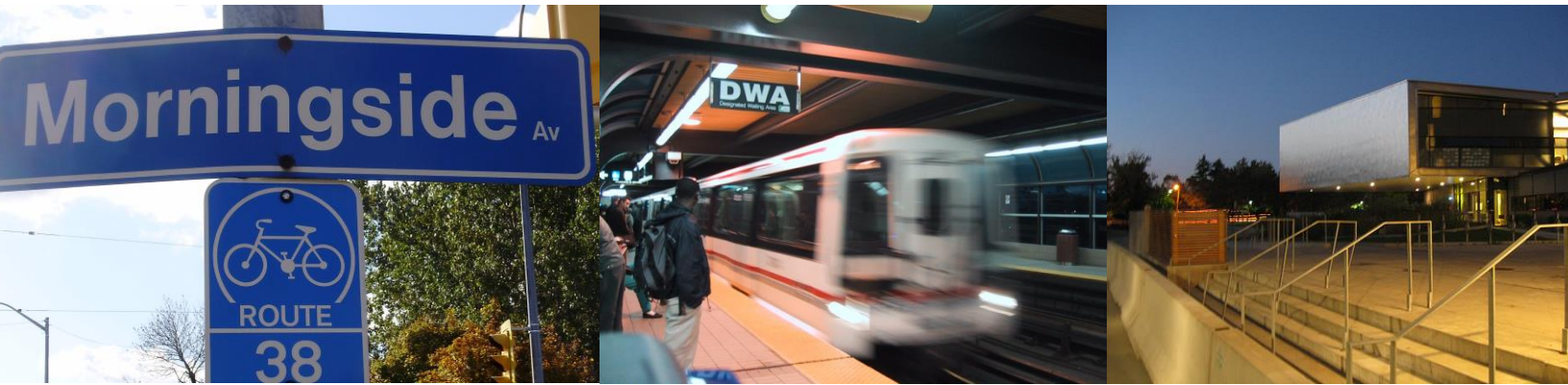


## University of Toronto Scarborough



## Living Off-Campus: Student Success Guide



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
SCARBOROUGH

# STUDENT HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE



[www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~residences](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~residences)

Student Residence Centre

Phone (416) 287-7365

Email [residences@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:residences@utsc.utoronto.ca)

Off-Campus Housing Services: [housingservices@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:housingservices@utsc.utoronto.ca)

## Office Hours

Monday – Friday

9:00 am to 5:00 pm

(9:00 am to 4:30 pm in July and August)

# Living Off-Campus

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## Welcome to a new year at the University of Toronto Scarborough!

Being a university student can provide you with some of the best memories of your life, but it also comes with its challenges.

Searching for off-campus housing and living in an unfamiliar area can be one of those challenges, especially if it's for the first time.

This resource was created to help you achieve successful off-campus living. It covers a broad range of topics that will walk you through the process of finding and maintaining suitable off-campus rental housing.

We've tried to cover all that is relevant securing off-campus housing, but if we've missed anything, please let us know! We're always looking to strengthen our services, and student feedback is an important part of that.

You can contact us at:

Residence Centre  
1265 Military Trail  
Toronto, Ontario, M1C 1A4

Phone (416) 287-7365

Email: [residences@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:residences@utsc.utoronto.ca)

Off-Campus Housing Services email: [housingservices@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:housingservices@utsc.utoronto.ca)

# The House Hunt

Wherever you decide to live, remember that it will be your home for the next eight to twelve months, or longer. Shop around. Be selective. You don't have to settle for cramped or low-quality housing. Take the time to look around and find something that makes you feel comfortable.

## *The Toronto Housing Market*

While the housing market in Toronto is very large, it is also very competitive. In 2017, vacancy rates were at an all time low of just 1%<sup>1</sup>. While this number might be discouraging, there are thousands of units available for rent in the city. But it will be important to have a plan, stay organized, and act quickly after you have found housing that you are comfortable with.

## *Getting Started*

While there is always housing being advertised, it might take you some time to find a place that fits your criteria. It's a good idea to start your search at approximately four to six weeks before your target move-in date so that you won't be pressured to accept housing that you are not happy with.

Start by making a list of the criteria that you are looking for. This will help cut down the number of postings you will have to sort through. Criteria to consider include:

### **Your Budget**

Rent costs vary according to a number of factors, including size, location, and type (basement apartment vs. high rise condo for example). Below are average costs based on housing advertised with the University of Toronto from May 2017 to May 2018:

Apartment Type	Average rent
Shared	\$725
Bachelor or Studio	\$900
1 Bedroom	\$1000-\$1,200
2 Bedroom	\$1400
3 Bedroom	From \$1,650

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmportal/en/#Profile/2270/3/Toronto>

**Location**

Will you want to live within a walking distance to UTSC, downtown, or somewhere in between? While housing in Scarborough is typically less expensive than downtown Toronto, some students prefer living in the downtown area and commuting further. What's more important to you? Would you rather have a short commute and be right next to campus, or live closer to downtown and have a longer commute?

**Transit**

How will you be getting to school? If planning on taking Toronto transit (TTC), GO Transit or Durham Transit, you might want to find housing close to a subway station, or near a bus or streetcar stop. If you are planning on driving to school, you would want to look for housing that includes parking. Also make sure to factor any additional expenses (i.e. bus pass, parking pass) into your expenses. Being open to purchasing a transit pass will expand your search area.

**Roommates**

Do you want to live with other people, or would you prefer living alone? If you are new to the city, having roommates can be beneficial to help you get oriented and learn more about the area. Keep in mind that there will be places in the house that are shared and you would be partly responsible for the cleanliness of the area, as well as chores that would have to be shared with your roommate(s).

**Type of Accommodation**

The two most common types of accommodation are living in an apartment and living in a house. Often, if living in a house you will be renting one room and will be sharing the common areas (kitchen, bathrooms, living room). Sometimes accommodations in a house are limited to just the basement area, which may have less natural light. Apartments are usually in high or low-rise buildings with many other tenants. They are usually professionally managed where as houses are typically managed by their owners.

**Furniture**

Will you be looking to buy your own furniture, or would you rather live in housing that is already furnished? Living in a furnished house can provide some convenience and savings, but you will likely be limited to the provided furniture. Any damage that you may cause to the furniture, you would have to pay for at the end of your tenancy.

## **Laundry**

Some housing will have a washer and dryer available in the unit, while others will not. For those without, you will have to find a public laundromat in the area.

## *Where to Look for Housing – The Online Search*

**University of Toronto Off-Campus Housing listings site:** [offcampushousing.utoronto.ca](http://offcampushousing.utoronto.ca)

The University of Toronto Off-Campus Housing website features off-campus listings surrounding the University of Toronto's three campuses: St. George, Scarborough, and Mississauga. Here you can search listings under the "Housing" tab, connect with other University of Toronto students searching for housing under the "Roommates" tab, and review the tools and educational information under the "Resources" tab. Be advised that the listings on this site are owned by private property owners not affiliated with the University of Toronto. Students seeking to rent a property or find roommates are responsible for making appropriate inquiries and inspecting properties before agreeing to rent. The University does not inspect the rental sites.

Note that you must [enable your JOINid](#) or use your UTORid to gain access to the listings.

## **Places4students.com**

[Places4Students.com](http://Places4Students.com) is a website that maintains a database of rental housing specifically for post-secondary students. This database contains hundreds of postings, is updated regularly, and can be searched by location, type, rental price, furnishings, and many other criteria. Search for postings near University of Toronto Scarborough and Centennial College to see all the relevant listings in the area. Once again, students seeking to rent a property or find roommates are responsible for making appropriate inquiries and inspecting properties in person before agreeing to rent.

## **General apartment listing sites:**

Other popular housing listing sites advertising housing available to the general public in major Canadian cities include:

View It: <http://www.viewit.ca/>

4Rent: <https://4rent.ca/>

RentSeeker: <http://www.rentseeker.ca>

## **Craigslist.ca & Kijiji.ca**

[Craigslist](#) and [Kijiji](#) are popular online classified websites that allow people to post advertisements for free. Both sites have a large amount of housing advertisements that are targeted towards the general public. **While most housing advertisements are legitimate, these sites are known to have a number of fraudulent postings. Never transfer money without meeting the landlord, reviewing the lease agreement, and seeing the unit in person. Be wary of fraudulent ads.**

## *How to Search*

Now that you know where to look for housing advertisements and have created a list of criteria for what you want, it's time to begin the search!

The first step is to view one of the listing services mentioned above and narrow down your search results by using the filter according to your search criteria. Have a close look at the search results, and be sure to read the listing thoroughly. Once you've identified the units that you are interested in, it's time to begin contacting landlords to plan a site visit.

## *Contacting the landlord*

When contacting a landlord via email or phone, always sound cheerful and confident, be polite, and introduce yourself. Explain that you're interested in renting from them and set up a time to meet and view the unit.

If communicating via phone, be sure to have a paper and pen handy to take down the address and viewing time. The landlord may also have some questions, and these often include:

- Who and how many people are interested in living there?
- When are you available to move in?
- What is your source of income?
- Where have you lived before?

If the phone goes to voicemail, here is a sample script that you can use to leave a message:



“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_(your name)\_\_\_\_\_, and I saw your apartment listing on the University of Toronto Off-Campus Housing listings (or other) website. I would like to speak with you to get some information, and hopefully set up an appointment to meet with you and view the place. I can be reached at (your phone number) . Thanks, and I hope to hear from you soon!”

## Inspecting the rental unit

Actually visiting the unit before signing a lease is very important. Besides seeing if you like the place, you can also get a good feel for how comfortable you will be in the neighbourhood. We recommend going to visit the rental unit with a friend for your safety.

Before you go, make sure that you think of an extensive list of questions to ask the landlord. While not an exhaustive list, some ideas include:

- When is the apartment available?
- How long of a lease agreement are you looking for? (Maximum 1 year)
- When is rent due? How do you like it being paid? (cheque, online, other)
- Are utilities costs (water, heat, electricity, internet) included in rent?
- Are utilities charged to individual apartments, or averaged between residents?
- How big is the hot water heater and is it shared with any other apartments?
- Is there a washer and dryer (laundry) in the unit? Is it coin operated or included in rent price? If not, where is the closest place to do my laundry?
- How long have you been renting this property? Do you manage other properties?
- How do I submit a maintenance request, if I have one?
- What modifications do you make to units between tenants? (E.g. will the apartment be painted/cleaned before you move in?)
- What are your most common maintenance requests?
- Have you had any pest issues? How do/would you handle pest control?
- Is there any additional storage space?
- Are the other tenants students? Are they generally quiet?
- How safe is the apartment/area? Have you had any break-ins in the past?
- Does the door have a deadbolt? Can I have one installed?
- Will you be changing locks between tenants?

A comprehensive [Inspection Check List](#) can be found on the UofT Off-Campus Housing website under the “Resources” tab.

## Searching for Safe Housing

Although some of the questions in the previous section touched on safety issues, safety gets its own section in this document as it should be an important factor in your decision.

It's strongly recommended that you visit the neighbourhood, meet the landlord, and thoroughly inspect the unit before signing a lease. You may want to consider re-visiting potential housing at night to check for adequate lighting, and the feel of the neighbourhood.

You want to gauge your landlord's sense of responsibility and importance in regards to safety concerns by asking safety related questions. If the landlord attempts to brush off your questions or shows little concerns, you might assume that safety issues won't be high on their priority list. *Do not rent from a landlord who does not demonstrate to take safety seriously.*

When inspecting the unit, be sure to ask yourself the following questions:

### Access to the Unit

- Does the room/apartment/house have an adequate locking system? Check the physical shape of the door jam, as well as the lock itself. Half inch deadbolts are good; door chains are less effective.
- If you are sharing some of the space, can you lock your own room? Can the bathroom be locked? Will the landlord have a copy of the keys to these places?
- How many people will have keys to the front door?
- When was the last time the locks were changed? In units such as rooming houses, where there is high turnover, excessive key-copying may be a problem.
- What is the landlord's policy on access to your building or to your room? (E.g. The landlord must provide 24 hours' written notice before entering in non-emergency situations)
- Are there functioning locks on the windows?
- Is there an access security system? Is it in good working order? This includes a buzzer system, intercom or keying system. You should be able to check who is at your door without having to open it. Is there a viewing device, or a lockable outside door with a window?

- Does each floor have a functioning smoke detector? It is mandatory in Ontario to have carbon monoxide detectors on each floor<sup>2</sup>; are these alarms present on the floor you're on?
- If there are outside fire escapes, do they reach the ground? They should not be low enough to allow access from the ground.
- If there is a garage or storage area, is it properly secured?
- Is the mail slot or mail box located in a way which prevents access to the rental unit? Can the mail box be secured?

### **Visibility and Lighting**

- Are the streets well-lit?
- Is there adequate lighting at all entrances to the building?
- Can you see clearly what is ahead as you approach the building? Are there sharp corners or pillars that obstruct your view of the building? Are there bushes or fences where someone could hide?
- Is there adequate lighting inside the building, particularly in hallways, or in stairwells?
- Is the garage or parking area properly lit?
- Is the storage area or laundry room well lit? Can you see who is in the area before you enter? Is it easy to see who is coming in, once you are inside the room or area?
- Is there an alarm button or telephone in case of emergency?

### **Communicating for Assistance**

- If there are isolated areas in the building, such as a laundry room or storage facility, can you call for assistance from those areas?
- How easy would it be to contact other people in the building to let them know you need help?

### **Neighbourhood Issues**

- What does the neighbourhood feel like during the day? At night? Are there any small businesses in the area that will be open at night? How easily can you reach a

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<sup>2</sup>

[https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/FireMarshal/CarbonMonoxideAlarms/QuestionsandAnswers/OFM\\_COAlarms\\_QandA.html](https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/FireMarshal/CarbonMonoxideAlarms/QuestionsandAnswers/OFM_COAlarms_QandA.html)

convenience store or a laundromat? What other places might you sometimes use at night? How safely can you get there?

- How easily can you reach your building by transit, and how comfortable do you feel walking that route? How late does public transportation run? Do you pass any darkened areas, laneways or construction sites?
- Do you see police patrolling the area?
- How many people are out on the street during the day? At night? Does the area feel well travelled, busy or isolated? Is it easy to predict when people will be around?
- Do you feel comfortable around the other tenants in the building or apartment? Do the other tenants agree on keeping doors and windows locked?

### **Maintenance**

- Is the building in good repair? Does the building feel cared for?
- How quickly will the landlord respond to requests for repairs?
- Are there signs of graffiti or vandalism?

### **Bed Bugs**

Living with bed bugs can cause much mental, physical and financial anguish. Bed bugs were nearly extinct thirty years ago, but have dramatically increased in numbers since to become a serious problem in many major cities. The best approach is to be proactive in ensuring that there is no infestation in any rental unit that you are considering. Ask your landlord if there is any history of bed bugs in the building (even if they've been reported on another floor, they can spread very quickly), and check the Bed Bug Registry ([www.bedbugregistry.com](http://www.bedbugregistry.com)).

Bed bugs can be present in even the cleanest apartments, as they do not feed on garbage or food (they feed on blood, like mosquitoes). They are difficult to spot, multiply easily, are hard to eliminate, and can go over eight months without feeding. Thus, if you suspect that your apartment has bed bugs, it's important to act fast and notify your landlord as soon as possible. It is your land lord's responsibility to pay for extermination services.

For information on how to prevent and treat bed bug infestations, see <http://www.toronto.ca/health/bedbugs/index.htm>.

If a landlord refuses to help when a tenant notifies them of a bed bug problem, tenants may obtain assistance from a legal clinic, the Landlord and Tenant Board or Toronto Public Health.

If it becomes necessary, Toronto Public Health can issue a Health Protection Order (Section 13)

to a landlord and/or tenant or both under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, to ensure clean-up and treatment is completed.

### **Multi-Tenant Houses (Rooming Houses) – *Illegal in Scarborough***

Multi-tenant houses, also known as rooming houses, can include a house, apartment or building where you share a kitchen and/or washroom with four or more people who each pay individual rent.

Multi-tenant houses make up a portion of the affordable housing stock in Toronto, however, it is important to note that **multi-tenant houses are illegal in Scarborough**. They are only permitted in the former cities of York, Toronto, and Etobicoke (with a license required in the latter two).

A main concern if you are living in a multi-tenant house is that if the by-law (city rule) is enforced by an officer, you may be at risk of losing your housing. In some rooming houses, there could also be concerns with quality, overcrowding, safety, and condition. If renting in a house, always ask a landlord how many people will also be renting in the house to ensure it a safe and legal place to live. Connect with the Student Housing & Residence Life office if you have any questions.

### **Fire Safety**

Fire safety in particular should be at the top of your mind when assessing the safety of your housing. Prior to agreeing to rent, inspect the rental property for fire and life safety equipment. Do not rent from landlords who do not demonstrate they take fire and life safety seriously.

It is the landlord's responsibility to follow the Ontario fire code and life safety requirements. They must install and maintain fire and life safety equipment, including smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Tenants are responsible by law to notify the landlord if the smoke alarm is inoperable. It is against the law for tenants to remove the batteries or tamper with the smoke alarm in any way. Tenants should contact their landlord immediately if they do not have the required number of smoke alarms.

Once in your rental accommodation:

- REPORT safety issues immediately to your landlord
- If landlord does not respond immediately seek advice from the University
- Learn the fire protection features in your housing, including all exits
- Cook with appropriate heat levels

- Do not leave food while it is cooking
- Ensure all burning objects are put out
- Never ignore a fire alarm

**Let us know if you encounter a bad landlord**

If you inspect or rent accommodation that you have found through our service, and your evaluation of the premises or the landlord's attitude towards personal safety is negative, make sure you discuss your views with us. You can also lodge a formal complaint that could result in the landlord being banned from advertising with us.

## Major Costs of Living Off-Campus

There are a number of important costs to consider when living off campus.

Item	Cost
Rent	\$725 - \$1000 per month
Utilities	\$50 - \$100 per month (Sometimes included in the rent cost)
Phone & Internet	\$50 - \$150 per month
Tenant's Insurance (See below)	\$200 - 300 per year
Public Transportation (TTC Pass)	\$146.25 per month (A limited amount of <a href="#">discounted passes</a> are available at the Scarborough Campus Students Union office each month for \$116.75)
TOTAL	\$725-\$1200 per month

The above are the basic costs associated with living off-campus, but for budgeting purposes you should also think about tuition and school expenses, food, entertainment, shopping and gifts, toiletries and other miscellaneous items.

### Tenant's Insurance

We strongly recommend that you purchase tenant's insurance while living in rental housing. Landlords may also require you to show proof of liability insurance upon the signing of the lease agreement. Many insurance companies offer tenants insurance—shop around to fit the policy and rate that work best for you

Tenant's Insurance:

- Covers your personal property.
- Provides you with protection in case of incidents such as fire or theft



- Can also cover you in the event that you are found liable for loss of property because of personal negligence, or for accidental loss or damage of jewelry or other property outside your home.

Insurance tips:

- Take photographs of valuable items and store these images outside of the apartment in case you need to make an insurance claim. Keep receipts and a list of serial numbers where possible.
- It costs approximately \$30 per year to individually insure about \$1000 worth of goods (not including the cost of appraisal).
- Make sure you have the contents of your apartment covered for their replacement cost and not a depreciated value.
- Many plans do not cover flooding, or reimburse little for damages due to flooding, so shop around.

Resources:

Insurance Bureau of Canada - <http://www.ibc.ca/nb/home/rental-properties/tenant-insurance>

# Housemates & Cooperative Cohabitation

When living with others, you should consider discussing items such as cleaning schedules and responsibilities, sharing items in the unit, study habits, sleep patterns, guests, and noise expectations. Try to have everyone meet each other, and make sure that everyone is comfortable. Communication and flexibility are key for successful housemate relations.

## Housemate Agreement Form

It is a good idea for everyone to put down all agreements in writing with signatures at the bottom. You may want to create this housemate agreement form shortly after all parties have moved in. At the end of this document you'll find a template housemate agreement form that you can adapt to fit your own particular needs and agreements. It is also a good idea to agree upon a timeframe to revisit the agreement and create amendments as need be.

## Have Ongoing Communication

One of the most crucial elements of maintaining good housemate relations is regular and open communication. If you are all too busy to regularly touch base on issues, schedule times to sit down and talk. It is also a good idea to discuss differences in communication styles, as people do communicate differently.

While leaving notes or messages on whiteboards might appear to be an easy solution with no confrontation, the absence of tone and body language can easily create misunderstandings and lead to passive aggressiveness.

## Mediation

If there are issues that you are unable to resolve with your housemates, you might want to consider mediation. St. Stephen's Community House provides a free conflict resolution service that will help roommates talk to each other and work out a solution with a team of neutral mediators.

St. Stephen's Community House  
91 Bellevue Ave, Toronto, ON  
416-926-8221 ext.224

[http://www.ststephenshouse.com/crs\\_pages/crs\\_mediation.shtml](http://www.ststephenshouse.com/crs_pages/crs_mediation.shtml)

## Information for International and Out-of-Province Students

Some students prefer to have long-term housing arranged before arriving in Toronto. Although this can provide peace of mind, we do not advise you to enter into a rental agreement without inspecting the unit and meeting the landlord in person.

We encourage you to arrange for temporary housing when you first arrive in Toronto so that you can have time to inspect potential rental houses for yourself. A list of temporary housing can be found at: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hs/temporary>. You can also contact our office for a list of hotels nearby Scarborough campus.

### Receipts

Despite not being Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada, all international students are encouraged to file a tax return with the Canada Revenue Agency. Many students living off-campus don't realize that rent payments for off-campus housing are considered to be tax deductible expenses. However, to include rent payments as an expense in your tax claim, you must have proper receipts from your landlord.

A rent receipt must include at least the following information:

- the address of the rental unit;
- the name of the tenant(s) to whom the receipt applies;
- the amount and date for each payment received for any rent, rent deposit, arrears of rent, or any other amount paid to the landlord and shall set out what the payment was for;
- the name of the landlord; and
- The signature of the landlord or the landlord's agent.

### Rent payments

Never make any rental payments with cash. Instead, making payment by cheque, money order, or online email transfers provide you with proof of payment other than a receipt issued by your landlord. It's important to have as much evidence of payment as possible in case disputes ever develop. Personal cheque is always the best option as it provides you with a few days grace to contact your bank and stop payment if necessary.

### Post-dated cheques

Postdated cheques can be suggested, but a landlord cannot refuse to rent a unit if you are unwilling to pay by postdated cheque. It is against the Residential Tenancies Act for the landlord to require you to pay by postdated cheque or other forms of automatic payment.

### **Guarantors**

Your potential landlord may ask for a guarantor. A guarantor is a person who can guarantee that your rent will be paid every month. A guarantor must have an account or credit history with a Canadian bank.

If you do not have a guarantor, you will need to open a bank account at a Canadian bank to prove that you have enough money to pay your rent.

If you need to open an account with a Canadian bank, it may require you to have:

- A passport
- A study permit issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- University of Toronto Student Card

Once the account has been opened, you can ask for a letter from the bank detailing the date your account was opened, the funds available, and your good standing with the bank. It may also be helpful to get a letter from the University of Toronto stating the duration of your study, including any funding you may have.

### **Legal Status**

Your landlord or potential landlord is not allowed to ask for your legal status in the country, including your Social Insurance Number (SIN).

## Legal Information

### *The Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)*

The RTA is the provincial legislation that governs the relationship of residential landlords and tenants in Ontario. Your rental accommodation may be an apartment, a house, or a room in a rooming, lodging or boarding house. These units are covered under the RTA.

However, if you share a bathroom and/or kitchen with the owner or the owner's immediate family, your living accommodations will not be covered under the RTA. If you are planning to look for this type of accommodation, consider developing some "House Rules" that can cover many of the points discussed in this guide. Ideally, these should be negotiated and signed as part of your original discussions with the owner.

The Landlord and Tenant Board is a quasi-judicial agency, set up under the RTA to provide information about the Act, and to resolve tenancy disputes either through mediation or adjudication. The Landlord and Tenant Board also provides landlords and tenants with information about the rights and obligations each has under the RTA.

Recommended reading:

Information for New Tenants, *Landlord and Tenant Board*:

<http://www.sjto.gov.on.ca/documents/lrb/Brochures/Information%20for%20New%20Tenants.html>

### *Lease Agreements and Related Concerns*

A lease, tenancy, or rental agreement is a contract granting use or occupation of property during a specified time for a specified payment. A lease may be written, verbal or implied (e.g. through the payment of rent). All are equally binding and can only be terminated in accordance with the RTA. The difficulty, however, for anyone relying on an oral agreement always lies in proving exactly what was agreed to. As a rule, always get any important agreements in writing. If the lease is in writing, it must include the legal name and address of the landlord, and you are entitled to receive a copy of the lease within 21 days. Never sign anything you do not understand!

As of April 30, 2018, landlords of most private residential units in Ontario must use the standard lease template produced by the provincial government. The lease agreement template is available at: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page18704.aspx>

### **Same or Separate Leases**

Under most tenancy agreements, if a group of people are all on the same lease, each person is responsible to the landlord for the entire rental amount. Your obligation to the landlord is

referred to as being “joint and several” in nature. If one of your housemates fails to pay their share of the rent, the landlord can look to the remaining housemates to make up the difference and will be in a position to begin eviction proceedings. It would then be your responsibility to pursue the defaulting housemate for their share of the rent. (It is best to seek legal advice concerning potential actions by the landlord and your rights against the defaulting housemate. Contact the SHRL Office for details about who to contact for legal advice.)

If all tenants have separate leases, you are only responsible for the payment of the amount specified in your lease and the landlord can take no further action against you.

### **Terms**

Prior to signing, a prospective tenant is free to negotiate the terms of the lease with the owner. You can amend a lease by deleting or adding sections and then having all parties to the lease initial the change(s). However, it is important to remember that the RTA will override any provisions of the lease that are contrary to the Act. If you are confused as to whether a provision in a lease is permissible under the law, you should contact Student Housing & Residence Life Office prior to signing a lease.

### **Offer or Application to Lease**

Often offers to lease and applications to lease contain wording requiring you to sign other documents, such as a “lease in the landlord’s standard form”, if your application is accepted. Insist on seeing these forms and understanding them prior to submitting your initial application or offer. This will allow you to better understand what you are getting into, negotiate better terms if possible, or seek legal advice. Remember, landlords of most private residential units in Ontario must now use the standard lease form.

### **Length of Lease**

Most landlords want students to sign a lease for 12 months (the “term” of the lease) because it can be difficult finding tenants for the summer months. You can try negotiating a shorter term, or alternatively, suggesting a reduced rent over the summer months; remember to always ensure such agreements are contained in the written lease contract.

If you decide to stay in the same apartment for a second year, you do not need to sign a renewal for a whole other year. You can continue to stay there after your original lease term expires on a month-to-month basis on the same terms and conditions that are in the expired tenancy agreement. Just note that a landlord can increase the rent every 12 months (with 90 days’ written notice and only by the guideline set out by the government each year).

Since some students only require housing for 8 months in the year (the Fall and Winter semesters), they opt to sublet their accommodation. (There are more details to follow in the section below regarding subletting).

### **Hidden Costs and Obligations**

Any term in a lease that does not contradict the RTA may be valid. Therefore, it is important to review a lease very carefully. Pay particular attention utility costs. For example, are you expected to pay for the water heater rental, or a portion of the hydro costs for the common areas such as laundry rooms and hallways? Whose responsibility is it to make sure the furnace is cleaned and, if necessary, repaired? Check to see what your responsibilities are in connection with the outdoor maintenance of the premises. Again, before you sign the lease agreement, be sure you understand it in full, and seek legal advice if you do not.

Ontario Standard Lease template: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page18704.aspx>

### ***End of Tenancy – Giving Notice***

All tenancies are terminated by giving the landlord \*appropriate written notice of termination. Even when a tenancy is for a fixed term (e.g. a year), it is still necessary to give the landlord written notice in advance of your departure at the end of your tenancy. The notice must be in writing; it must be signed by you; it must identify the address in question; and it must state the date on which the tenancy is to end.

#### **\* Appropriate Amount of Notice**

The amount of notice you must give depends on the type of tenancy you have:

- A month-to-month tenancy requires at least 60 days' written notice, specified to be effective on the last day of the month of the rental period (e.g. notice should be given by March 1st to end a tenancy on April 30th, if the rent is paid on the first of the month.)
- A tenancy for a fixed term (e.g. 1 year) requires at least 60 days' written notice specified to be effective on the expiration date of the tenancy agreement. You cannot simply give the landlord 60 days' notice part way through the term. The termination date cannot be earlier than the expiration date on the lease. If a notice is late, the tenant is advised to contact the landlord to determine whether or not s/he will accept the late notice. If the landlord refuses to accept the notice on the grounds that it was late, the student could seek legal advice, or alternatively, provide notice which otherwise complies with the minimum notice requirements under the Act.

When the term of your lease expires and if you simply move out without giving notice, you will be responsible under the original lease terms until the lease is properly terminated. Because your tenancy continues as a month-to-month tenancy, you may be liable for additional rental payments and for any other obligations under the lease.

### **Can You Leave Early?**

Generally, tenants must abide by the notice of termination provisions discussed above.

A tenant with a one-year lease must wait for the end of the term discussed above and provide the landlord with the appropriate notice. There are a few exceptions:

- The landlord and the tenant can agree in writing to end the tenancy before the end of the lease
- Sometimes a landlord may be willing to accept a cash settlement (be sure to get this type of agreement in writing)
- The tenant may be able to assign the lease to another person or terminate the lease early if the landlord will not permit assignments (You are required to consent from your landlord if you will be assigning the lease)
- The tenant may, with the landlord's consent, sublet the premises (although this will not relieve them of their obligations to the landlord)
- A tenant may have grounds (e.g. substantial lack of repair, substantial interference with the enjoyment of the unit, etc.) to ask the Landlord and Tenant Board to terminate the lease.
- Since 2016, tenants who are victims of sexual and domestic violence can end their tenancy in 28 days if they believe they or a child living with them may be harmed or injured if they do not leave the unit.

It is best to seek legal advice in these circumstances. If a tenant abandons the premises, the landlord can take action against the tenant and his guarantor, if any, for unpaid rent for the remainder of the lease, or until such time as a replacement tenant is found. As well, a tenant may be liable for interest and the landlord's costs in obtaining the amount owed.

### **Assigning the Lease**

When you assign your tenancy, you transfer all of your future rights and obligations under the original lease agreement to the new tenant. A tenant must have their landlord's consent to



assign a lease. A landlord may permit assignments but reject a particular assignee, as long as they are not acting arbitrarily or unreasonably. A tenant may have the right to terminate a lease (with proper notice) if a landlord refuses to allow assignments. If you assign a lease without the consent of the landlord, the landlord may negotiate a new tenancy agreement with the person now occupying the residence. It is best to obtain legal advice in these circumstances.

### **Re-signing a Lease**

Your landlord cannot force you to sign a new lease or a renewal. At the end of the term you are automatically deemed to have renewed your lease as a monthly tenancy agreement on the same terms and conditions as your old lease, except for any permitted rent increases. This gives you more flexibility in terminating your lease the following spring. Of course, it also means that the landlord will have greater flexibility in terminating your agreement, if he or she has adequate reasons, as required by the RTA.

### **Termination of Tenancy by Landlord**

Your landlord cannot terminate the tenancy against your wishes unless he or she has grounds under the RTA and has given you the required notice.

Your landlord must have a valid reason, as outlined in the RTA, for regaining possession of the property. Some of the grounds on which a landlord may give notice of termination are:

- Conversion of the premises to other than rental residential use
- Repairs or renovations so extensive as to require a building permit and vacant possession of the premises
- Demolition
- The landlord, or a purchaser of the property from the landlord, genuinely requires the premises for his own occupancy or that of a marriage partner or their children or parents
- The tenant has persistently failed to pay rent on the date it became due and payable

### ***Eviction***

Some of the grounds on which a landlord may give notice of termination are:

- Non-payment of rent

- Undue damage to the premises
- Carrying on an illegal activity or business
- Conduct by the tenant (or another occupant of the unit or a person permitted in the building by the tenant) which substantially interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of the premises by the landlord or other tenants
- Impairment of the safety or other lawful rights of other tenants in the premise
- Allowing too many people on the premises on a continuing basis in contravention of health, safety or housing standards

If you receive a notice of termination, you should seek legal advice immediately. If the tenant remedies some of the grounds for the complaint, you do not have to move out on the termination date. If you do not move out, the landlord must apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board for an order to evict you. The landlord must inform the tenant that the tenant is entitled to dispute an application for an order terminating the tenancy and evicting the tenant.

### *Subletting*

Many tenants often try to sublet their apartments when they wish to move before the end of their lease term or to help cover expenses while they are away for the summer. You cannot charge the subtenant more rent than you pay the landlord.

It is important to remember that the original tenant remains liable to the landlord for any breaches under the terms of their lease. When you sublet, you remain ultimately responsible to the landlord for your obligations under the original lease, and your rights under the lease return to you when the period of subletting is over. Therefore, if a subtenant does not pay their rent or damage caused to the property, the tenant may find themselves paying the landlord and then chasing after the subtenant for reimbursement.

You do need your landlord's consent to sublet. However, the landlord may not "arbitrarily or unreasonably" withhold his or her consent. The landlord can charge you for "reasonable out-of-pocket expenses" incurred in giving his consent to the subletting. You are entitled to an itemized list of such expenses and if you feel they are unreasonable, you may apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board to have the amount examined. It is advisable to obtain the landlord's written consent. It is always preferable to sign a sublet agreement with the subtenant. In the event that you ever have to sue a subtenant for unpaid rent, a written agreement will provide proof of your arrangements.

# Money Matters

## *Deposits*

According to the RTA, it is legal for a landlord to ask you for a deposit equal to only one month's rent. The landlord must obtain the rent deposit on or before entering into the tenancy agreement. This deposit can only be used towards the last month's rent. This deposit provides the landlord with some security in the event that a tenant leaves the premises prior to the termination date. Additional deposits, including prepayment of first month's rent, "damage deposit", "cleaning deposit", etc. are not permitted. Always ask for a receipt when you pay a rent deposit. The landlord may ask you for "first and last months' rent". This is a shorthand way of confirming that at the start of the lease you will be paying both the rental deposit and the first months' rent.

A landlord can ask for a deposit on keys or pass cards but the amount must be refunded with the return of the keys or pass cards at the end of the tenancy, and cannot exceed the expected costs of replacing the keys or pass cards.

\* The landlord must pay you interest on your last month's deposit, the percentage is based on a guideline set each year by the Provincial Government. The interest must be paid to you yearly, even if you continue to live in the premises. If you requested this and your landlord did not comply, you are entitled to deduct this amount from your next rent cheque.

## *Rent*

A tenant is responsible for paying the full rent when it is due. If the lease says the rent is due on the first of the month, then it is late as of 12:01 a.m. on the second day of the month. Overdue rent is often called "arrear of rent". If you know you will be late with a rent payment, you should discuss the problem with the landlord. Sometimes a landlord may agree to defer a payment but this is entirely at the discretion of the landlord.

If a tenant is late with a rent payment a landlord may give them a notice of termination. If the tenant rents month-to-month or has a lease, at least 14 days' notice of termination must be given. The tenant can avoid eviction by paying the full amount of the arrears of rent before the termination date. If the tenant does not pay the arrears the landlord can apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board to evict them. If you are persistently late in the payment of your rent the landlord may give you a notice of termination even if you are not currently in arrears. In this situation, you should seek legal advice to ensure that your rights as a tenant are protected.

The landlord cannot, without an order of the Landlord and Tenant Board or a court, seize a tenant's property for default in the payment of rent or for the breach of any other obligation of the tenant.

### *Rent Payments*

A landlord cannot insist that you do the following:

- Pay twelve months rent in eight months
- Pay by post-dated cheques
- Pay some rent in advance (except for last month's rent)

Also, be aware that if you pay rent in advance and the building is sold you may have the new owners asking to be paid again!

### *Rent Increases*

When you move into an apartment you will have to negotiate the rent. There is no limit to what a landlord can charge. However, after your new rent is set, the limits for future rent increases are set out in the RTA.

Generally, your landlord can increase the rent every 12 months. Your landlord must give you at least 90 days' written notice of an increase in the proper format.

Usually, the rent can only be increased by the guideline set each year by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. However, the rent can be increased by more than the guideline in certain circumstances. If you receive a notice that the landlord is applying to increase the rent above the guidelines you should seek legal advice. The rent increase guideline for 2018 is 1.8%.

### *Rent Reduction*

Under the RTA a tenant can apply for a rent reduction if:

- The landlord does not make repairs or improvements which they have undertaken to complete, or fails to provide services that were agreed to as a condition of an agreement to increase the rent

- There is a decrease in municipal taxes/charges by more than the prescribed percentage
- A service or facility is reduced or removed and the landlord has not reduced the rent

## Maintenance and Repair Issues

### *State of Repair When You Begin Renting*

Discuss the condition of the apartment before you agree to lease. If the landlord promises to replace, clean, fix or paint anything, put it in the lease before you sign it (no matter how trivial it may seem), including a due date for completion. You may also want to include a clause permitting you to inspect the premises prior to the commencement of the lease to ensure that the work is complete and allowing you to withdraw from the lease agreement without penalty and with reimbursement of your deposit if you are not satisfied.

It is the landlord's responsibility to remove any garbage and remaining items left by the previous tenant. When moving in it is always a good idea to inspect the premises with the landlord and record the condition of the premises including the walls, rugs and screens in the windows. You do not want to be held responsible for any pre-existing damages to the premises.

### *Condition of the Premises While You Live There*

As a tenant, you are responsible for the "ordinary cleanliness" of your premises. As well, you are responsible for any damage to the premises caused either deliberately or negligently by you, other occupants of your apartment, or anyone whom you permit on the premises. Undue damage to the rented premises may be grounds for eviction. You may have further obligations or restrictions contained in your lease. For example, the lease may provide that you can only repaint the apartment using a white colour. Furthermore, you need to clarify up front with the landlord, whose responsibility it will be for snow-shoveling and grass cutting, since there are city by-laws governing these situations.

### *Repairs*

A landlord is responsible for maintaining your premises in a good state of repair and fit for habitation, and for complying with all health, safety, and housing and maintenance standards. If an issue arises, the first step is to talk to your landlord about your maintenance problems. Follow this up with a letter and be sure to keep a copy.

If the landlord does not respond in a reasonable period of time, contact the City of Toronto Apartment Standards Office (<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/housing-shelter/apartment-building-standards/rentsafeto-for-tenants/>) request an inspection. If an inspector finds that the repairs are necessary, a work order may be issued, listing the repairs that must be completed by a specified date. In addition, a tenant may file an application for an

abatement in rent or the Landlord and Tenant Board may order the landlord to carry out the repairs.

Unless it is a true emergency, it is best to apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board for an order authorizing the repair. Withholding rent or deducting the costs of the repairs (without court authorization) may result in the landlord applying for a notice of termination for non-payment of rent.

If one thing breaks the moment something else is fixed, you can apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board for an order to terminate your lease for lack of repairs. The Landlord and Tenant Board will need proof that you notified the landlord and gave him or her a reasonable time to remedy the situation. However, unless the circumstances are extreme, the Landlord and Tenant Board will be reluctant to grant an early termination. It would be best to seek legal advice in these circumstances.

It is very important to maintain good record-keeping when living in your own place.

Keep written records of utilities, canceled rent cheques (individually or as a group), a log of repairs (including number of calls – with dates – to the landlord), as well as the name, address and telephone number of the landlord or property manager. All housemates should have access to this file.

### *Vital Services*

It is illegal for a landlord to disrupt the reasonable supply of vital services to a tenant such as heat, electricity, natural gas or hot/cold water. If you are unable to control your temperature and it drops below 21 degrees Celsius, contact your landlord and notify him or her of the situation.

### *State of Repair When You Leave*

First, look at the terms of your lease. Usually, you are not responsible for “ordinary wear and tear”. So if the damage is minor (e.g. nail holes for pictures) you are probably not responsible. If you have made “improvements” (e.g. painting and wall papering) without the consent of the landlord, or if your lease prohibits this activity, the landlord is within his rights to insist that you remove or correct the “improvements” and restore the premises to their original condition.

Please note:

- You should do a general cleaning before leaving.
- You should remove and dispose of items appropriately or you could be charged by your landlord.

## Other Issues Covered Under the Residential Tenancies Act

### **Your Right to Privacy**

The RTA has a number of rules to protect the privacy of tenants. A landlord can enter a rental unit only in the following circumstances:

- A landlord can enter a unit without written notice if there is an emergency or if the tenant consents to the entry at the time of entry
- After either a landlord or a tenant has given a notice of termination, the landlord may (after notifying or attempting to notify the tenant in advance) enter a unit without written notice between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. to show the premises to potential tenants
- A landlord may enter a unit, after providing 24hrs written notice and between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (a) to make repairs or to do work in the unit (b) to allow a potential mortgagee, insurer, or purchaser to inspect the premises or (c) for any other good reason as set out in the lease

There are special provisions in the RTA if the landlord has agreed to clean the unit.

### **Number of Housemates**

If you would like to add another housemate to the bunch, the RTA does not prohibit a tenant from taking any additional housemates, so long as the number of persons continuously occupying the premises does not violate housing, safety, or health standards or any other by-law. (Check with the City of Toronto by-law office for more information.) In other words, your landlord cannot charge you an extra \$75 a month for your friend to live there. If the new housemate regularly pays rent directly to the landlord, an implied tenancy may be created. Otherwise, the new housemate may have no relationship with the landlord and may be dependent solely on their agreement, often verbal, with the existing tenants. In no event can the landlord increase the rental payments during the term of the lease based upon the number of occupants.

### **The Party Problem**

If your housemates have wild parties and have already been warned by the landlord that he or she will take steps to evict you if it happens again, the landlord may give notice of termination of tenancy. This can be done if the conduct of a tenant, another occupant of the rental unit, or a person permitted into the residence is such that it “substantially interferes” with the



reasonable enjoyment of the residential premises by the landlord or another tenant. Furthermore, the landlord may be able to take legal action if the excessive noise is bothering the neighbours, which could be in violation of noise by-laws.

## **Discrimination**

The Ontario Human Rights Code makes it against the law for landlords to refuse to rent to you because of your race, sex, sexual orientation, age, colour, nationality, religion, or place of origin. As well, they cannot discriminate against you because you are disabled, single, married, living common-law, receiving public assistance, or because one or more of your children live with you. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please inform our office, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal at [www.hrto.ca](http://www.hrto.ca), and the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (CERA) at [www.equalityrights.org/cera/](http://www.equalityrights.org/cera/).

You can also obtain advice and guidance from the following University of Toronto offices:

- Equity and Diversity Office <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca> Works to ensure an environment free of biases based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship or creed and where the individual feels entitled to treatment which is dignified and respectful.
- Community Safety Office: <http://www.communitysafety.utoronto.ca> Coordinates ongoing education and outreach initiatives directed at improving personal safety and security on campus.
- University of Toronto Safety <http://safety.utoronto.ca>

## **Locks**

A landlord can change the locks only if they supply a key to the tenant. A tenant cannot change the locks without the landlord's consent.

## **Guests**

A landlord cannot interfere with a tenant's reasonable enjoyment of a rental unit for all usual purposes. As well, a landlord cannot harass, obstruct, coerce, threaten or interfere with a tenant.

## **Pets**

The RTA provides that a provision in a lease prohibiting pets is of no effect. However, it may still be a problem if your pet is substantially interfering with the reasonable enjoyment of the

premises or is a dangerous breed. You may also run into trouble if the landlord or another tenant has serious allergies and is being affected by your pet. As well, local by-laws may prohibit certain species or the number of pets permitted. A landlord may evict a tenant with a pet under certain circumstances.

While on the topic, please remember that if you decide to adopt a pet, it is a long-term commitment – not just for the eight months while you’re attending school. Every year, the local animal shelters are overflowing with abandoned pets from students who have decided they no longer want the responsibility of owning an animal, or are returning to another city or country. Please act compassionately.

## **Landlord Rights**

The RTA provides that tenants will not “harass, obstruct, coerce, threaten or interfere” with the landlord. Conduct that substantially interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of the premises by the landlord or other tenants, or which impairs the safety or other rights of other tenants may be grounds for eviction under the RTA. As well, the RTA contains a list of offenses that may be reported to The Investigation Unit of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. These offenses include changing the locks without the landlord’s consent and interfering with a landlord in the exercising of his/her rights under the RTA.

## **The Commute**

### *Public Transit Details*

#### **The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)**

The TTC is a public transportation system that serves Torontonians through its network of subway lines, busses, and streetcars. For a complete map of the system, see [http://www3.ttc.ca/Routes/General\\_Information/Maps/index.jsp](http://www3.ttc.ca/Routes/General_Information/Maps/index.jsp)

It is helpful to use the TTC’s trip planner function (or even GoogleMaps) when planning how to get from potential rental places to school and back: [http://www.ttc.ca/Trip\\_planner/index.jsp](http://www.ttc.ca/Trip_planner/index.jsp)

#### **Go Transit**

GO Transit is Ontario’s interregional public transit system, linking Toronto with the surrounding regions of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). For a map of Go Transit’s network of busses and trains, please see <https://www.gotransit.com/en>.

## *Transit Safety*

### **Take Care When Walking to or from a Transit Stop**

- Walk with confidence and be alert to your surroundings. Avoid distractions such as texting and playing loud music with headphones, especially at night.
- Avoid taking short cuts or walking in unlit areas.
- Be aware of places where you can get help on your route, like open stores, restaurants, and public telephones.
- Plan ahead.

### **Use "Request Stop" at Night**

Persons travelling alone on TTC buses between 9:00pm and 5:00am can use the Request Stop program. Here's how it works:

- Request Stop allows an individual to get off the bus at locations between regular TTC stops.
- Tell the driver at least one TTC stop ahead of where you want to get off. The driver must be able to stop safely in order to meet your request.
- Leave the bus by the front doors. The rear doors will remain closed so that no one can follow you off the bus.
- Note: Request Stop is not available on streetcar routes.

### **Report It**

If you are the victim of a crime, it is important that you immediately report it to a TTC or GO Transit employee, Transit Special Constable, or Toronto Police Officer. Try to provide detailed information about the incident such as suspect description, date, time, location and, if possible, TTC or GO Transit vehicle number.

## Living in the Community

While living off-campus can bring a sense of freedom and independence to some, it also brings a whole new set of responsibilities to your housemates, your neighbours, and to the Scarborough community.

The University of Toronto Scarborough is serious about its responsibilities both for and to its students in the wider community. This means the University offers what support it can for students living off-campus, and also expects students to represent the University well in the way they live and act in the community. Students, whether on- or off-campus, are members of the University of Toronto community, with both the rights and responsibilities that University membership involves.

### **Good neighbour tips:**

- Introduce yourself & be friendly
- Follow parking and traffic rules
  - o <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/>
- Follow garbage/recycling schedules and rules
  - o Can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/recycling-organics-garbage/>
- Take care of your yard
- Use discretion
- Be mindful of your noise levels
- Plan parties responsibly
- Handle problems politely

### *Community Safety*

UofT Scarborough Community Police Service offers a number of programs to help promote security and safety. Programs to be aware of include:

#### **UofT Scarborough Patrol Services – Travel Safer program:**

A building patrol or Campus Police officer can travel with you at any time of day or night on campus, including to the parking lot or at the on-campus bus loop. Call ahead to 416-287-7022 to arrange for a travel escort. <http://www.uts.utoronto.ca/police/travel-safer>

**Community Safety Office**

This office offers consultation and training workshops on safety and related issues on a variety of topics such as: dealing with difficult behaviour, online safety, criminal harassment, and creating a respectful workplace. The office will offer self-defense training courses as well.

Contact the Community Safety Office at 416-978-1485. Information is available at:

<http://www.communitysafety.utoronto.ca/about-us.htm>.

**UTSC Community Police**

Emergency phone: (416) 978-2222

**Campus Community Police**

University of Toronto Scarborough

1265 Military Trail

Science Wing, Room SW 304

Toronto, Ontario

M1C 1A4 CANADA

Non-emergency: (416) 287-7398

[campuspolice@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:campuspolice@utsc.utoronto.ca)

***Break-Ins***

To protect your house from a break-in, make sure that there are working locks on all the doors and windows and always lock the house when you leave. If you're going home for holidays or away for Reading Week you may want to invest in a timer for your lights. Have a trusted neighbour or friend keep an eye on the house for you.

If your house has been broken into, go to a neighbour's house to call the police (911) Don't touch anything. Then call a friend to wait with you until the police arrive.

***Fire Safety***

Your landlord is required by law to ensure that the house is safe, and that there is a working smoke detector on each floor as well as a fire extinguisher. It's important to have a carbon monoxide detector as well. If you have serious concerns about the fire safety of your accommodation, contact Toronto's Fire Prevention Division at 416-338-9050 for information on fire safety standards, prevention and inspections.

## *Health and Safety*

If you've noticed evidence of pests or vermin (e.g. mouse droppings) in your accommodation, call your landlord first. If your landlord is not able or willing to call an exterminator or solve the problem in some other way, then call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

## *Exploring the Community*

### *Bike Paths*

Exploring the community by bike (prior to snowfall) is a great way to get familiar with a large area in a short time. While it's safe to bike on roads when being cautious, Toronto also has a network of bike paths to take advantage of. To view all of the bike paths in the city, see:

<http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/map/index.htm>

### *Shopping*

Scarborough Town Centre Mall  
300 Borough Drive

Kennedy Commons Mall  
Kennedy & William Kitchen Road (just below  
Kennedy & Highway 401)

Morningside Crossings Mall  
255 Morningside Avenue

Wal-Mart  
799 Milner Avenue

Parkway Mall  
85 Ellesmere Road

### *Grocery Stores*

Food Basics  
2900 Ellesmere Road

No Frills  
4473 Kingston Rd

Wal-Mart  
799 Milner Avenue

Fusion Supermarket  
1150 Morningside Ave

## *Banks*

CIBC

Nearest ATM:

Sunoco Gas

800 Morningside Avenue

MAC's (Centenary Plaza)

2862 Ellesmere Road

Nearest branches:

371 Old Kingston Road

255 Morningside Avenue

TD

255 Morningside Avenue

3487 Kingston Road

RBC

4410 Kingston Road

Scotiabank

Nearest ATM:

2 locations at UofT Scarborough

Nearest branch:

4509 Kingston Road

HSBC

4438 Sheppard Avenue East

## *Clinics, Pharmacies, & Other Health Locations*

The Doctor's Office (Walk-In)

4410 Kingston Road (Swiss Chalet Plaza)

416.284.1020

Malvern Medical Centre

#100-1333 Neilson Road

416.291.7719

After Hours Clinic (Walk In)

@Rouge Valley Health Centre

2867 Ellesmere Road

416.281.8618

CMC Medical Clinic

Milner Medical Centre

857 Milner Avenue

416.287.3611

Health Advice

TeleHealth Ontario

24 hours / day; 7 days / week

1.866.797.0000

Ellesmere X-ray

2880 Ellesmere Road (Food Basics Mall)

416.284.1697

Mental Health

Mobile Crisis Program

The Scarborough Hospital

416.289.2434

Food Basics Pharmacy

2900 Ellesmere Road

416.281.0505

Morrish Pharmacy

3600 Ellesmere Rd., Unit #7

(Ellesmere & Morrish)

416.287.6674

### *Entertainment*

Cineplex Odeon  
799 Milner

Fossil & Haggis  
730 Military Trail

Boston Pizza  
785 Milner Ave

Swiss Chalet  
853 Milner Ave

Kelsey's  
50 Cinemart Drive

Amazing Ted's  
362 Old Kingston Rd

Fratelli's Village Pizzeria  
384 Old Kingston Road

### *Postal Outlets*

Highland Creek Guardian Drugs & Postal Outlet  
364 Old Kingston Road

MAC's Centenary Postal Outlet  
2872 Ellesmere Road

West Hill Pharmacy Inc and Postal Outlet  
4410 Kingston Road

Shoppers Drug Mart Postal Outlet  
Scarborough Town Centre



## Independent Living Tips

### *Suggested Purchases*

- A fold-up shopping cart (for groceries as well as taking laundry to the laundromat)
- A broom, dustpan and vacuum
- A box of baking soda to keep one in the fridge to absorb odours
- A first aid kit
- Light bulbs
- Dishcloth/towel and dish soap
- Pots and pans, baking sheet(s)
- Containers with lids (for dry goods - cereals, pastas, left-overs). This is a deterrent for bugs and mice
- Can opener and cork screw
- Oven mitts
- Cleaning supplies and sponges for floors, mirrors, bathtub, toilet and sink
- Garbage bags
- Waste baskets and recycling containers
- Flashlight and spare batteries; candles (for power outages)
- An iron & ironing board
- A screwdriver and a hammer
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Shower curtain
- Bulletin board for posting utility bills to be paid, notes, phone messages, etc.

## On-Campus Services and Resources

AccessAbility Services	SW302	416.287.7560
Academic Advising & Career Centre	AC213	416.287.7561
Admissions & Student Recruitment	AA128	416.287.7529
Athletics	Recreation Centre	416.283.3211
Bookstore	3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor B Wing	416.724.8213
CopyKats (printing)	SW209	416.287.7384
EMRG (Emergency Medical Response Group)	BV306	416.287.4883
Financial Aid	AA142	416.287.7001
Health & Wellness Centre	SL270	416.287.7065
International Student Centre	SL151	416.287.7518
Parking Office	SW303	416.287.7576
Registrar's Office	AA142	416.287.7001
Student Housing & Residence Life	Residence Centre	416.287.7365
Scarborough College Students Union	SL108	416.287.7047
Student Affairs Office	SL157	416.208.4760
Vincent Bladen Library	ARC	416-287-7482
Women's Centre	SL224	416.287.7024
Writing Centre	AC210	416.287.7480

### UTSC Community Police Services

EMERGENCIES	SW304	416.978.2222
General Inquiries		416.287.7398
Community Safety Office		416.978.1485

## Off-Campus Services and Resources

### *Landlord and Tenant Board*

The Landlord and Tenant Board provides information about, and answers questions regarding the Residential Tenancies Act.

Toronto - Toronto South Regional Office  
79 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 212  
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M6

Toronto - Toronto North Regional Office  
47 Sheppard Avenue East, Suite 700  
Toronto, Ontario M2N 5X5

Toronto East - Durham Regional Office  
2275 Midland Avenue, Unit 2  
Toronto, Ontario M1P 3E7

They can be reached at 1-888-332-3234 or at <http://www.sjto.gov.on.ca/lrb/>

### *Tenant Legal Advice*

Downtown Legal Services (DLS)  
655 Spadina  
Toronto, ON

<http://downtownlegalservices.ca/>

Intake line: 416-978-6447

General inquiries: 416 934-4535

DLS is a community legal clinic providing service to University of Toronto full-time and part-time undergraduate students. This service is also available to anyone who meets Legal Aid Ontario's financial

and geographic eligibility criteria. Clients are seen by appointment only and no advice is given over the phone. They do not see people on a drop-in basis.

Federation of Metro Tenants  
27 Carlton Street, Suite 500  
Toronto, ON  
[hotline@torontotenants.org](mailto:hotline@torontotenants.org)  
[www.torontotenants.org](http://www.torontotenants.org)  
416-921-9494

This service will give advice over the phone. If the line is busy, keep calling or try at another time. If you are unsure of the terms of your rental agreement, it would be wise to call them before you finalize it.

Advocacy Centre for Tenants  
[www.acto.ca](http://www.acto.ca)

The Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO) works to better the housing situation of Ontario residents. It does not provide individual service to tenants. It also runs the Tenant Duty Counsel Program (TDCP), which provides information and limited legal assistance to eligible tenants appearing at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

### *Toronto City Services*

City of Toronto By-laws  
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/index.htm>

City of Toronto Safety & Fire Prevention  
<http://www.toronto.ca/fire/prevention/index.htm>

Toronto Public Health  
Monday to Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
416-338-7600  
[publichealth@toronto.ca](mailto:publichealth@toronto.ca)  
<http://www.toronto.ca/health/>

City of Toronto Apartment Standards Office  
<http://www.toronto.ca/apartmentstandards/home.htm>

# Terminology

**Accessible:** Refers to the ability to access the apartment by a wheelchair.

**A/C:** Air conditioning.

**All Inclusive or Utilities included:** "All inclusive" generally means that all of the utility costs are included in the rental fee amount. These utilities may include, but are not limited to: electricity costs, water usage costs, electric heating costs, and natural gas heating costs. Generally, the costs for telephone lines, including long-distance charges, internet connections and cable television are not included in an "all inclusive" arrangement, but it is always recommended that you clarify what the term "all inclusive" actually includes.

**Appl:** Appliances - could mean refrigerator, stove, clothes washer, clothes dryer, dishwasher.

**Assign:** Transfer legal obligation to someone else, such as transferring responsibility for a lease to someone else.

**Bachelor Apartment:** An apartment consisting of one room serving as bedroom and living room, with a separate bathroom.

**Bachelorette:** A very small bachelor apartment.

**Basement Apartment:** Located in the basement of a house. Because it is below ground, it doesn't usually have as much light as a first-floor apartment, but is cheaper. It is usually cooler in summer. Beware of damp or moldy basements, especially if you have asthma or other breathing problems.

**BR or bdrm:** Bedroom, an enclosed room for sleeping.

**Cable:** The term "cable" refers to "Cable Television" and is a service that is purchased from a cable television provider, giving the tenant access to many television channels.

**Can be furnished:** This means the landlord can provide some furniture if the tenant needs/wants it. If not stipulated in the ad, you should check with the landlord to see what furniture he/she can provide. If you do not have much furniture, it may save you money to be able to use what the landlord already has.

**Eviction:** Getting someone to leave housing he or she has been occupying. Evictions must be authorized by the Landlord & Tenant Board.

**Flat:** An apartment in a house. The front entrance may be shared with other tenants but usually you have a lockable door to your flat.

Fridge: Refrigerator

Furn: Furnished. You may need clarification as to which furniture is included.

Highrise: An apartment or condominium building that is six or more storeys high.

Homestay: A form of tourism and/or study abroad program that allows the visitor to rent a room from a local family to better learn the local lifestyle as well as improve their language ability.

Hrdwd: Hardwood floors.

Hydro: Refers to electricity.

Lease required: A lease is a legally binding agreement between the landlord and the tenant. In Ontario, a verbal tenancy agreement is as binding as a written one.

LGBTQ positive: The household has identified itself as being open to lesbian, gay, transgendered, bisexual, and queer individuals.

Loft bedroom: The bedroom is on a higher floor and may be the only room on that level.

Lrg: Large

M-to-M: Month to month rental agreement

Neg: Negotiable

NS or non-smkr: No smoking. Some landlords will not rent to people who smoke, especially in shared apartments.

Partly furnished: This could mean any amount of furniture, but most likely it would include a bed and mattress, a dresser or some type of clothing storage and a table and chair(s). It may include pots and pans, dishes, cutlery, bed and bath linens.

References needed or "refs req'd": The landlord is asking that you to provide him/her with references from previous landlord(s) or other personal references to confirm that you have been/will be a responsible tenant.

Room in an owner's home: You rent a bedroom in a landlord's home. House rules, including the provision of food and sharing of amenities can vary considerably, so it's best to talk to the resident owner-occupier about how the house works and what they would expect of you. Tenants renting a

room in a landlord's home are not subject to the Residential Tenancies Act (any disputes would therefore have to be handled as a contract dispute, and could be taken to civil/small claims court).

Rooming House: A multi-bedroom house where each room is rented individually. Typically all bedrooms have locked doors, with a shared kitchen and bathroom. ***Rooming houses are illegal in Scarborough.***

Self-contained Apartments: A self-contained unit where none of the facilities are shared. An apartment should have its own bathroom, toilet and kitchen.

Semi-Private: A private bedroom with at least one other private facility, usually a bathroom, kitchen, sitting room or study. If a bathroom or kitchen is not private, the student will share access to them.

Shared Houses/Apartments: Usually you rent a bedroom in a house or apartment and share the kitchen, common room, bathroom/toilet with other tenants.

Sq. ft. : Square feet. One square metre is equal to between nine and ten square feet.

Stove: Oven, Cooker, Range, Stove-top

Studio: Same as Bachelor.

Sublet: This term refers to the agreement that a new tenant would make between themselves and the current tenant of a property who is moving out, either permanently or for a period and expecting to return to their apartment. The current tenant whose name is on the rental agreement or lease would be vacating the property and the subletter would be moving in and assuming responsibility for rental costs, utility costs and all other costs associated with the sublet agreement.

W-to-W: Week to week rental agreement

# Our Housemate Agreement

BETWEEN: \_\_\_\_\_

AND: \_\_\_\_\_

AND: \_\_\_\_\_

AND: \_\_\_\_\_

AND: \_\_\_\_\_

We have entered a tenancy agreement with respect to (address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We agree that this document represents a binding agreement among us with respect to our tenancy from (start) \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_ to (end of term) \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_. We further agree that, if the provisions of this document conflict with our rights and obligations under the tenancy agreement and/or the Tenant Protection Act of Ontario, the provisions of the tenancy agreement and/or the Tenant Protection Act shall prevail.

We agree that our obligation to pay rent for the premises will be apportioned as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We agree that our obligation to pay other costs associated with our tenancy will be apportioned as follows (specify any limitations if the unit is occupied by fewer than the full complement of tenants eg: housemate goes on exchange)

UTILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

CABLE: \_\_\_\_\_

INTERNET: \_\_\_\_\_



ADDITIONAL (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

We agree that all housemates will adhere to the conditions agreed upon, in an effort to provide a good living environment for all.

1. Household cleaning duties shall be:

- A. allocated by a work-wheel.
- B. agreed upon by a weekly/monthly schedule.
- C. permanently assigned.
- D. dishes are the responsibility of the individual user but can not be left dirty more than 24 hours.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

2. The level of tidiness of common areas will be:

- A. personal stuff gets picked up daily plus dusted and vacuumed/mopped weekly
- B. food and beverages get picked up right away but the rest can wait until cleaning day
- C. clean when we agree it needs it but spills get dealt with immediately
- D. everything *but* dirty laundry is tolerated.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The playing of stereos, musical instruments, T.V. or yelling:

- A. will not be allowed after \_\_\_\_ or before \_\_\_\_ to allow for rest and studying.
- B. is unrestricted by time, but at agreed upon volume levels.
- C. is unrestricted, with a friendly signal for quiet.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

4. The buying & consumption of food shall be dealt with such that:

- A. eat whatever you find in the cupboards or fridge regardless of who paid for it.
- B. all goods are purchased during group excursions and the cost and use is shared.
- C. all food is purchased, labeled, stored and consumed separately.
- D. specific items are agreed upon to be common (i.e. milk, butter, toilet paper etc.) and paid for by a house fund, the rest is personal.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Guests (partners, friends & study groups) will follow guidelines such that:

- A. their messes, utilities and meals are the responsibility of their host.
- B. their activities adhere to the house constitution.
- C. their visits, especially large groups are given consent by a house majority beforehand.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Smoking is:

- A. not allowed under any circumstances, including guests.
- B. permitted in bedrooms BUT NOT IN BED.
- C. allowed anywhere but not during mealtimes and provided the smoker empties his/her own ashtrays.
- D. the individual choice of housemates and guests.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

7. When it comes to personal belongings (clothes, stereos, etc.):

- A. they will be regarded as personal, not household, property and are not up for borrowing.
- B. borrowing will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- C. they are now part of the general household belongings and require no permission.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

8. The substitution of one housemate for another will be: (Note: all substitutions must be approved by the landlord)

- A. entirely the responsibility and cost of the departing housemate.
- B. advertised at the cost of the departing housemate but chosen by the remaining housemates with no reasonable sublet or assignment refused
- C. there will be no substitutions regardless of the circumstances. We worked hard selecting compatible housemate and we aren't prepared to live with a stranger
- D. welcomed for a probationary month to ensure they "fit" in the house
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Household rules:

- A. will be modified during the year with the agreement of all of the housemates.
- B. will not be modified during the year.

We agree that each housemate is responsible for his/her own portion of the rent and other expenses, pursuant to paragraphs #1 and #2, above, until the tenancy agreement terminates. We further agree that, should any housemate prematurely vacate for any reason, he or she is required to provide payment directly to the remaining housemates for rent and other such expenses until a suitable subtenant is found, pursuant to item #8 above or until the tenancy agreement terminates.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

We acknowledge that we have read this document and agreed to the terms and conditions it contains.  
We further acknowledge that we have each receive a copy of this document, as well as a copy of any written tenancy agreement.

1 witness \_\_\_\_\_

2 witness \_\_\_\_\_

3 witness \_\_\_\_\_

4 witness \_\_\_\_\_

5 witness \_\_\_\_\_

6 witness \_\_\_\_\_

Each housemate gets a photocopy of this dated, signed agreement! As well as any amendments made during the tenancy