



"Serving Hampton Roads since 1977"

One Columbus Center, Ste 700

Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Phone: (757) 965-2140

Email: rentals@rcvirginia.com

Website: www.rcvirginia.com

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TENANT HANDBOOK

THIS HANDBOOK CONTAINS INFORMATION WE HOPE WILL MAKE YOUR TENANCY MORE ENJOYABLE. IT WILL ANSWER SOME OF THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS WE GET FROM OUR TENANTS. PLEASE READ SECTION I BEFORE SIGNING YOUR LEASE AS SECTION I OF THIS HANDBOOK IS PART OF YOUR LEASE.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR RENTAL HOME. WE ARE HERE TO ASSIST YOU AND MAKE YOUR STAY A HAPPY AND ENJOYABLE TIME.

REVISED 03/2018



Dear Tenants,

Here are just a few reminders to help you with your rent payments.

Rent is due on the 1ST of the month. Payments are to be made by check, cashier's check, money order, or through the Online Tenant Portal. Money orders may be purchased at your local supermarket, post office, and convenience stores. Cashier's checks can be released by your bank. **CASH PAYMENTS FOR RENT ARE NOT ACCEPTED AT THE REALTY CONSULTANTS OFFICE.**

Checks, cashier's checks, or money orders must be made out to **Realty Consultants** and the address of the property you are renting should be clearly written on the front of the check, cashier's check, or money order.

Payments may be mailed to: **Realty Consultants Property Management
One Columbus Center, Ste 700
Virginia Beach, VA 23462**

Our accountant is available to accept your payments in our office Monday – Friday, 9:00AM – 5:00PM.

Please have your check, cashier's check, or money orders filled out with all the necessary information and have the address of the property available prior to making your payment at the office.

If you need to leave a payment before or after office hours, a drop box is located in the front entry way of the office building. **Payments MUST be in an envelope with your property address clearly printed on the outside** to ensure your rent is processed in a timely manner.

If your rent is not received by the 5th of the month, 10% of your total rent will be charged as a late fee or \$50.00, whichever is greater.

There is an \$85.00 service fee for any returned checks. Repayment must be made by certified funds.

**Thank You!
Your Property Management Team**

SECTION 1

OFFICE HOURS are 9am to 5pm Monday through Friday. All routine communications should be directed to your Property Manager during office hours at the following location:

Realty Consultants Property Management
One Columbus Center, Ste 700
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Important: Be sure that the property address is marked on the payment envelope and any correspondence left at the office with regard to your tenancy.

Rent: Rent is due on the 1ST of the month in advance, without deduction, offset or demand. Payment must be by check, cashier's check, or money order and must be made payable to Realty Consultants. We do not handle any amounts of cash, so **we WILL NOT accept cash for payment of rent or security deposits.** You can also pay your rent online through the Tenant Portal. All rents are to be paid at:

Realty Consultants Property Management
One Columbus Center, Ste 700
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Phone #: (757) 965-2140

NOTE: Be sure that the property address for which you are paying rent is clearly marked on the face of the check, cashier's check or money order. Realty Consultants **IS NOT** responsible for checks or rent payments lost in the mail.

DELINQUENT RENT: If rent is not received by the due date, a late fee of 10% of your full rent or \$50.00, whichever is greater, will automatically be charged to your account on the 6th of each month.

PER DIEM RENT: This is your full month's rent amount divided by 30 days. It is used to calculate pro-rated rent at move-in or, in special circumstances, at move-out.

RETURNED CHECKS: Any Checks or Electronic Funds Transfers returned for non-sufficient funds or any other reason will incur an \$85.00 service fee. Repayment must be made by certified funds. Late rent payments, evictions, and judgments can and will be reported to the credit bureau.

SECURITY DEPOSITS: Your security deposit **MAY NOT** be applied to your final month's rent. You will receive a Security Deposit Statement of Account, which will show all deductions from the deposit, if any. Deposits are fully refundable within 45 days of vacating the property provided all the below listed Conditions have been met:

- **Occupancy has been terminated**
- **Full term lease has expired**
- **An inspection shows the property to be in clean and satisfactory condition (normal wear and tear excluded)**
- **Stove, oven, refrigerator, bathrooms and fireplace have been thoroughly cleaned**
- **All trash and debris have been removed from the property boundaries**

- **All keys including mail box, storage, etc. have been returned**
- **All carpets have been professionally cleaned w/receipts provided**

You may request that your security deposit release be expedited within 10-15 days of move-out for a fee of 10% of the total security deposit before deductions.

COVENANTS BY LESSEE: Your lease will obligate you to certain upkeep, maintenance, limitation of alteration, etc...It is most important that you understand these covenants.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS PROVIDED BY OWNER: Your Property Manager will arrange for all maintenance and repairs that are the responsibility of the owner. Repairs (except emergencies) will be scheduled during normal business hours and the tenant is responsible for granting access to the contractor if required. Because of the distance involved and the number of repairs scheduled each day, our property managers are not able to (nor are they required to) be at the property to grant access or supervise jobs.

INSURANCE: You are required to have Renters Insurance as a condition of your lease and to provide a copy of the coverage to your Property Manager. Please contact an insurance agent for a renter's policy, which will afford you protection as well as liability coverage.

AGENCY: In renting to you, we are acting as agent for the owner of the property. This means that we can bind the owner by contract, but it also means we are bound to act in the owner's best interest at all times. We cannot guarantee that the owner will perform his/her obligations under the lease.

MAIL AND POSTAL SERVICE: Please inform your Property Manager of any mail delivered to the property for owners.

UTILITIES: You have been given a Utility Information Sheet located in your Tenant Packet. You should make arrangements for turn on as early as possible as some utilities may require up to a week's notice. You will need to do this within 48 hours of signing your lease.

EMERGENCIES: Please contact your Property Manager immediately for the following emergencies. On weekends, holidays and after normal office hours please call your Property Manager at (757) 965-2140. If you are unable to reach her immediately please leave her a message on her office phone and she will contact you as soon as possible.

SMOKING: Is never permitted in the rented property!

INSPECTIONS:

- Move-In:** When you sign your lease, you will be furnished with a "Move-In Inspection Report" that must be signed, completed, and returned to your Property Manager within 5 days of occupancy. Such notification of discrepancies shall not be construed as acceptance by the Property Manager.
- Periodic Inspections:** From time to time by the Property Manager, Property Owner, Service Vendors, and Maintenance Personnel will conduct these to determine condition/value of property or as needed. With the exception of Emergencies, Property Manager will give 24 hour's notice of appointment. **Tenant will be responsible for any fees related to no show by tenant for appointment or access not being granted once appointment is set with Tenant & Vendors.**

GRASS and SHRUBBERY: The grass, shrubbery, and leaves are the tenant's responsibilities. Grass shall be cut every two weeks at a minimum or more frequently to insure grass does not exceed 6" in height. Trees, bushes, and shrubs should be cut and pruned when required. Grass, Shrubs, and trees should be watered as needed to prevent excessive dryness and damage.

VEHICLES: Parking of vehicles shall be either in assigned areas (garage, parking lot, and driveway spaces) or on the public street if allowed. Vehicles shall never be parked on lawns or sidewalks. *Tenants are allowed only one vehicle per person(s) on the lease, unless special written permission is given by the property manager.*

UNREGISTERED, UNLICENSED, AND/OR INOPERABLE VEHICLES: No unregistered, unlicensed or non-operable vehicle shall be stored on the property unless it is in a garage. No vehicle repairs (except minor items, e.g. tire changing) will be conducted at any time except in a garage.

SECTION II

INSPECTION AND TROUBLE SHOOTING GUIDE

This checklist and troubleshooting guide is provided to help you solve some of the most common problems encountered by our tenants. For maximum benefit you should use the list as a guide for things to check after occupancy and as a reference before calling for service. Because we have properties in every configuration imaginable, we must cover each subject in detail. We must also assume that you are not familiar with the items covered. If we are too basic, we apologize.

WATER SHUT OFF: One of the first things you should do after the move is to locate the water shut off valve. After a flood starts is not the time to start the search. What you are looking for is a single faucet that shuts off all the water in the house. The most common place to find this faucet is in the garage, close to the water heater (not at the top of the heater), in a closet, under the kitchen sink, or in the utility room. Some old houses have a bent piece of iron coming up through the floor, usually in a closet, that you turn to shut the water off. Try the shut off, but do not be surprised if all the water does not stop immediately. Some shut offs on older houses will only slow the water to a trickle, but this is definitely better than a flood. Main property water shut off is normally at the driveway or near the street in a cover box marked WATER.

ELECTRICAL POWER PANEL: Locate the panel and check to see if you have fuses or circuit breakers. Fuse panels are common on houses more than 40 years old. Two types of fuses are found in the fuse box. The electrical stove, water heater, and air conditioner/heater will be serviced by cartridge type fuses. These are held in fuse holders that resemble drawers. To check the fuse, pull the fuse holder out of the box. Many times blown fuses will be burned or the cartridge ruptured. Other times they will look perfectly normal, and the only way to check them are to replace the questionable fuse with a new one.

CAUTION #1: Do not pry the prongs of the fuse holder apart to release the fuse. Simply slide the fuse out toward the open end of the holder.

CAUTION #2: When you replace the fuse holder, it must be right side up. If you put it in upside down, the circuit will be off.

The other type of fuse is the screw-in type with fuse wire visible or a red button in the cap. If the fuse wire is broken, replace the fuse. If the button is popped; push it in. All fuses must be replaced with the

same size fuses as were originally installed. Slow blow fuses should be used for circuits when fuses blow often. They are available in both cartridge and screw-in types but only from hardware and electrical supply houses.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS: We have a number of problems each year because tenants think that a circuit breaker pops by moving the circuit switch to the OFF position. This is not the case!! The circuit breaker moves very slightly and unless you look closely, you may still think that it is ON. To reset, simply turn the circuit breaker OFF and back ON again. If you are not sure, try them all. Off—then—ON. You may want to turn off electrical & electronic equipment when doing this.

One type of circuit breaker found in many properties is the GFI (ground fault interrupter) circuit breaker. This circuit breaker detects the slightest voltage going to the ground and cuts the power off. It is used in bathrooms, exterior plugs, garages and some lights. Because the GFI circuit breaker is so expensive, there are usually only one per house and all the above plugs are wired to it. If you lose power to the plugs in one bathroom, you can bet you have lost all power to the plugs on the GFI. The trick now is to find the circuit breaker. Most houses have the GFI circuit breaker in the one bathroom or the main circuit breaker panel. It is usually marked with red, yellow, or black button and is between the upper and lower plugs in a bathroom or outside installation. Some houses have the GFI at an outside plug. When moisture gets into one of your plugs, the GFI circuit breaker pops, so please make sure the covers are closed on outside plugs during rainy weather.

NOTE: The circuit breakers are ON when both rows of circuit breakers are positioned toward the center of the panel.

ELECTRIC STOVE: If the whole stove is off, check the fuse or circuit breaker. If the oven will not turn on, try the broiler. If both will not turn on, check the timer. Instructions are normally on the face of the timer, but generally one of the two clocks has a knob that will pop out if you are back to normal operation. Just turn the set knob until it pops out.

SELF-CLEANING OVENS: (uses heat to clean-door locks)

- Follow instructions printed on the oven.
- DO NOT use commercial cleaners such as Easy Off or Mr. Clean or Mr. Muscle.
- DO NOT put bright metal rings around stove burners in the oven for cleaning. They will turn black.

CONTINUOUS CLEAN OVENS: The oven cavity in a continuous clean oven absorbs grease when heated. The only way to clean the oven is to use it. If additional cleaning is required, most manufacturers recommend wiping the oven with mild soap and water solution. Because the finish will not absorb large amount of grease, it is important that the bottom of the oven be lined with heavy duty aluminum foil or a shallow drip pan. DO NOT use regular aluminum foil – it will catch on fire.

DISHWASHER: Use at least once each week. If used less, the seals dry up and the motor may be ruined when put back into regular use.

DISPOSALS: If disposal motor just buzzes, then stop and turn switch off. Free the disposal by turning the blade backwards and forwards from beneath the sink with a wrench that fits in the center of the bottom of the motor. Check the reset circuit breaker on the bottom of the disposal and try disposal again. If the unit turns easily by hand but not with power, call for service.

FURNACES: Gas and oil furnaces have an emergency shut off switch within sight of the furnace unit. Most have a red cover plate labeled EMERGENCY CUT OFF or OIL BURNER EMERGENCY CUT OFF. The switch is often mistaken for a light switch. If the furnace stops working, this is the first place to check.

OIL HEAT: It is best to have a service contract with an oil company. Most companies offer budget payments to customers with service contracts and automatically fill your tank when needed. Do not let your tank run dry as it may cause damage and require a service call to get the furnace restarted. Sludge in the bottom of the tank usually clogs the lines and nozzle, and the entire system must be cleaned before it will work again. If the furnace stops working check the RED switch first. Then check the furnace fuse in the main fuse panel. Also, check the reset button on the furnace motor. Next, check for oil in the tank. Finally, call for service.

GAS HEAT: Old gas furnaces have a pilot light that burns continuously. The pilot light ignites the burner when the thermostat demands heat. A safety device keeps the gas from being turned on at the burner if the pilot light has gone out. Re-lighting a pilot light is simple, and you should learn the procedure if you have gas heat. Most furnaces have a three-way switch labeled OFF-PILOT-ON. To light the pilot, turn the switch to OFF. Then turn to PILOT and light the pilot light. To do this, you must exert downward pressure on the selector knob and hold the knob down for several seconds or maybe even a minute after the pilot light is lit.

Next, release the downward pressure and the pilot should stay lit. If not, repeat the procedure. Finally, move the selector from PILOT to ON. Some selectors have red buttons that must be held down after lighting.

If you have not looked your furnace over before the pilot goes out, you may not be able to figure out where the light is located because it is dark in there.

New furnaces have automatic lighting devices and no pilot is required. Forget all the above and call for service if the furnace will not light.

For both types of gas furnaces, the first thing to look for is the red switch. Next, check for the pilot. Finally, call for service.

HEAT PUMP: The heat pump is the most economical method of heating in this area-if used properly. Set a comfortable temperature and then LEAVE THE CONTROL ALONE.

The air coming from the vents is colder than body temperature. DO NOT stand over the heat vent to try and warm up, it does not work.

During the extremely cold temperatures, or when the emergency heat switch is turned on, filament heaters will provide extra heat. Use of the emergency heat mode is expensive! Do not be surprised if you find the outside unit caked with ice or steaming on a cold day. It is not an emergency, but let your Property Manager know if ice is forming on the unit.

BASE BOARD HEAT: Ensure that air is free to flow under the radiator unit. If blocked by a thick rug the unit will not heat properly.

Keep the door closed if you are heating one room only. Cold air will always rush into a room causing drafts and a false reading on the room thermostat.

WATER HEATER: If gas, learn to light the pilot light. (Same as a gas furnace.) If electric, check for a timer. Learn to set the timer and which fuse or circuit breakers control the unit.

AIR CONDITIONERS: Poor cooling is usually caused by a clogged filter. If the filter has been changed and there is inadequate air flow – Call your Property Manager for service.

If the unit does not run at all, check the red switch. Check the fuse of the circuit breaker. If the unit still will not operate – call your Property Manager for service.

If water drops from the unit or runs on the floor, or drips through the ceiling (if the unit is in the attic), shut the unit off and clear the condensation drain. Some drains are very easy to clean with a vacuum cleaner or a garden hose used to blow out the line. If you cannot do it yourself – call the Property Manager for service.

DO NOT operate the unit until the clogged drain is cleared as the unit will continue to produce water and damage to the property may occur.

PRECAUTIONS DURING FREEZING WEATHER

- Always leave the heat ON.
- Close the crawl space vents found around the bottom of the exterior walls of the house.
- Let both hot and cold faucets run slowly on extremely cold nights.
- Well pumps must have water drained from system prior to freezing weather. Some may be disconnected and stored in garage or shed.

OTHER PROBLEM AREAS

AIR FILTERS: Check for location when moving in. Change monthly or more often as necessary to improve performance of furnace or air conditioner.

SMOKE DETECTORS: Smoke Detectors are inspected and have new batteries prior to move-in. If a smoke detector begins to chirp, this means the battery is low and needs replaced. Tenants are responsible for changing any battery in the smoke detector at their expense during the duration of their tenancy.

NO WAX FLOORS: Use only preparations especially designed for these floors.

FIBERGLASS TUBS: Use SOFTSCRUB or other comparable cleanser on the tubs and sinks and showers.

CARPETS: All flooring including carpet is considered part of cleaning at termination of lease and should be cleaned as specified in the lease.

WALLS: DO NOT use contact paper or sticky paper hangers on walls, doors, or cabinet surfaces.

WOOD STOVES: Ask if there are any special instructions. Generally, stoves are restricted to hardwood only.

FIREPLACES: The fireplace is not an incinerator for Christmas wrappings, cardboard, etc. Burning these materials could be very dangerous. Before your first fire of the season, the fireplace should be inspected by a professional chimney sweep. Please burn hardwood only, so a build-up of tar and soot can be avoided.

BUGS AND VERMIN: The property may be under a termite program and may have annual inspections and treatments. Please send the office written notification if you are concerned about the treatment of the property.

Small black ants are a seasonal problem throughout Hampton Roads; do not be alarmed by their continual presence in the spring and fall. You can pick up a product called TERRO in your local Lowe's or Home Depot to combat these pest. Follow the directions found on the package and "presto", your ant problem will be solved in about two days. It is the tenant's responsibility to combat other occasional pests found in the home when it comes to roaches, bugs or the occasional mouse. It is the property manager's responsibility to deal with squirrels, birds, or rats if they are ever found in your property.

As always, any questions or concerns should be directed to Realty Consultants Property Management at (757) 965-2140.

Please enjoy the property and we appreciate your business!