

Fort Collins Public Housing Tenant Handbook



**Fort Collins Housing Authority
1715 West Mountain Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80521**

**Main Office 416-2910
Maintenance 416-2092**

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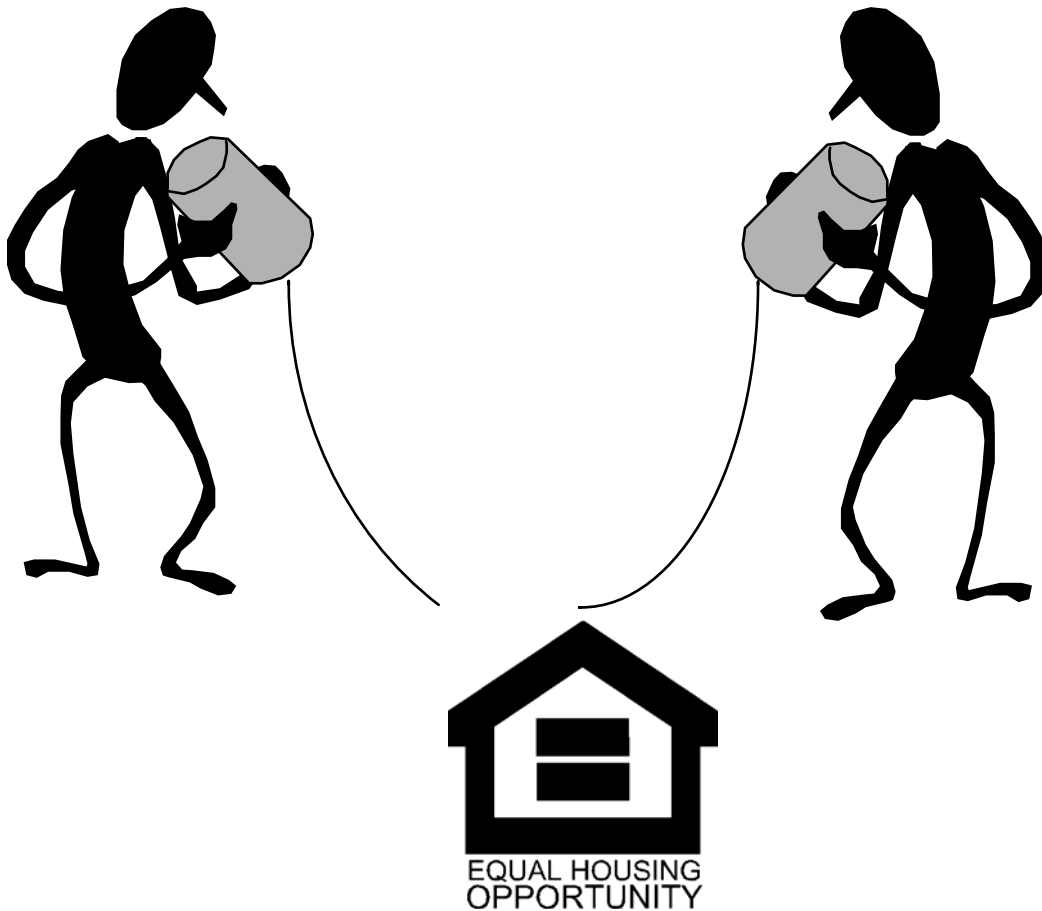
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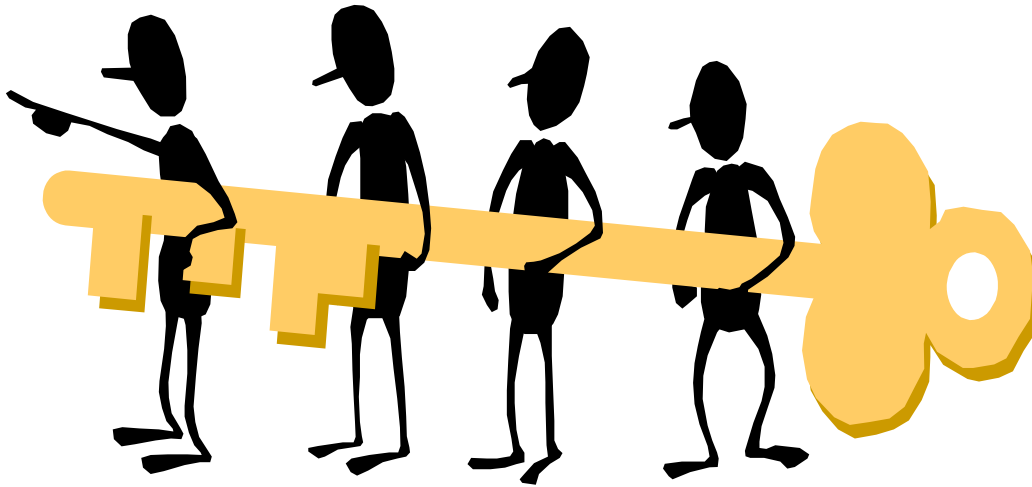
Welcome

We are very pleased to have you and your family with us. Our management team and staff are here to serve the housing needs of you and your family. We hope you will have many years of comfort, security and happiness in your new home.

Whenever you move into a new home and neighborhood, there are many questions you may have, and problems that may arise. There are also a number of requirements for our different housing assistance programs. Hopefully this handbook will help to answer some of your questions and concerns.

This handbook should be considered as part of your lease. It explains in more detail some of the requirements of our programs, and has some tips on how to properly care for your unit. Please remember that if you have further questions you can call our main office, or if you need repairs you can call our Maintenance office. We have after hour's coverage so your call will always get through to the appropriate person.





1. Moving In

a. Security Deposit

You will pay a security deposit in the amount specified by the lease. If you have chosen to pay the security deposit in three equal payments, the amount due on the security deposit will be taken before any rent payment is credited. This deposit will be held until you move out of the unit. After you have moved out of the unit, the security deposit will be refunded to you within the time period specified in the lease minus any charges you have incurred.

b. Inspection

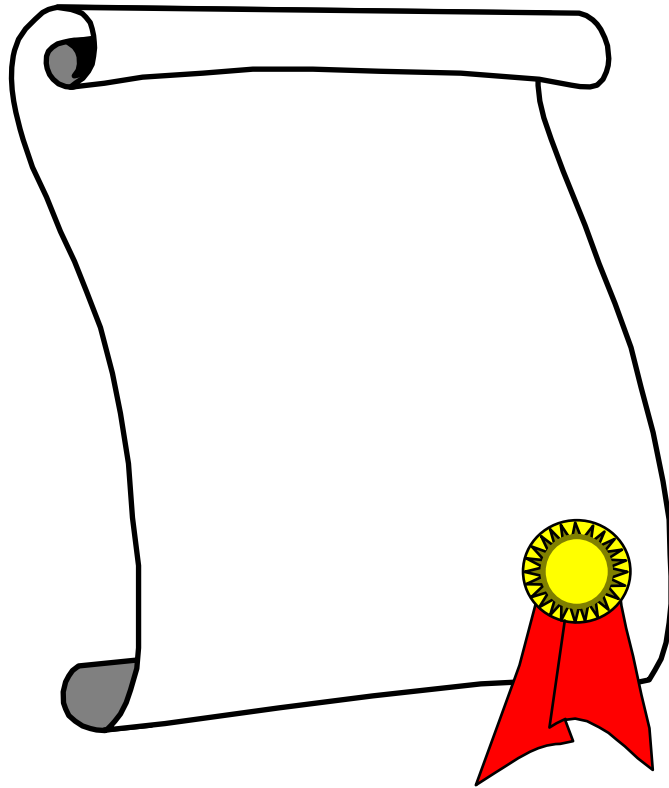
A move-in inspection is given to you at the time of the lease signing. This inspection details what condition the unit was in when the Maintenance Department turned it over for occupancy. The move-in inspection should be returned to your Housing Coordinator with any additional comments within 1 week.

c. First Months Rent

If the beginning date of the lease is for any day other than the first day of the month, the rent for the first month will be pro-rated.

d. Renter's Insurance

We encourage all our tenants to get renters' insurance. The cost is usually very low and it will protect your possessions against a variety of unforeseen events.



2. Rules and Policies

a. The Lease

Your lease is your contract with the Housing Authority for the unit you have rented. It explains in detail what your responsibilities are as a tenant of the Housing Authority, and what our responsibilities are as your landlord. You should read it carefully and keep it handy in case you need to refer to it.

Your lease covers a number of areas including: when your rent is due, what your security deposit is, what items you will be charged for, how payments are applied, what maintenance you are responsible for, what utilities you are responsible for, what maintenance we are responsible for, for what reasons we may enter your unit, and for what reasons you may be evicted.

Please note that one of the reasons you may be evicted for is acting in a manner that will disturb other resident's peaceful enjoyment of their unit. The City of Fort Collins or the Town of Wellington has a noise ordinance and we expect our tenants to follow it. We ask that you be considerate of your neighbors, especially during the hours between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. Eight hours of community service per month is required of all non-exempt adult Public Housing residents and is referenced in your lease.

b. Rent

Rent is due on the first of the month. If rent is not paid by the fifth of the month, a late fee will be charged to your account and you will receive a Demand for Rent or Possession from the Housing Authority. If you know beforehand that you cannot pay the rent on time, you may fill out a Late Rent Payment Request form. Your Housing Coordinator must approve your request and sign the form before it is valid. Even if a Late Rent Payment Request has been approved, you will still receive a Demand for Rent or Possession and you will still be liable for late fees unless the late fees have been waived in writing. All legal fees incurred by you because of failure to pay your rent on time are your responsibility and will be added to your account.

The Housing Authority calculates your rent as the greater of the minimum rent or 30% of your adjusted gross income. The Public Housing minimum rent is \$50. The maximum rent you will have to pay is the Housing Authority's flat rent, which is calculated as the market rate rent for the unit you live in. You can voluntarily choose to pay the flat rent, in which case you will only have to recertify your income once every three years. If you have chosen to pay the flat rent and you have a decrease in income, you can request that the Housing Authority recalculate your rent based on your income.

c. Program Requirements

Once a year you will be required to recertify with the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority will send a letter to you when your recertification is due, asking you to make an appointment to see your Housing Coordinator. As part of the recertification process, your income must be reexamined, a CBI check must be run, and your unit must be inspected. You will be notified of any change in rent. You will be given at least 30 days notice of any increase in rent resulting from an annual recertification, unless the recertification has been delayed because you failed to come in on time.

Tenants who claim no income will be required to recertify every 90 days.

The Housing Authority does not require you to report an increase in income until your annual certification is due. You may at any time request a reexamination of your income if you have had a decrease in income during the year. You must report such occurrences by the 20th of the month in order for them to take effect the first of the following month.

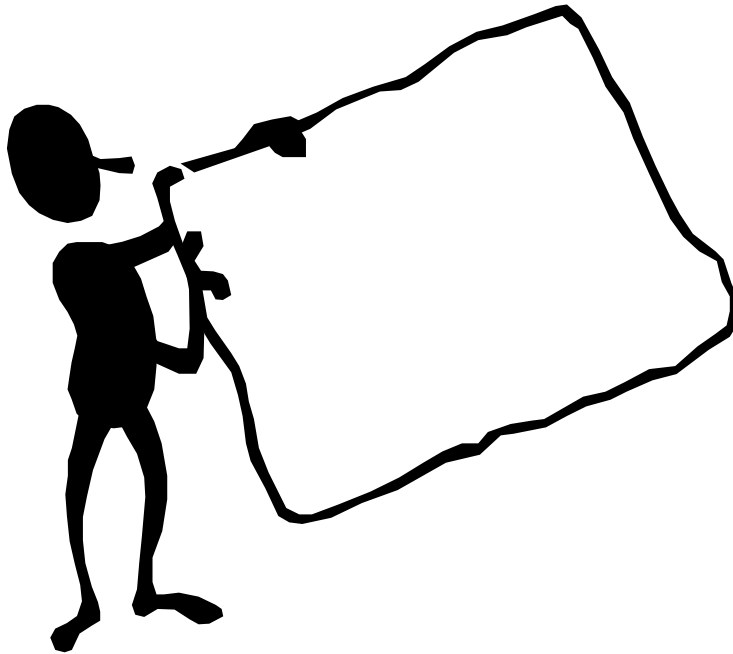
Any change in family composition must be reported to the Housing Authority within 10 days of the change. Any new member added to the household must first be determined eligible for assistance by the Housing Authority. Failure to report such changes is grounds for eviction and loss of assistance.

d. Policies

Policies governing admission and continued occupancy of Public Housing are available for you to read at the Housing Authority's main office. These policies may be subject to change. Notice of changes will be posted with reasonable time given for review and comment.

e. Incident Reports

Issues concerning neighbors or employees of the Housing Authority should be submitted in writing if at all possible. The Housing Authority will investigate all such reports. We often use the City of Fort Collins Community Mediation Services to help solve disputes between neighbors, and we also urge you to attempt to solve the problem yourself first.



f. Occupancy Issues

You are responsible for the conduct of all household members and any guests who might be visiting. You may not have guests whose stay exceeds 14 days in each calendar year without the prior written approval of the Housing Authority.

The family may not be absent from the unit for more than 30 days without the prior written consent of the Housing Authority. In general it is a good idea to let your Housing Coordinator know if you are going to be absent for an extended period of time to avoid any misunderstandings.

g. Housekeeping Standards

The Housing Authority expects you to maintain your unit in a safe and sanitary condition at all times. This includes routine cleaning of your unit, disposal of trash, and caring for the outside of your unit and yard if required to do so.

If you have vinyl flooring in your unit you can clean it with a commercial floor cleaning detergent, and you can also wax it once it is clean. If you have carpet it should be cleaned by shampooing.

You are responsible for cleaning the interior and ground level windows in your unit on a regular basis.

Please do not use abrasive cleaners on your sink, bathtub, shower stall or appliances.

Please use plastic bags and twist ties to contain your garbage, and place the bags in the containers provided. Crush boxes and cans before disposing of them. Always make sure any cigarette butts or other smoking materials are extinguished before disposing of them in the garbage.

At the time of your annual inspection, a check of your housekeeping standards will be conducted. If you fail this inspection your unit will have to be reinspected until it passes. Failure to maintain your unit in a safe and sanitary manner is grounds for eviction and loss of your assistance.

h. Animals

The Housing Authority has 2 classifications of animals for tenants: service/support animals that assist the disabled, and household pets. There is no extra charge for service/support animals that assist the disabled, while there is an extra charge and deposit required for household pets. The Housing Authority must approve all animals regardless of their classification. The forms may be picked up from your Housing Coordinator.

i. Appeals

The Housing Authority will allow tenants a chance to appeal an adverse decision against them, unless the decision falls into the category of decisions not subject to the Public Housing Grievance procedure. The Public Housing Grievance process consists of an informal meeting and then a formal grievance if the tenant wishes one.

j. Promissory Notes

FCHA may enter into a Promissory Note for rent owed, late charges, maintenance charges, etc. at its sole discretion. Normally the amount owed must be \$1000 or less and the Promissory Note must be for a period of 12 months or less. Once entered into, the Promissory Note cannot be re-written to include additional charges. If more than one payment is missed eviction proceedings may begin.

k. Transfers

The Housing Authority has three categories of transfer requests: emergency transfers, immediate administrative transfers, and regular administrative transfers. In most cases, except for emergency transfers, there will be a waiting list for the transfer. A transfer cannot take place until there is a vacant unit available and the tenant is at the top of the transfer waiting list. Unless the transfer is at the request of the Housing Authority, the tenant will be responsible for any costs associated with the transfer. For a complete list of transfer requirements you should contact your Housing Coordinator.

l. Smoke-free Units

All current and new residents will comply with the following smoke-free policy, No smoking is allowed in any building or unit, or outside of any building within 20 feet of any window, door or other entryway, or such greater distance as may be necessary to ensure that the second-hand smoke does not infiltrate any dwelling unit. All residents, their guests and any other visitors must abide by this policy.

3. Maintenance

a. Repairs

Our Maintenance Department will attend to all routine maintenance. Work orders should be called in to our Maintenance Department. Emergency work orders will be taken care of as soon as possible, non-emergency work orders should generally take 1 to 2 days to complete unless outside contractors or vendors are involved. If you plan to be gone and want your work order completed, please let our staff know they have permission to enter your unit.

Emergency problems that endanger health, safety or property should be called in to the Housing Authority as soon as possible. Calls made after normal business hours will go to our answering service, who will contact the maintenance person on call for emergencies. Please be sure to leave your name, address, phone number, and a description of the problem.

Damages caused by you, your family, or your guests will be charged to your account. Items needing repair that are the Housing Authority's responsibility will be paid for by us.

b. Locks and Keys

If you are locked out of your unit and ask the Housing Authority to unlock your door for you, you will be charged for this service. You may wish to leave an extra key in a safe place that will be available to you. If you need replacement keys there will be a charge. Tenants are not allowed to have their locks changed or re-keyed without permission, however if there is a security issue they may contact the Maintenance Department.

c. Smoke Detectors

Your unit contains one or more smoke detectors, which may be sensitive to cigarette smoke, frying foods, smoke from your toaster, or excess humidity from your shower. If your detector goes off, check all the rooms in your unit. If there is no fire, you can silence the detector. If there is a fire, remove yourself and your family and call 911. **Please do not disconnect your smoke detectors.** They are in your unit for the safety of your family. If you are having problems with a smoke detector please call the Maintenance Department.

d. Laundry Facilities

Laundry facilities are available at some locations. Coin operated washers and dryers are available for tenant use only. Please be considerate of other tenants and remove your clothes promptly when they are done. Please help keep the laundry room clean by disposing of your trash in the container provided. The laundry facility hours are from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

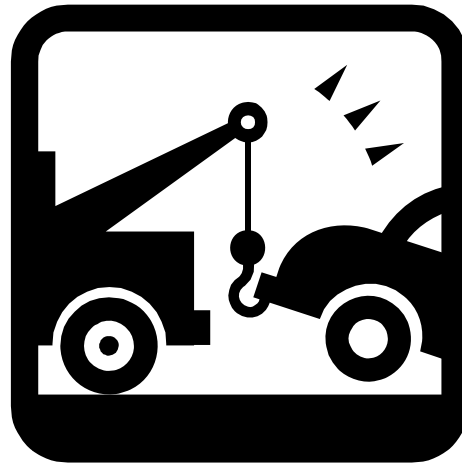
e. Pest Control

The Housing Authority provides pest control services for our buildings and grounds. You may request extermination services for your unit if there is evidence of insects or rodents in your home. If the problem is caused by poor housekeeping habits you will be charged for the service.

Your best defense against insects and rodents is to keep your unit clean. Do not leave food out on your counters or in your sink. Keep your cooking and food storage areas clean, and take out your garbage on a regular basis.

f. Lawn Care

Your lease will state what type of maintenance you are responsible for. The Housing Authority has lawn mowers and weed eaters you may borrow. While these items are in your possession you are responsible for them and will be charged if they are damaged.



g. Parking/Automobiles

The Housing Authority's parking areas, driveways and common areas are private property and are not to be used for the storage of boats, trailers, mobile homes, recreational vehicles or other items. All vehicles must be licensed and in working condition. You will be asked to remove any vehicles in violation of this policy. You are not permitted to repair your car or wash it on our property.

h. Heating

Your unit is equipped with its own individual thermostat to control your heat. Don't block the heating vents by placing furniture or rugs over them, and do vacuum the vents periodically to prevent dust and lint build-up. If your heat isn't working properly you should call the Maintenance Department and not try to fix it yourself.

i. General Maintenance Issues

Please do not use your patio or balcony area to store household items. Please do not leave toys, bikes, car parts, appliances, etc, on your balcony, patio or lawn. Do not use your outside areas for storage of combustible materials or trash which may impose a fire hazard.

The Housing Authority provides either draperies or mini blinds for your unit and we ask that you not hang sheets or blankets over the windows. Please keep your mini blind cords separated and away from small children.

Please do not attach decals or other hard to remove items to your windows. Window replacement due to breakage will be charged to the tenant.

The Housing Authority must approve any structural modification to your unit in writing before it is done.

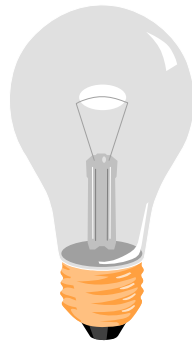
Wall decorations may be hung with small nails, please do not use large nails or tape. Plants or ceiling hangings may be hung with toggle bolt hooks. Please consult the Maintenance Department if you are unsure what to use.

You may line your cupboards with decorative paper but please do not use self-adhesive contact paper.

Please operate your garbage disposal, if you have one, with cold running water at least once every 3 days. Do not put paper, coffee grounds, grease, egg shells, banana peels, corn husks, fruit pits, bones or other hard items in your garbage disposal. Always use cold running water and allow your disposal to run for 40 seconds after you have used it.

Do not pour oil or fats down your drain, in your toilet, or in your garbage disposal, they may harden on contact with cold water and cause a blockage. **DO NOT** use drain cleaners on your drain, they usually do not work very well and can be hazardous to the maintenance staff if they later need to work on your drain.

The Housing Authority provides for basic trash removal. Excess trash charges will be billed to the tenant's account.



Replacement of light bulbs in your unit is your responsibility. If accessing the fixture is a safety hazard, please contact the Maintenance Department. If you wish to repaint your unit, you must receive permission from the Housing Authority first. The Maintenance Department will inspect your work after it is completed.

Only authorized personnel are allowed on your roof. You are not allowed to affix antennas, satellite dishes, basketball hoops or any other item to your roof. If you need something removed from your roof please call the Maintenance Department.

If your unit has a basement please do not use the area as a bedroom. The windows are not designed to allow you to escape in case of fire.

You may cover your existing carpet or vinyl flooring with carpet or rugs, however please do not permanently attach them to the floor. You must remove any carpeting and tape from the floor before you move out.

4. Moving Out

a. Proper Notice

After the initial term, you may give the Housing Authority 30 days written notice to terminate the lease. **You must turn your keys in to be considered moved out.** You will be charged rent until your keys are turned in, and you will be charged rent for the full 30 days if you did not give proper written notice.



b. Refunds

Except for normal wear and tear, your unit should be in the same condition upon move-out as it was when you moved in. A detailed list of cleaning expectations is available from your Housing Coordinator. A pre move-out consultation is available from our Maintenance Department. The Maintenance Department will also do a move-out inspection that you may be present for if you wish. Please call the Maintenance Department to arrange for a time if you wish to be present. Your deposit will be refunded to you according to the time frame specified in your lease, minus any charges for damages and cleaning. Please leave a forwarding address and phone number if you wish to get your deposit back.