

TIPS FOR RENTERS

- 1. Start by deciding what area(s) of Winnipeg you could see yourself living in:**
 - The Housing Directory is divided into areas of Winnipeg with the most budget friendly places listed at the beginning of each section.
 - Due to the low vacancy rate in Winnipeg, you might want to pick several areas to research so that you are not limited and have more options.
 - If you wish to remain in your area, start your research early and get your name on wait lists.
 - Wait until you have an apartment confirmed before selling your house.

- 2. Review your financials, you need to know what you can afford:**
 - Decide on how much you are able to spend on rent, be aware of utility costs.
 - Ask the right questions about extras such as parking, storage, emergency pull cord costs, and activity fees, so that you can better judge how much you will need.
 - There are programs available to help such as the Rent Assist (see page 12).

- 3. Decide what your housing needs are:**
 - Book a free Housing Consultation to discuss your options with the Housing Consultant call **204-956-6440**.
 - Do you need a place that offers rent geared to income? If so, have you looked into the wait lists for these places?
 - What type of social activities or amenities are you looking for?
 - What is your current health status? Are you able to navigate stairs? Do you need a place that offers parking? Do you have a pet? Do you want social programs? Do you smoke? (many buildings are non-smoking)

- 4. Select the places that meet your needs and explore those options:**
 - If you are moving from a house, you might need to take measurements to ensure that your furniture will fit.
 - Call the managers or contact numbers listed and make an appointment to view the places that may have a show suite.
 - Bring a checklist with you and a family member or a friend you trust to help you make a decision that is right for you.
 - When you go view a building, do not hesitate to ask questions, this could be your next home and you want to make a well informed decision.
 - If there is no suite to view, attend a congregate meal program in the building, if available, and speak directly to current tenants. Many buildings also have events open to the public where you can ask tenants about their experience living there (open house events, craft sales, bake sales, holiday events, etc.).
 - View the place(s) of your choice by driving by in the daytime as well as at night. Find out about safety issues: parking, elevator use, security cameras, security staff, and management - are they on-site or off?
 - Check the condition of the building both inside and out. How old is it? Is it clean and well maintained? Does everything work: locks, windows, plumbing, appliances, etc. Do you like the neighbourhood? Will you be safe walking in the area? Where is the bus stop? Do they allow power scooters?

5. Know your rights and be aware of what to ask for:

- Are there any membership fees or expenses not covered in the rent?
- Many apartments do not require a security deposit for older adults. If one is required, make sure it is not more than half of the first month's rent. If it is, they are overcharging you according to Provincial Law.
- You can call the **Manitoba Residential Tenancies Board at 204-945-2476** to enquire about allowable rent increases, what costs are considered to be part of your rent, and to enquire about any previous complaints and any outstanding issues that may have been filed. Staff can answer questions about Rights and Responsibilities for the tenant and can assist in conflict mediation.
- Inquire about the **Tenancy Agreement**: is it month to month, or is it a fixed-term agreement? Whatever is agreed upon, be sure to get it in writing to prevent future disputes. A Tenancy Agreement should state the amount of rent to be charged, when it should be paid, what is included in the rent, and the utilities the tenant is responsible for.
- For those with pets, landlords are now allowed to request you sign a pet agreement form and may ask for additional damage deposit to cover potential damages caused by pets such as holes in the lawn, carpet stains, etc.
- You should know how soon you can move in and how much notice is required if you want to move out.
- Ask if you have the option to sublet your apartment.
- If there are damages to the suite, be sure to write it down on a piece of paper, or ask the manager to add it to the move-in inspection report. Also, if the landlord says there are repairs to be made, get it in writing.

6. Waiting List Information:

- Don't be intimidated by the length of waiting lists, put your name on as many lists that appeal to you.
- Keep track of the calls you have made and the lists you are on. Some management companies start a new list every few years while others do not keep a list more than a year. Knowing when you called, who you spoke to, and what they said will help avoid future miscommunications.
- Some places require a deposit for holding your name on their waiting list. This is usually refunded if you take your name off the list, or it can be applied towards your damage deposit upon moving in. Either way, obtain a receipt as a record of the transaction.

7. Start changing your life and make the move a reality:

- Take inventory of your possessions, decide what to keep, what to give away, what to sell. Invite trusted friends and family over to help you downsize.
- If required, have an antique appraisal conducted to define your insurance needs for moving.
- Get an estimate on your house, if selling. There are several real estate companies who specialize in working with older adults.
- Start packing! Get started on changing your life, the sooner you start the less overwhelming it will be. **Be proactive, not reactive!**

SAMPLE CHECKLIST FOR VISITING POTENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTIES

(Add or change this checklist to suit your personal needs)

	Apartment #1	Apartment #2	Apartment #3
ADDRESS	_____	_____	_____
VIEWING TIME	_____	_____	_____
CONTACT PERSON	_____	_____	_____
PHONE NUMBER	_____	_____	_____
BASIC INFORMATION:			
Monthly rent	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Parking	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Type of parking	_____	_____	_____
INCLUDED IN RENT:			
Cable	_____	_____	_____
Heat	_____	_____	_____
Hydro	_____	_____	_____
Internet	_____	_____	_____
Telephone	_____	_____	_____
Water	_____	_____	_____
APPLIANCES			
Dishwasher	_____	_____	_____
Fridge	_____	_____	_____
Stove	_____	_____	_____
Laundry on-site	_____	_____	_____
• In suite	_____	_____	_____
• Included in rent	_____	_____	_____
• Coin operated	_____	_____	_____
• Smart Card	_____	_____	_____
EXTRAS:			
Activities	_____	_____	_____
Air Conditioning	_____	_____	_____
Balcony / Patio	_____	_____	_____
Exercise Facilities	_____	_____	_____
Meals	_____	_____	_____
Party Room	_____	_____	_____
Pool	_____	_____	_____
Sauna	_____	_____	_____
Storage	_____	_____	_____
Shuttle bus	_____	_____	_____
RESTRICTIONS			
No pets	_____	_____	_____
No smoking	_____	_____	_____
No wheelchair access	_____	_____	_____
CONSIDERATIONS			
Close to bus route	_____	_____	_____
Close to amenities	_____	_____	_____