

# Tenant Handbook

Your guide to your new home



# Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome you to your new home. We hope this handbook will be a helpful and convenient source of information for you. It provides information about what your rights are as a tenant, what you can expect while living here, and what we expect from you. It gives useful information such as how and where to pay your rent, how to report maintenance concerns in your unit, and tips for recycling.

The lease agreement that you signed contains very detailed information about your tenancy. The lease is a legal document and you should be familiar with what it says and keep a copy of it in a safe place.

Housing Services recognizes that good communication is essential to promote safe and stable housing. Please contact us with any concerns about your home and community. We want to help build a community that you can enjoy and take pride in.

Each tenant can contribute to the success of their tenancy, the maintenance of their home and to their neighborhood. We look forward to working with you to make your home a great place to live.

*Sincerely,*

*Housing Services Team*

**COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES  
HOUSING SERVICES**  
Postal Bag 6300  
228 Church Street  
BELLEVILLE, ON K8N 5E2

613- 966-1311  
1-800-267-0575  
Fax: 613-966-4598  
Hours: 8:30 - 4:30  
Monday to Friday  
(Except holidays)

**Key staff members are listed below, along with your tenant code number.**

Your Tenant Code # \_\_\_\_\_

Property Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ext. #

Rent Calculation Clerk \_\_\_\_\_ ext. #

Community Relations Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ext. # 4320

Facilities Department \_\_\_\_\_ ext. # 6313

**Help Numbers**

**FIRE, POLICE, AMBULANCE** ..... 911

**COMMUNITY SERVICES INFORMATION** ..... 211

IF UNABLE TO REACH 211, PLEASE CALL ..... 1-866-340-0899

Call 211 for Hastings County, social, health and or community services information, including:

- Addiction support
- Children’s services
- Community services
- Employment services
- Financial assistance
- Food banks
- Health services
- Home care
- Legal services
- Multicultural services
- Recreation centres
- Seniors’ services
- Support groups
- Credit counselling

**211ontario.ca**

## Hastings County Housing Services Staff

Type of Issue	Who to Call
Rent calculations	Call your Rent Calculation Clerk
Maintenance concerns or repairs	Call the Maintenance Clerks or put a note in the Work Order drop box located in your apartment building. Facilities Department 613-968-7078
Rent payments	Call your Property Supervisor.
Building safety	Call the Facilities Department and report it right away. If there is a fire or life safety event, call 911. Facilities Department 613-968-7078
Questions about your tenancy agreement/lease	Speak to your Property Supervisor or leave a note in the Office drop box.
Neighbourhood conflicts	Call your Property Supervisor and put it in writing.
Community support services	Your Community Relations Supervisor will provide contacts for community support services as needed.
If you are locked out	Call Facilities Department 613-968-7078 A charge may apply for repeated lost key calls.
<b>Emergencies include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No heat</li> <li>• Uncontrolled or substantial water leak</li> <li>• Flood in unit</li> <li>• Smoke detector</li> <li>• Sewer back up</li> </ul> For emergencies requiring Fire, Police or Ambulance, call 911	



### TENANT TIP #1

Keep this booklet in a convenient location for easy access to information.

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### Living in Your Home

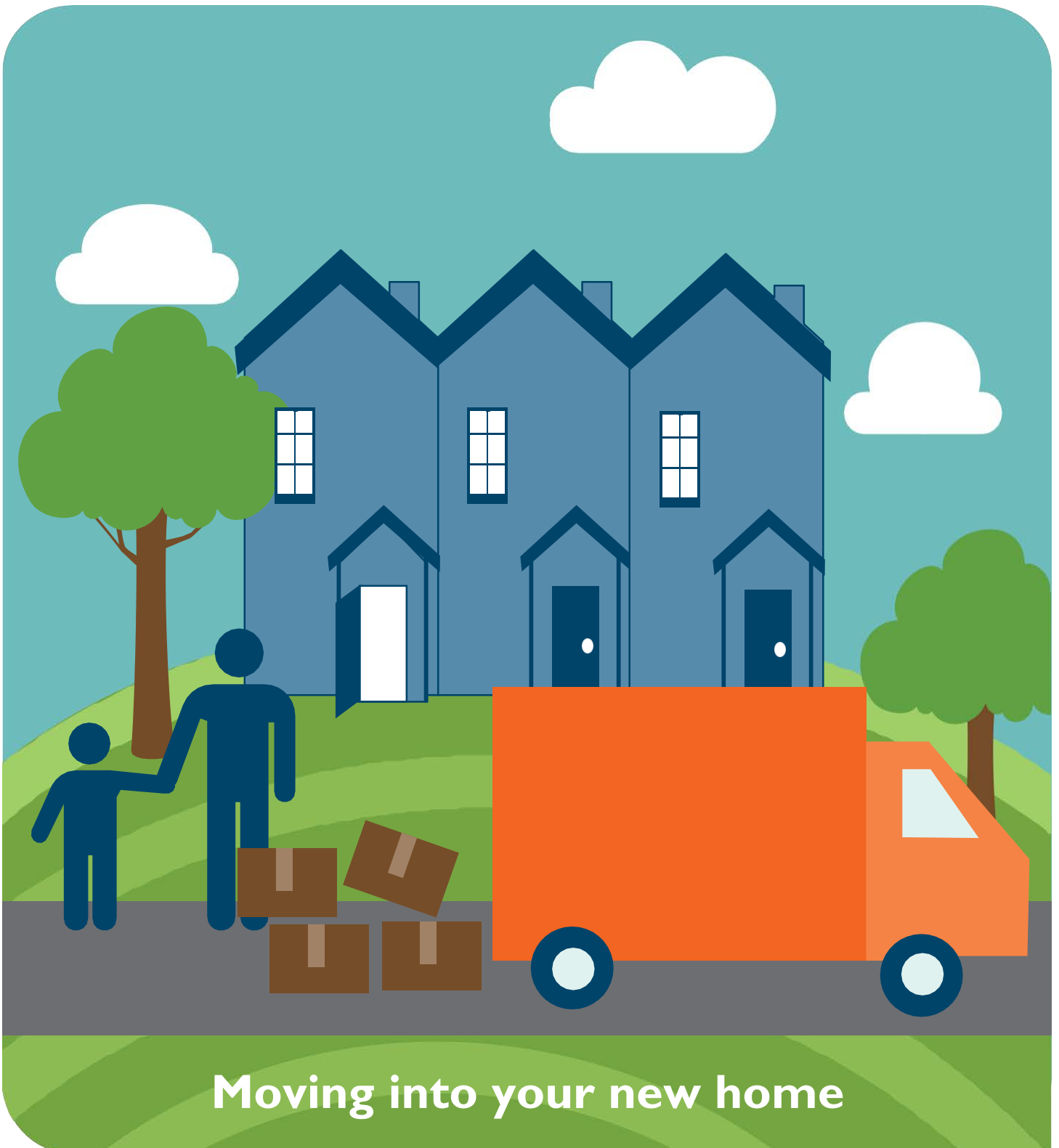
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## Moving into your new home

Tenant insurance  
Drop boxes

- › Move-in inspection form
- › When you move in

## Moving into your new home

After signing your tenancy agreement/lease, you must make an appointment with your Property Supervisor to receive your keys and complete the move in inspection.

### Tenant Insurance Is Mandatory

Hastings County Local Housing Corporation (Hastings LHC) does not provide insurance for your belongings. Your tenancy agreement/lease requires you to purchase tenant insurance for the following reasons:

- It can help you replace furniture, clothes, kitchenware, and other belongings damaged by fire, flood or theft
- It can pay for accidental damages you, your family or guests may cause
- It can provide funds to house you temporarily while repairs are made to your apartment
- May pay for legal costs if your actions cause damage

### Drop boxes

In seniors' buildings, Housing Services has drop boxes for mail to staff in the Housing office. Use the drop box as a quick and simple way to pay rent (no cash please), submit complaints, and send in Income Declaration Packages. Staff pick up items from the drop box regularly.



### TENANT TIP # 2

For information on tenant insurance options, please contact a local insurance broker or visit

**[www.tenant.hscorp.ca](http://www.tenant.hscorp.ca)**

It's a good idea to compare prices before buying your insurance.



## Move-in inspection form

Although your unit is inspected before you move in, your Property Supervisor will complete the Move-In Inspection Form with you on the day you receive the keys. Any problems or concerns (torn screens, missing electrical covers, leaking taps), will be noted on the Inspection Form and the Property Supervisor will complete a work order for the Facilities Department to complete the work.

## When you move in

### Apartment buildings:

Please do not put boxes down the garbage chutes. Boxes must be broken down, bundled, and placed in the recycling room or taken off site.

For safety reasons, please do not prop the outside doors of the apartment building open or tie up the elevator.

### Apartment Building/Townhouses:

When you receive your keys from your Property Supervisor, you will be shown:

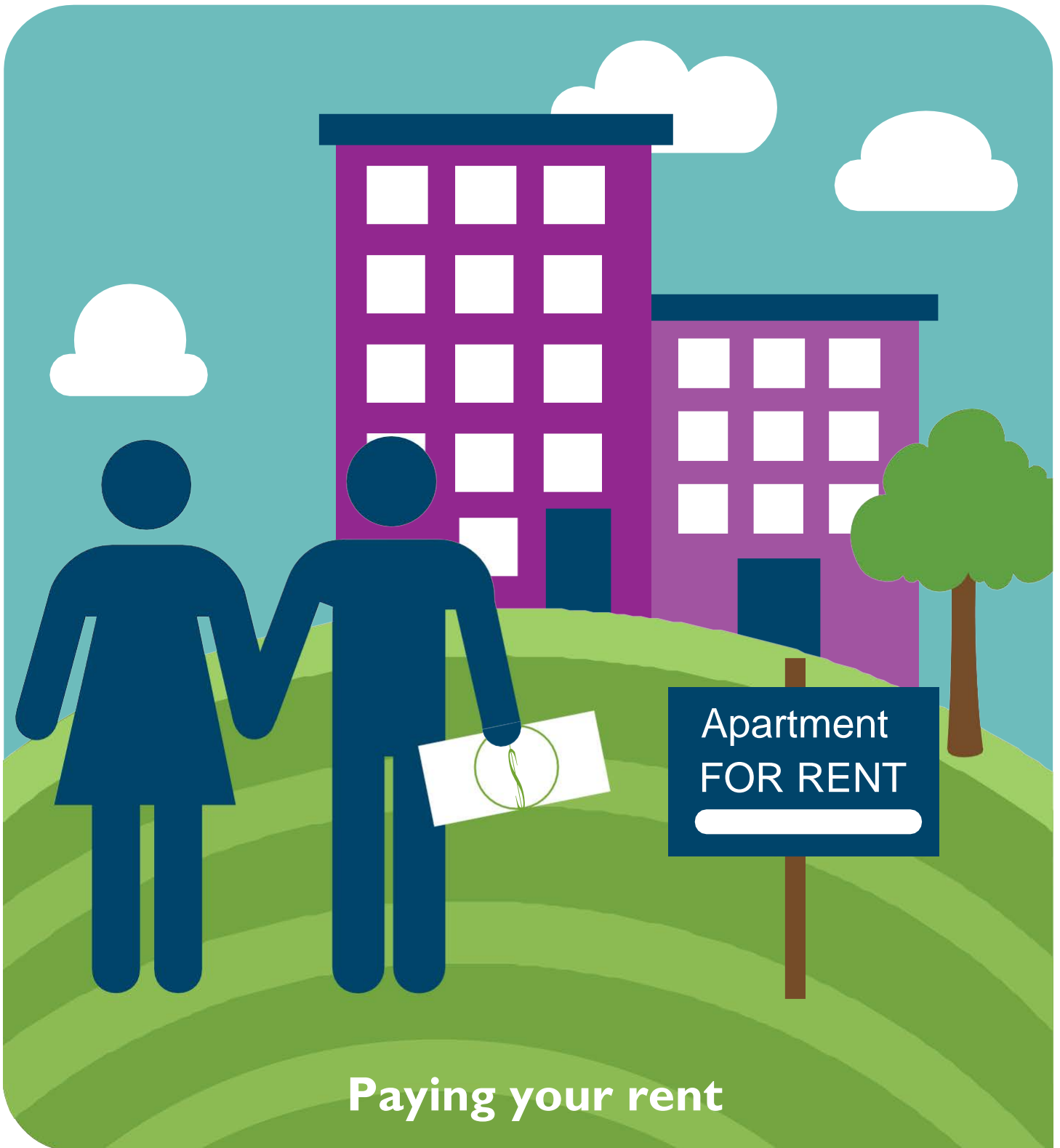
- On/off switch for the furnace (if you have one)
- Furnace filter and how and when to change it
- Electrical panel
- Smoke detectors and their operation



## TENANT TIP # 3

Before you move in...

- Set up utilities in your name
- Contact the Post Office with your new address
- Arrange for your phone and advise Housing Services of your new phone number
- Arrange for cable and internet service if you want it
- Your Tenant Package includes a letter for your cable provider
- Purchase tenant insurance



## Paying your rent

- › How to pay
- › If you are having trouble paying your rent
- › Annual Income Review package
- › Report any changes in your household
- › Guest policy
- › Absence from the unit

## Paying your rent

### How to pay

**Pre-authorized payments** - The bank will automatically transfer your rent to Hastings County LHC from your bank account. The rent will usually come out of your account between the 1st and 3rd day of the month. To set-up a pre-authorized payment, you will need to submit a void cheque and sign an authorization form. This is the preferred method of payment.

**Cheque or money order** - Please make cheque or money order payable to Hastings County Housing Services and include your name, address and tenant account number (this number is given to you when you move in). Your cheque or money order can be placed in the drop box at the apartment buildings or mailed to the office at:

Hastings County  
Housing Services  
228 Church Street  
Postal Bag 6300  
Belleville, ON K8N 5E2

Or the Quinte West office at:

Hastings County  
Housing Services  
91 Creswell Drive  
Trenton, ON K8V 3G5

**Cash payments** - Cash can only be accepted at Housing Services offices at; 228 Church Street, Belleville, or 91 Creswell Drive, Trenton. Please DO NOT put cash in the drop box. Staff members are not permitted to accept cash payments except at the office.

**Debit card** - You may pay by debit card, or credit card. The debit/credit card option is available at the office only, or credit card by calling the office.

**Telephone and online payments and payments at your bank** - Check with your local bank to see if this is available to you. You will need your tenant account number when you sign up. To make sure Housing Services receives your rent by the 1st of the month, you need to make this type of payment 3-5 days before.



### TENANT TIP # 4

Rent is due the 1st day of each month



### TENANT TIP # 5

Office Hours  
8:30 – 4:30  
Monday – Friday  
(except stat holidays)

## Annual Income Review package

Once a year you will be sent a package of forms. You must complete the forms and submit them before the due date.

If you do not return the package of forms before the due date, you will lose your subsidy and your rent will increase to the maximum (market) rent.

If you do not understand the forms or need help, please call your Rent Calculation Clerk.



### TENANT TIP # 6

To get your Notice of Assessment, call Revenue Canada at 1-800-959-8281

## Report any changes in your household

Report any changes to your Rent Calculation Clerk or your Property Supervisor in writing with supporting documents (i.e. pay stubs, receipts) within 30 days of the change.

Changes in household income can result from many things, including:

- An increase or decrease in the number of hours worked
- A wage increase or decrease
- Loss of job
- Getting a new job or a second job
- Your child is in post-secondary education
- A change in the number of people living in the household (new baby, death, someone moves in or out)
- A change in the number of people in your household receiving assistance

**Please remember that you must get approval from your Property Supervisor before moving someone into your unit.** Failure to report these changes could result in your household no longer being eligible to receive RGI assistance.

## If you are having trouble paying your rent

We want you to keep your home. If you are having trouble paying your rent, call your Property Supervisor right away. We will try to work with you to arrange a payment plan.



### TENANT TIP # 7

Do not wait for your annual Income Review Package to report changes. Report changes to your Rent Calculation Clerk or your Property Supervisor as they happen.

**At minimum, tenants must pursue income from the following sources:**

- Basic financial assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997
- Support under the Divorce Act (child support)
- Benefits under the Employment Insurance Act
- Any pension that a person is entitled to receive (Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement)
- Support or maintenance from immigration sponsorship

**Guest policy**

You are welcome to have guests in your unit for up to two weeks without written approval from your Property Supervisor. If you think your guest may stay longer than two weeks, please contact your Property Supervisor. Longer guest visits require approval to make sure that your household remains eligible for RGI assistance.

**Absence from the unit**

If all members of your household are absent from your unit for more than 90 days maximum in a 12 month period, you will no longer be eligible for RGI assistance. Exceptions are granted for medical and or employment related absences.



**TENANT TIP # 8**

**Important Contacts to Pursue Income**

**Ontario Works**  
1-800-267-0575

**Family or Child Support**  
416-327-6868 or local family court

**Employment Insurance**  
1-800-206-7218

**Pension**  
1-800-277-9914

**Support Under Immigration Act**  
1-888-242-2100



## Living in your home

- › Regular maintenance
- › Balconies and patios
- › Garbage and recycling
- › Mold and mildew
- › Heating your home
- › Hot water tank
- › Air conditioners
- › Satellite dishes/cable/antenna
- › Lock changes
- › Pests
- › Swimming pools
- › Fences
- › Lawn care
- › Snow removal
- › Elevator safety
- › Laundry
- › Parking
- › Playgrounds
- › Fire safety
- › Security
- › Moving out

## Living in your home

### Regular maintenance

To request maintenance to your home, call the Facilities Department or complete a Work Order Form (available in apartment buildings) and put it in the Work Order drop box. Facilities will hire a contractor, who will call you to make an appointment. Please make sure you are home or have made arrangements to allow the contractor to enter your home. If the contractor is unable to enter your unit at the scheduled time you may be charged for the cost of the service call. If your maintenance concern has not been addressed after a reasonable length of time, please contact your Property Supervisor.

### Balconies and patios

- Apartment tenants are not allowed personal barbecues.
- Do not leave children on balcony unattended.
- Do not allow pets to urinate or defecate on the balcony or patio.
- Balconies and patios must be clean and tidy at all times.
- Balconies should not be used as storage areas.
- Please do not install carpet on your balcony/patio or make any other alteration without approval from your Property Supervisor.
- Please do not feed birds or animals from balconies or patios because it creates problems with pigeons and other pests.

### Garbage and recycling

Please keep communities healthy and clean by properly throwing out garbage and recycling. Please properly dispose of garbage in the designated garbage room or in the dumpster located in your neighborhood.

Do not put garbage on your front step or patio or balcony.

#### Apartments

Before putting garbage down the garbage chute, please be sure that it is double-bagged and tightly sealed. Bags of kitty litter and glass must be taken directly to the garbage room or dumpster.

We encourage you to recycle. Please rinse items before placing them in the recycling totes in the garbage room.

Please do not put needles in regular garbage.



#### TENANT TIP # 9

Flowers can really make your home look nice. If you have a flower bed in your yard, please feel free to plant some flowers.



#### TENANT TIP # 10

Make sure garbage is in proper containers or bins to avoid attracting rodents.



#### TENANT TIP # 11

You are responsible to properly dispose of hazardous waste. Examples include batteries, paints, cleaners and medications.

## **Townhouses**

- If your community has garbage bins, please be sure that all garbage is placed directly into the bin
- Please recycle as much as possible and sort the recyclables into the proper bins
- If you have curbside pickup, have your garbage out no earlier than 5 p.m. the day before and no later than 7 a.m. the day of collection. Be sure to separate regular garbage from recyclable material.

## **Mold and mildew**

Common household mold is best managed by:

- Venting dryers outside
- Closing windows in the cooler weather
- Opening curtains to avoid containing heat and producing humidity
- Not over packing closets
- Not blocking air ducts and cold air returns
- Not allowing water to accumulate
- Wiping common household mold with soap and water
- Using bathroom/kitchen exhaust fans

## **Enterphone system (Apartment Buildings)**

- the Security Entry System is connected to the telephone jack in the living room
- you will need a phone (not a phone line) to plug into this jack
- when someone buzzes your apartment from the lobby, your phone will ring
- Dial "6" to open the entrance door to let them in

This system is in place for all buildings except 185 Cannifton Road, Belleville and 139 Ontario St. Trenton. These two buildings have a separate entry system with the controls on the wall in the entrance of the apartment.



## Heating your home

- Your unit has individual controls for heat. You can adjust the temperature by adjusting the thermostat.
- Please keep your doors and windows closed when the heat is on.
- Please do not place anything in front of your thermostat (including bookshelves and entertainment units and especially heat-producing items such as televisions and computers).

### Houses/Semi-Detached/townhouses

- If you are living in a family community, you have a furnace which is located in the basement (with a couple of exceptions). It will have a clean filter on move-in day. It is your responsibility to change the filter every month when the furnace is in use.
- To avoid a fire, you must keep the area around your furnace and hot water tank clean and free of clutter.
- Please make sure that your heating vents are not covered (for example, do not place carpets over them).

### Hot water tank (family communities only)

In most family communities, the hot water tank is owned by Hastings LHC. If repairs are needed, please call the Maintenance Department.

Hot water tanks are rental units in the following neighbourhoods:

424 Bleecker Ave., Belleville

46 Tracey Park Drive, Belleville

59 Russell Street, Belleville

Green/Brant and Main Street, Deseronto;

If you have a problem with your rental tank, call the rental provider on your invoice.

Note: Transferring a rental water tank agreement from one rental company to another is not permitted.

### Air conditioners

- Window air conditioners are permitted in Hastings LHC communities.
- Where hydro is included in the rent, (apartment buildings) there is an annual air conditioning charge per air conditioner per season that is due when you put the air conditioner in the window.
- For energy conservation and overall safety, please make sure that your air conditioner is properly installed.
- If you intend to use a window air conditioner, you must notify Facilities directly.



### TENANT TIP # 12

#### Ontario Energy Support Program (OESP)

The OESP will reduce the cost of your household electricity by applying a monthly credit directly to your bill. The credit amount will depend on how many people live in your home and your combined household income. Visit [ontarioelectricitysupport.ca](http://ontarioelectricitysupport.ca) to apply.



### TENANT TIP # 13

To conserve energy when you are home, it is suggested that you set the thermostat at 22 degrees Celsius (72 degrees Fahrenheit); when leaving, lower the thermostat by two degrees Celsius.

## Windows (Townhouses and Houses)

- The windows in your unit are provided with screens. It is important that these screens remain in the unit at all times for your safety, as well as to prevent the infiltration of vermin or pests to the unit.
- The windows in the bedrooms of your unit are equipped with sash limiters which restrict the opening size to 4 inches. **These are installed for your safety and cannot be removed.**

## Satellite dishes/cable/antennas

- Hastings Local Housing Corporation (LHC) has strict guidelines concerning the installation of satellite dishes, cable and antennae.
- A letter outlining the requirements is included in the Tenant Package at move in.
- If a satellite dish or any other equipment is improperly installed, it will be removed at your expense.

## Lock changes

### Deadbolts

According to the law, only the landlord is permitted to change the locks.

### Pests

- If cockroaches, mice, bed bugs or other pests are in your home, please contact the Facilities Department immediately as pests can spread quickly from unit to unit.
- Pest control is a shared responsibility. Please make sure your food is stored in airtight containers and garbage is sealed and taken out on a regular basis. Do not feed any animals or birds around your home or apartment building.

## Swimming pools

Before buying a pool, please speak to your Property Supervisor.

- The pool must be above the ground and less than 11 inches deep.
- The pool must be set up on your leased premises, not in a common area or public space.
- The pool must be placed on a patio or it must be moved daily to avoid damaging grass.
- There must be adult supervision if there is water in the pool.
- The pool must be emptied after each use.
- You must have tenant insurance coverage in the event of an accident.



### TENANT TIP # 14

All units have deadbolt locks that are changed before you move in. You are not permitted to change the lock on your unit. If you lose your keys or require a lock change, please call your Property Supervisor or the Facilities Department who will send a contractor to do the work.

## Fences

In order to maintain safe, attractive communities, fences cannot be built on Housing Services property.

## Lawn care

- If you live in a single family or semi-detached home, you are responsible to maintain the area around your home.
- Housing Services cuts the grass at townhouses and apartments.
- You can help by keeping your personal property off the grass.
- Ponds are not permitted.

## Snow removal

- If you live in a single family or semi-detached home, you are responsible for clearing your driveway, walkway and any public sidewalks in front of your home.
- If you live in a townhouse, you are responsible for shoveling the sidewalk from the main walkway to your door. All main walkways are the responsibility of Housing Services.
- Please co-operate with the snow plow contractor who clears the snow from parking lots. If asked, please move your vehicle as soon as possible.

## Elevator safety

- If the elevator stalls, use the emergency equipment provided inside the elevator to call for help - you will be connected with the Housing Services answering service and they will immediately send help to get you out.
- Stay calm. Do not try to leave the elevator and do not try to force open the doors.
- If at any time the elevator is damaged or you notice a problem, please report it to the Facilities Department right away.

## Laundry

### Apartments

Laundry facilities are available for Tenant use only. Hours and rates are posted in the laundry room. If you see a broken machine, please call the number posted in the laundry room.

### Houses/Semi-Detached/Townhouses

If you live in a house or townhouse you may want to install a washer and dryer. For your safety, please be sure that the equipment is properly installed and make sure the dryer is vented outside.

## Parking

Parking is usually available at each site for a small monthly charge and is for use by tenants who have a car. Where parking is on a first-come-first-served basis, tenants often park in the same spot out of habit and courtesy.

Some buildings with larger parking areas allow visitor parking in the rear of the lot.

You are not permitted to park unlicensed vehicles on Hastings LHC property. Unlicensed vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Please refer to your tenancy agreement/lease for more information on parking.

## Playgrounds

Many Hastings LHC communities have playgrounds for the enjoyment of your family. Please supervise your children while they are in the playground. It is important that you report any safety concerns to the Facilities Department right away.

## Unit Inspections

Hastings LHC staff conduct a complete unit inspection at least once each year.

- You are given a 24 Hour written notice of the inspection date.
- It includes testing of the smoke alarms.
- Checking for clear access to the electrical panel.
- Checking for clear access around the heaters, furnace, hot water tank.
- Checking all rooms in the unit for any safety issues or maintenance requirements.
- Checking that you are maintaining your unit to a normal housekeeping standard.

## Designated Substances

Due to the age of construction for the majority of Hastings County buildings, there is a possibility that the following designated substances might be located in various materials within your unit; lead, mercury, polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), crystalline silica, ozone depleting substances, asbestos. In their present state, these substances are safe and will not affect your health and wellbeing. Hastings County Housing Services in partnership with Hastings County Facilities Department conduct annual inspections and inventory the designated substances and maintain a comprehensive inventory of locations which contain the above noted substances.

**It is very important that you do not modify or alter your unit in any way. Any damage to drywall, insulation, plumbing, and floor drains or flooring must be reported immediately to the Facilities Clerks for corrective action.**

For more information on what substances exist on your property, please refer to the County of Hastings Website, where you will find a link to the report for your property.



### TENANT TIP # 15

Parking permits are issued to tenants in buildings with limited parking. You can apply to a waiting list if you need parking and none is currently available.

## Fire safety

Fire safety saves lives. In case of fire, call 911 immediately.

Housing Services inspects all smoke/carbon monoxide detectors annually.

### Houses/Semi-Detached/townhouses

Your home has been equipped with a smoke /carbon monoxide detector on each level. It is the law and could save your life. Please check your smoke detector monthly by pushing the test button to make sure it is working.

A working smoke detector will sense smoke and sound an alarm to alert you of danger. The faster you know about a fire, the faster you can start moving your family outside.

**Do not sleep in the basement** as it does not have proper fire exits or ventilation. Using the basement as a bedroom is a violation of municipal bylaws and your tenancy agreement/lease and could lead to eviction.

### Apartment buildings

- Know your building; learn the locations of all exits, stairways, pull stations and fire extinguishers.
- You must participate in fire drills -valuable information is shared.
- Talk to your Property Supervisor if you have any questions or concerns about fire safety.
- Door closers are required by law. It is your responsibility to report any problems with door closers as soon as possible to the Facilities Department. Repairs are a priority because door closers save lives by slowing the spread of fire and smoke.
- The common areas of your building have fire and life safety equipment such as:
 

» Fire extinguishers	» Smoke/carbon monoxide detectors
» Pull stations	
» Fire alarm panels	» 24-hour monitoring system
- If you need assistance exiting the building in an emergency, please contact your Property Supervisor to have your name added to the Non-Ambulatory List that is provided to the Fire Department
- **It is a crime to disconnect door closers, smoke/carbon monoxide detectors and fire and life safety equipment. Doing this will lead to eviction.**



## TENANT TIP # 16

### Fire Safety Tips:

#### Cooking:

- Do not leave pots or pans unattended on the stove
- Do not hang curtains, towels, paper or other combustible materials above the stove
- Have a fire extinguisher available in the kitchen

#### Candles

- Blow out the candle when leaving the room or going to sleep
- Place candles in sturdy, burn-resistant containers that won't tip over and are big enough to collect dripping wax
- Keep lit candles away from items that can catch fire such as clothing, books, curtains, Christmas trees and paper decorations

### Smoke & carbon monoxide detectors

Failing to obey the Fire Code could result in a costly fine. Please contact the Facilities Department right away if:

- You think your smoke detector is not working or it is “chirping”
- The “power on” indicator goes out
- The detector is damaged
- There is an electrical problem that may affect your electrically-wired detector

## Security

### Apartment buildings

Help protect yourself and your neighbours. Keep your building as safe and secure as possible:

- Do not prop open any doors to the building or allow entry to anyone who is not your guest
- Apartment doors should be locked at all times. Use your peephole to see who is outside your door and do not open the door if you feel unsafe
- If you invite a salesperson into your unit, show them out of the building once done
- If you see something happen in your community and you think a person or property is in immediate danger (i.e. a crime in progress), call 911 to report the emergency

## Moving out

### Notice to vacate

If you plan to move out of your unit, you must give your Property Supervisor 60 days written notice from the first day of the next month. You will be responsible for paying rent for this timeframe. For example, if you give notice on April 23, you are responsible for the rent until June 30.

### Unit inspection

After you give notice that you are moving, you and your Property Supervisor may inspect your unit. You need to return the unit to its original condition, such as painting the unit a neutral color and removing your possessions. You may also have to pay for any repairs that are considered above and beyond regular maintenance (for example, holes in walls, dark paint on walls).



**TENANT  
TIP # 17**

The best security is the eyes and ears of neighbors. Protect yourself and your community by reporting crime.

**Police  
Crime Stoppers  
Housing Services**

**Call 911 for Emergencies.**



## Rights and responsibilities

## Rights and responsibilities

### Common rooms (Apartment Buildings Only)

- The common room is available to all tenants and using the room for a personal function cannot restrict the use of the room by the other tenants
- The tenants using the common room are responsible to keep it clean and tidy

### Eviction

Hastings LHC wants to keep tenants housed. We work with you to solve problems as they arise. Please contact your Property Supervisor if you run into any difficulties.

However, you may be evicted if you:

- Do not pay your rent
- Repeatedly pay rent late
- Cancel or let your tenant insurance expire
- Provide false information about your household income
- Make too much noise or act in a way that seriously bothers another tenant or landlord
- Threaten the safety of another tenant
- Conduct illegal activities on Housing Services property
- Damage the Landlord's property
- Failing to provide access to staff or contractors for required repairs and services

### Tenant Appeal

You have the right to request an appeal if you believe that:

- Your rent has been miscalculated
- Your subsidy should not have been terminated
- Your request for a transfer has been unfairly denied
- You should not have been put on the over-housed list

Tenants have 10 business days from the date they were informed of the decision, to request a review in writing. Submit requests to: The Appeal Committee, Hastings County Housing Services, 228 Church Street Postal Bag 6300, Belleville, ON K8N 5E2 or fax to: 613-966-4598.



## Being a Good Neighbour

### Smoke Free No Smoking

As of January 1, 2016, Hastings County Community & Human Services, Housing Services implemented a Smoke Free Housing Policy. Under this policy new tenants are not permitted to smoke in their units; current tenants are “grandfathered” therefore are permitted to smoke under their current lease agreement.

Tenants that wish to smoke, may do so out doors:

Townhouses - must be five (5) metres from all windows, and doors;  
 Apartment Buildings – must be nine (9) metres from the building.

### Pets

You are responsible for your pet. This means that you must clean up after it, repair any damage your pet causes and make sure it does not harm or disturb other tenants, staff or animals. Do not allow your pet to roam free around the property.

### Noise and Disturbances

You and your neighbour have a right to enjoy your home. Successful community living requires respect for one another’s viewpoint. Sometimes we will not agree. Keeping good relationships with your neighbours can go a long way towards making the community one that everyone can enjoy. Please keep the following in mind:

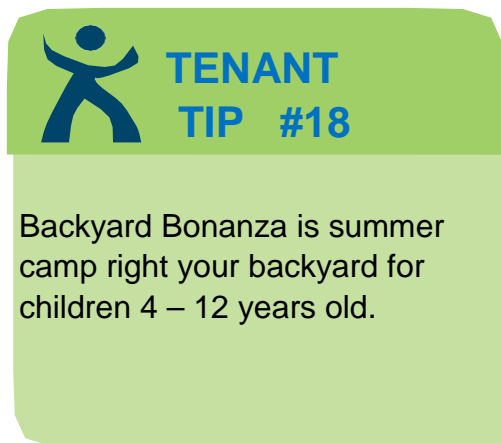
- Realize that some disagreement is normal – take positive steps to settle these differences quickly
- Be considerate of others – when playing your TV, stereo or radio – if you live above another unit, put down an area rug to decrease noise coming from your unit – keep your patio, balcony neat and attractive
- Stay cool – do not attempt to resolve conflict while you are angry
- Be patient – try to be understanding – change takes time
- Speak directly to the person involved – solutions that you and your neighbour both agree on are often the ones that work the best
- Report to Property Supervisor – if talking with your neighbour doesn’t help – contact your Property Supervisor – you will be asked to file a written complaint and the Property Supervisor will discuss the situation with you and your neighbour to try to find a workable solution.

## Community Relations

The Community Relations team bring services to your neighbourhood:

Welcome Home Program - Provides a “welcome” visit to the neighbourhood and information about services in the community

Backyard Bonanza - Summer program for kids



Food to Go Program - Provides healthy snacks to kids during the summer

Home Visitor Program –Provides support to Tenants struggling with housing issues (eg housekeeping, social problems, help with paperwork, etc)



## Transfers to another unit

Hastings County LHC has a transfer policy regarding moving from one Hastings LHC unit to another.

You may be able to transfer from one LHC unit to another if you meet the criteria:

- Special Provincial Priority - Special consideration may be given if your personal safety or the safety of another household member is at risk because of abuse by someone you live with. This priority status is given to help you separate from the abuser.
- Over-housed - If you are living in a unit that has more bedrooms than your current household needs based on Hastings County LHC occupancy standards, you may be considered over-housed (for example, when family members, such as adult children, move out);
  - You have lived in your current unit for at least 12 months
  - There is no damage in your unit
  - You have not been served a Notice of Termination for at least six (6) months
  - You do not owe any money to Housing Services or any other Social Housing Provider
  - You have paid your rent in full and on time for at least six(6) consecutive months
  - There have been no complaints about you disturbing other tenants or staff
  - You have an active tenant insurance policy
  - You are not in contravention of your lease



Before you request a transfer be sure that your unit has been restored to the condition it was in when you moved in.



➤ Hastings County LHC Policies

- › Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)
- › The Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB)
- › Housing Services Act (HSA)
- › Ontario Human Rights Code

- › Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- › Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

## **Policy and Legislation**

### **Hastings County LHC Policies**

Hastings County Community and Human Services, Housing Services, has a set of policies that can be found on our website at: [www.hastingscounty.com](http://www.hastingscounty.com).

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

The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 (RTA) came into effect on January 31, 2007. The purpose of this Act is to:

- Protect residential tenants from unlawful rent increases and unlawful evictions
- Establish a framework for regulating residential rents
- Balance the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants
- Provide other processes to informally resolve disputes

### **The Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB)**

The Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal became the Landlord and Tenant Board when the RTA came into effect. The Board's role is to provide information about the RTA and to resolve disputes between residential landlords and tenants. You can reach the Landlord and Tenant Board at 1-888-332-3234 from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### **Housing Services Act (HSA)**

The Housing Services Act, 2011 allows for the community based planning and delivery of housing and homelessness services with general provincial oversight and policy direction. It sets out the requirements for rent-geared-to-income rent calculations, waiting lists and other areas effecting tenants.

### **Ontario Human Rights Code**

The Ontario Human Rights Code provides protection from discrimination and harassment based on race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, color, citizenship, religious beliefs, political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, physical and mental disability, or receipt of social assistance. For more information on the Ontario Human Rights Code, visit [www.ohrc.on.ca/en](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en).

## Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)

All information relating to rent-geared-to-income tenants that is provided to, collected or maintained by Housing Services is subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Housing Services cannot share any information contained in your housing application and tenancy files with anyone, not even another family member, without your written permission.

## Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

Hastings County Housing Services is committed to review its practices, processes and built environment for barriers to access for persons with disabilities by:

- Working in partnership with Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Auditing all facilities to determine future accessibility related needs
- Using the AODA and FADS in order to accommodate persons requiring alternate formats

For more information on the AODA, visit [accesson.ca](http://accesson.ca) or [mcss.gov.on.ca](http://mcss.gov.on.ca).

To request accommodation or give feedback about accessibility at Housing Services, please call your Property Supervisor.



### TENANT TIP # 19

Hastings County Housing Services prides itself on the diversity of its communities. We want to make sure that no matter where you are from or what language you speak, you can participate fully. If you cannot understand notices, newsletters and important messages, please let us know and we can provide links to interpreters or translators in your community.

*This Tenant Handbook has been "adapted with permission from Niagara Region Housing", October 2018.*