

CITY OF BOSTON ONLINE GUIDES

RENTING IN BOSTON GUIDE:

Your guide to learning about what to expect when renting.

www.boston.gov/renting-boston

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN BOSTON GUIDE:

Your guide to searching and applying for affordable housing opportunities.

www.boston.gov/affordable-housing-boston

LOW-INCOME RESOURCES GUIDE:

Your guide if you are struggling with housing, food, or other basic needs, you are not alone. There are many ways we can help.

www.boston.gov/low-income-resources

EVICTION GUIDE:

Your guide to responding to an eviction.

www.boston.gov/departments/neighborhood-development/office-housing-stability#eviction-information

TRASH AND RECYCLING GUIDE:

Your guide to properly disposing of trash and recycling.

www.boston.gov/trash-and-recycling-guide

GETTING AROUND BOSTON GUIDE:

Your guide to finding your way around Boston.

www.boston.gov/getting-around-boston

CITY OF BOSTON RESOURCES

OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY

We help residents find and maintain stable, safe, and affordable housing. www.boston.gov/housingstability 617-635-4200

BOSTON HOME CENTER

We are the one-stop shop for homebuyers and homeowners.

homecenter.boston.gov 617-635-4663

OFFICE OF FAIR HOUSING & EQUITY

We work to prevent discrimination and ensure fair and equitable access to housing. www.boston.gov/fairhousing

617-635-4408

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

We administer and enforce building, housing, health, sanitation, and safety regulations mandated by City and State governments. www.boston.gov/isd 617-635-5300

BOS:311

We connect you with a representative ready to help with requests for non-emergency City services and information. 311

OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY

CITY OF BOSTON'S RENTING IN BOSTON GUIDE



City of Boston
Mayor Martin J. Walsh



NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOUR TENANCY



LEASES AND TENANCIES-AT-WILL

Leases are binding legal contracts that are typically for one year. Your landlord cannot raise the rent for the term of the lease. A tenancy-at-will agreement is a month to month tenancy that provides more flexibility.



DEPOSITS AND FEES

Before you move in, a landlord can only collect first month's rent, last month's rent, security deposit equal to one month's rent, and a lock change fee.

The landlord should provide proper receipts and pay interest on last month's rent and security deposit on an annual basis. The landlord must place the security deposit in a separate, interest bearing account.



BROKER FEES

A broker can charge you a finder's fee but needs to give you written notice that states the amount of the fee.



APARTMENT CONDITION

Check out the apartment and building before you rent. Make sure it's not a scam listing and look to see if the apartment/building are in good-repair with appropriate safety features, facilities, and appliances.

THINGS TO KNOW DURING YOUR TENANCY



APARTMENT CONDITIONS

You are entitled to a safe and decent apartment. Report problems to your landlord in writing.



RECORD KEEPING

Keep a copy of your rental records, including any written rental agreement, payment receipts and communications with your landlord



BE A RESPONSIBLE TENANT

Pay rent on time. Follow lease and property rules. Respect your neighbors and the property.



REASONABLE ACCESS

Your landlord can enter to inspect the unit, make repairs, and show the unit to prospective tenants. The landlord should provide at least one day's notice and attempt to arrange a convenient time to access the unit.

THINGS TO KNOW WHEN RENEWING OR ENDING YOUR TENANCY



NOTICE TO RENEW OR TERMINATE

A tenancy-at-will requires both landlord and tenant to provide adequate notice should either want to end the tenancy. If the landlord wants to terminate the tenancy, there is a legal process. A tenant with a lease should review the terms of their lease to understand the lease renewal and termination process, and see if it is a fixed lease, self-extending lease, or option-to-renew lease. A tenant with a fixed lease can be asked by the landlord to renew their lease months prior to the lease end date.



SECURITY DEPOSIT

Your landlord should return your security deposit plus interest within thirty days after move out, and must give an itemized receipt within thirty days if they want to deduct money. They should not deduct for reasonable wear and tear.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Leave the apartment clean and take pictures of the unit condition. Return all keys. Forward your mail. Notify utility companies. Schedule bulk item pick-up, if necessary.



EVICTON

Your landlord cannot evict you without following the law, and must provide proper written notice, and file a summary process action in court. Only a Judge can evict you. Make sure you respond to any court documents you receive and show up to defend yourself in court.



RENTER'S INSURANCE

Buy renter's insurance. It's a small price to pay if there's a big problem.