



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What needs to be done to my house before it is ready for rent?

The better condition that a house is in, the better quality tenant that it will attract. Your home must be left in professionally cleaned condition as the tenants will be paying a non-refundable cleaning fee. Your Property Manager prefers to arrange this cleaning to insure that the cleaning guidelines are strictly followed. The carpets must be freshly cleaned and all debris and personal belonging removed from the house.

It is not necessary to paint automatically, but you should consider painting any room that has dirty or marred walls. A neutral color is best. Your Property Manager will be happy to discuss any necessary repairs or painting with you. Neutral window coverings such as blinds should be left, but not curtains that match a particular bedspread or couch. Tenants moving into a rental property do expect some sort of window coverings to be provided for privacy and safety.

The tenants are generally requested to maintain the yard in the condition it is provided to them. Therefore, the yard should be freshly mowed, weeded, trimmed and the leaves and debris removed.

How will you find tenants for my house and how long will it take?

Your property will be advertised on our website, as well as several other national third party websites. It will also be posted on craigslist regularly. A Property Information Sheet will be prepared for your property with all the necessary information and pictures. This information is given to anyone who sees the property, and is often faxed to people who have indicated an interest. A book of Property Information Sheets for all available properties is in at our office for prospective tenants to browse through if they stop by our office, which they often do.

We are in frequent contact with many real estate agents in the Albany area as well as the relocation offices of major companies.

It normally takes two to four weeks to rent a home. It sometimes takes longer in the winter. A home goes on the list of available properties as soon as we receive notice from the existing tenant and permission from the owner to re-rent.



Do you collect first and last months rent?

The most common move-in cost in the Albany area is about two months rent. While you can collect first and last months rent, it is generally preferable to collect first months rent plus a security deposit as a security deposit can be used for any owner costs while a last month rent can only be used for rent.

As well as first month's rent, we normally take a non-refundable cleaning fee sufficient to have the property cleaned when vacant and a refundable security deposit, the total of which is approximately one month's rent. The property is automatically professionally cleaned between each tenant.

Can I say that I do not want any pets or smokers in the house? How about children?

Pets owners are not a protected class. However, by eliminating them you are probably eliminating 75% of the people in the market for a rental house! Being open to pets does make your property available to more potential renters. Additional deposits for pets generally run \$200.00 to \$500.00. However, if you feel very strongly about this issue, we will agree not to show your property to anyone with a pet.

All of our properties prohibit smoking, in the interest of protecting your investment, as well as the health of the neighborhood.

Children come under the protected class of "familial status" and it is not possible to discriminate in this way. Our application forms do not ask number or ages of any children.

What happens if the tenant does not pay rent on time?

The rent is due on the first of each month and considered late after the fifth. More than 95% of the tenants pay their rent by the fifth of the month. If not paid by the eighth of the month, we will take the first step in the eviction process, which is to send to the tenant a "72 Hour Notice" to pay the rent or vacate.

If they have not paid by the end of the notice period, we would notify the owner and file at the courthouse for a FED (eviction) hearing, which will be within ten days. In most cases, we will handle all evictions ourselves, without an attorney. You would pay initially for filing fees (which are later charged to the tenant) but there is no additional charge for our time. If an attorney is necessary in a contested FED, you will be responsible for any legal fees.



When do I get my money each month?

The rents are due on the first of the month and late after the fifth. The rental funds must have cleared their banks before we can begin disbursing funds and the Real Estate Division as deemed it necessary to wait two weeks for such clearance. We begin the payment of bills on the fifteenth and the statements to owners, along with their checks, go out between the 24th and 30th. The statement will have all activity on the account for that month.

How am I protected if the tenant damages the property?

A security deposit is taken at move in order to minimize the risk of tenant damage. Tenants who pass our screening criteria generally do not create any damages over the amount of the security deposit. Our screening company checks criminal, credit and eviction records as well as jobs and landlords.

Should the tenants leave the property owing more than is covered by the security deposit, they will be billed. If they do not pay, it will be turned over to a collection agency.

What happens if the tenant leaves before the end of the lease?

The tenant is responsible for the rent for the term of the lease. If they are forced or choose to leave prior to the termination date, they will be charged for the rent until the property is re-rented to acceptable persons under the same terms and conditions of the original lease. They are also responsible for the cost of re-renting the property, 50% of one months rent (\$200 minimum), and the advertising cost.

Will I get called in the middle of the night with emergencies?

We will handle all emergency and non-emergency repairs. You would never be called in the middle of the night!

Who does repairs on the properties you manage? Can I use my own contractors?

We use a variety of contractors depending on what needs to be done. A list of the requirements for those contractors is listed separately. Many of our vendors are available 24 hours a day for emergencies. They work at competitive rates and are licensed and bonded as appropriate. You are billed for exactly the amount of the vendors invoice; we do not charge for supervision of normal repairs.