house, rather than a unit in an apartment building. A flat in Halifax may be an upper, middle or basement level.

Furnished/Unfurnished

A furnished apartment will include some furniture (for example: a bed, sofa, chairs, and table). An unfurnished apartment does not include any furniture.

Inclusive

This means that payment for all utilities is included in the rent.

Landlord

One who owns the property and offers an apartment to rent.

Lease

A lease is a contract usually in the form of a written agreement. It gives you the right to live in a specific place for a certain length of time in return for payment of rent. It outlines any obligations you have in addition to paying rent and specifies what the landlord owes you in addition to the right to occupy this space. The lease provides legal protection for both of you.

Each province has laws governing the rights and obligations of landlord and tenants. The lease should reflect these regulations. If you have any questions about this, call the provincial government of the province you are residing in.

Lease Extension

An alternative to renewing your lease is to work out a month-to-month lease extension which makes it possible to avoid the responsibility of the rent after you move on. Inquire about this option, if your lease is due and you are not sure how much longer you will be staying.

Notice to Quit

In most situations you must let your landlord know ahead of time whether you intend to renew your lease or move. Your lease will indicate when you should give this notice. A lease is automatically renewed if you do not inform the landlord (with a year lease – three months notice is required) of your intention not to renew. The landlord must also give you notice (with a year lease – four months notice) if he/she wants you to move out.

Rent

Money paid to occupy an apartment. You may be asked to sign post-dated cheques for the months in which you will be occupying the apartment. The rent amount will be indicated on the lease.

Room

A bedroom that is being rented out by the owner of the house; the room may be furnished or unfurnished. Most likely you will have to share the bathroom and kitchen facilities with other occupants of the house.

Security Building

An apartment building that has a security system where tenants must approve the entrance of their guests (usually by a speaker/intercom in the lobby that allows tenants to ask who is there and can unlock the front door for guests).

Studio

A studio apartment is similar to a bachelor apartment not normally in the loft of a house.

Sublet

You are responsible for the rent for the duration of the lease even if you have to move before the lease expires. You may however, find someone to sublet your apartment. Sometimes the sub-lessee pays you and you pay the landlord but more often the sub-lessee pays the landlord directly.

Superintendent/Super

The superintendent takes care of the apartment building as well as your concerns as a renter. He/she may live on the premises.

Utilities

May include any of the following but not limited to: heat, hot water, and power/electricity. If utilities are included in your rent it will be indicated on the lease.

