

# Housing Search Checklist

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## BEFORE YOU BEGIN A SEARCH

### What kind of rental unit do you want to live in?

- studio, 1, 2, 3, or 4 bedroom apartment
- suite or apartment in private home
- room in a shared house
- room in private home

### What are your transportation needs?

- within walking distance
- within biking distance
- on a T-Cat Bus Route
- proximity to a shopping center or a job site

### What features are essential?

- dishwasher
- washer and dryer in the unit
- air conditioning (room units or central air)
- cable and internet capabilities
- off-street parking
- furniture included
- handicapped accessibility
- private room and/or bath
- smoking (or not)
- pets permitted

### What are your financial means?

- Living with others can lower housing expenses.
- Rooms in a student or private house tend to be the least expensive.
- Include the cost of renting or purchasing furniture, if needed.
- When calculating your maximum affordable rent, be sure to include utilities.

## How much legal protection do you require?

- A one year lease offers a certain amount of legal protection.
- Units that do not carry a lease offer maximum flexibility but limited legal protection.

## DURING YOUR HOUSING SEARCH

- Begin your search using the widest criteria possible. Narrow your choices by adding more features.
- Inspect the actual unit you intend to lease, and consider writing necessary repairs into the lease.
- Check the security of the unit.
- Check the fire safety of the unit (a smoke detector is required by law).
- Be sure that there are two means of egress (exit) from the unit.
- Arrange for telephone service and utilities to be turned on by the time you move in.

## AFTER YOU MOVE IN

- Complete a thorough inventory of your apartment.
- Give a copy of your inspection form and pictures to the landlord.
- Purchase renter's insurance.
- Consider purchasing additional fire safety equipment (fire extinguisher, and/or smoke detectors).
- Always get a written receipt from your landlord when you pay rent or deposits.