



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

CMHA Housing Handbook



Acknowledgements

This handbook draws upon information from other tenant guides and resources. The Sandy Hill Community Health Centre's Tenant Guide and the City of Ottawa's Housing First HBCM Guide offered great info and some materials are used directly in this guide. Other sources of info used in this handbook are from Crime Prevention Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health, CMHA National and CMHA Ottawa.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Important Numbers	7
Section 1: Your Mental Health Supports	8
Community Mental Health Worker	8
Crisis Plan Summary	8
Groups to Attend	9
Other Supports	9
Peer Supports	9
Section 2: Your Lease	10
Legal Facts	10
Neighbours	11
Noise Complaint.....	12
Rent and Utility Payments	12
Unit Condition	13
Unwanted Guests	13
What does my lease say?	13
Section 3: Your Building	14
Garbage	14
Laundry	14
Instructions for Washing and Drying Laundry	15
Separate Your Loads	15
Choose Your Load Size	15
Choose Your Water Temperature	15
Start Your Load	15
Remove Your Load	15
Using the Dryer	16
Maintenance	16
Emergencies	16
Gas Leaks	16
General Maintenance	17
Reporting Maintenance Issues to Your Landlord	17
Getting Maintenance Issues Fixed	17
Tips to Avoid Maintenance Issues	18
Mail	18
Pest Control	18
Bed Bugs	19
Fruit Flies	19
Pets	20
Smoking and Vaping	20

Table of Contents (continued)

Storage	20
Section 4: Your Daily Life at Home	21
Bills and Budget	21
Cleaning	21
How to Clean Surfaces (countertops, tables, etc.)	22
How to Clean the Floor	22
Cleaning Your Kitchen.....	22
Clogs	22
Fixing Toilet Clogs.....	22
How to Use a Plunger.....	22
Tips to Avoid Toilet Clogs	22
Fixing Shower or Sink Clogs.....	23
Tips to Avoid Clogs.....	23
Cooking and Groceries	23
Cooking.....	23
Grocery Shopping.....	24
Furnishing your apartment	25
Keys	25
Lightbulbs	26
Loneliness	26
Repairs	27
Substance Use.....	27
Section 5: Your Community	28
City of Ottawa Services.....	28
2-1-1	28
3-1-1	28
9-1-1	28
Community Health and Resource Centres	29
Employment	29
Food and Cooking Problems	29
Ottawa Good Food Box	29
Community Cooking Groups	29
Food Banks	30
Libraries	31
Parks	31
Recreation	31
Shopping	31
Transit	32
Travel Training	32
Affording Public Transit	32
ODSP and Medical Travel	32
Community Pass	32

Table of Contents (continued)

Equi Pass	33
Seniors	33
Access Pass	33
Schedules and Routes	33
Para Transpo	33
Volunteering	33
Section 6: Your Safety	34
9-1-1 Emergencies	34
Fire Safety	34
General Fire Safety	35
How to Use a Fire Extinguisher	35
Harm Reduction	35
Home Takeovers	36
Preventing a Home Takeover	37
Recognizing a Home Takeover	37
During a Home Takeover	37
After a Home Takeover	37
Your Landlord’s Role in Home Takeovers	37
Overdoses	38
How to Recognize a Fentanyl Overdose	39
What to do is Someone is overdosing	39
How to Recognize a Fentanyl Overdose	39
How to Recognize a Fentanyl Overdose	39
Appendix A – Sample Crisis Plan	41
Appendix B – Move-In Inspection Form	43
Appendix C – My Personal Guest Policy	47
Appendix D – What does my lease say?	48
Appendix E – The Honest Monthly Budget	50
Appendix F – Cleaning Schedule	52
Appendix G – Welcomed Guest or Home Takeover	55

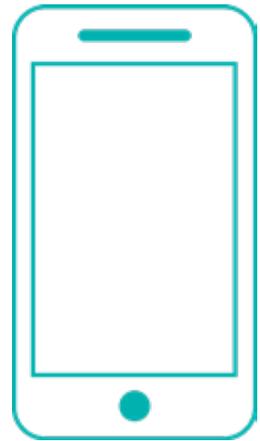
How to Use this Handbook

This Handbook is intended as a resource to help you with housing related questions and to support you as a tenant. These are ways you can use this Handbook:

1. Review the Handbook with your Mental Health Support Worker and discuss areas that are important to you.
2. Fill in the sections with phone numbers, contacts and ideas so you can refer to them as you need. The green sections are areas where you can fill in your personal information.
3. Use the Table of Contents to look for topics based on the Sections and see that topics are arranged alphabetically.
4. Take a look at the worksheets in the Appendices - complete them and use them as you need.

Important Numbers

Complete this page and stick it on your fridge, or take a photo of it and keep it on your phone.



Case Manager Name: _____

Case Manager Phone Number: _____

Program Manager: _____

Housing Coordinator: _____

Housing Coordinator Phone: _____

Superintendent Name: _____

Superintendent Phone Number: _____

Maintenance Emergency Number: _____

Landlord Name: _____

Landlord Phone Number: _____

Distress Centre (toll free): 613-238-3311

Mental Health Crisis Line (toll free): 613-722-6914

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

Family Doctor Name: _____

Family Doctor Phone Number: _____

My pharmacy is: _____

Other medical contacts (health clinics, health specialists):

Other community supports (counselors, lawyers, drop-ins):

Other important numbers:

Section 1: Your Mental Health Supports

Community Mental Health Supports

If you're feeling anxious or distressed talk to someone about it or call for someone for support. During the day, you can call your case manager.

Case Manager Name: _____

Case Manager Phone Number: _____

Here are other numbers for support 24 hours a day, toll free:

- **Mental Health Crisis Line:** 613-722-6914
- **Mobile Crisis Line:** 613-241-0422
- **Distress Centre:** 613-238-3311

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

- If you feel bad physically and you're not sure what to do, you can call Telehealth Ontario 24 hours a day, for free. They will help you.

Other numbers that may be useful:

In Case of Emergency

For a health emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to a hospital.

Decide what the best thing to do is (go to a clinic, an emergency room, or take care of it yourself, using your crisis plan).

Crisis Plan Summary

A crisis plan is a useful tool to help you when you aren't feeling well or if life is getting overwhelming. Talk to the people who support you, including your mental health worker, to help you create a brief crisis plan below. For a more detailed crisis plan, see Appendix A at the back of this handbook.

Keep your crisis plan handy so you can refer to it when you need it. Share the plan with the people who support you so they can help you use your plan if you need it.

Groups to Attend

Groups:

Day/Time

Location

Other Supports

Peer Supports

A person who has lived experience with a mental health issue can be called a “peer.” A Peer Support Worker, or Peer Supporter, is a trained peer who builds a mutual relationship with another peer. This means that they both share their experiences and build strength and resilience together. You can connect with each other by sharing your experiences with your mental health issue, trying to get help, or just talk about how you’re feeling that day. Peer Supporters don’t have an agenda or set goals with a peer, but the relationship you build may help you feel better because you won’t be alone.

A Peer Supporter may be a formal worker with an organization, or an informal supporter from a drop-in, 12 step meeting, or other support group you attend. You will know they are your supporter because you’ve had a discussion about this kind of relationship.

These Peer Support organizations are run by and for peers:

Mood Disorders Ottawa – (613) 526-5406 – www.mooddisordersottawa.ca

OCD Ottawa – info@ocdottawa.com – www.ocdottawa.com

Psychiatric Survivors of Ottawa – (613) 567-4379 – www.pso-ottawa.ca

Rollercoaster to Recovery is a free comprehensive list of peer services and other services in Ottawa, and can be downloaded at www.f-a-c.ca.

The peer support organization I want to connect with is: _____

Their number is: _____

Section 2: Your Lease

A lease is a legal contract between the tenant and the landlord. Most tenants and landlords are covered under the Residential Tenancies Act (the RTA). This law:

- Gives landlords and tenants specific rights and responsibilities,
- Provides rules for increasing the rent and for evicting a tenant, and
- Creates the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB).

Legal facts

Your rights and responsibilities as a tenant are described in your lease agreement. These rules apply to you, your housemates, guests, or anyone else you allow onto the property. Some of the most common rules include:

- Make sure your rent is paid on time.
- No illegal activity in your unit, or on your landlord's property.
- You, your housemates, your guests, or anyone else you allow onto the property must smoke in places that are approved by your landlord. If you live in a smoke-free property, make sure to smoke off the property.
- Never make changes to your property without written permission from your landlord. Changes include: painting, adding, removing, and changing flooring or appliances, and more.
- Never change or add locks to your unit without your landlord's permission. If you do get permission, give your landlord a copy of the new key as soon as you have one.
- If you plan on finding somewhere else to live, you need to let your landlord know with written notice at least 60 days (two months) before the end of the lease. Even if your lease is about to end, you still must give written notice if you are moving out. So even if you are on a month-to-month lease, you must give at least 60 days' written notice before you plan to leave. For example, if your tenancy begins on the first day each month and you give your landlord notice on June 15, the termination date would be August 31.
- If you are a victim of sexual and/or domestic violence and believe you could be harmed if you don't leave the rental unit, you can give 28 days' notice at any time during your tenancy.
- If you are moving out, make sure your property is empty, clean, and in good condition on the day you leave. This rule also applies to your yard and balcony, if you have any.
- Make sure all your utility bills (heating, hydro, and water) are paid in full before the day you are moving out.

If you are receiving a housing subsidy, there will be more rules for you to follow. Be sure to look at your subsidy agreement and to talk to the Housing Coordinator to know and understand those rules.

If you live in a condominium building, you also must follow the rules of the condominium, in addition to the rules in the Residential Tenancy Act. Often condos have special rules about pets, smoking, use of balconies, etc., that are quite strict.

Remember: treat your landlord with the same respect you would like to be treated. If you have an

issue with your landlord, do not harass them as this will only create more problems. If you need help dealing with your landlord, speak to your case manager or the Housing Coordinator.

If you are unsure about your rights, read through your lease, talk to your case manager or the Housing Coordinator, or get help from a legal clinic.

Housing Resources:

Action Housing
(613) 562-8219
261 Montreal Rd #200, Vanier, ON

Housing Help
(613) 563-4532
309 Cooper St, Ottawa, ON

Community Legal Clinics offer help and advice to tenants about their rights and responsibilities:

My closest legal clinic is: _____

The Landlord Tenant Board website: <http://www.sjto.gov.on.ca/ltb/>

Neighbours

The key to a successful tenancy is to be a good neighbour! Loud noises, loud voices, loud music, lots of comings and goings, etc., will bother your neighbours. Make sure that you, your housemates, and your guests are respectful towards your neighbours. As a tenant, you are responsible for the actions of your roommates, guests, and anyone else you allow onto the property.

Too much traffic in and out of your apartment could get you in trouble with your neighbours, your landlord, or even the police.

Sometimes your neighbours might cause problems for you. It's always best to stay calm when this happens. Try to talk to them about the problem in a calm, non-threatening way. Yelling or using aggressive body language is never a good idea. It will make them mad and make the problem worse. If you're not sure how to deal with a conflict or a problem with a neighbour, talk to your Case Manager, and they will help you out. If you see or hear signs of violence, call the police.



Noise Complaints

One main reason tenants get evicted is for being too noisy. Being a quiet neighbour and keeping your guests quiet is your responsibility. Turn down your TV, use headphones for music, TV and computers, and don't wear hard shoes or heels in the apartment because it can bother your neighbours below. Keep your dogs from barking. Ask your guests to be quiet.

In particular, make sure that you, your pets, or your guests do not make loud noise between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.. Any kind of loud noise after 11:00 p.m., on any night of the week, may disturb your neighbours, and they can call the police or the City by-law office. Excessive noise result in police can come to your apartment, and/or a warning, or a fine from By law. Furthermore, loud noises is a reason landlords have for evicting tenants.



If someone is being too loud, a polite and assertive way to tell the person why you are asking them to leave would be, "I need you to leave my apartment because you are making too much noise. Thank you." Or, "I'm sorry, but it's getting late and I need to be up early. I am going to bed now, but we can get together another time."

Rent and Utility Payments

Make sure your rent is paid in full, and on time every month using the type of payment you, CMHA Ottawa, and your landlord agreed on. For most people receiving housing support from CMHA Ottawa, this means a rent direct payment to your landlord from ODSP, or OW along with a rent supplement from CMHA Ottawa. If there is any problem with a rent payment, let your support worker, or the CMHA Ottawa Housing Coordinator know as soon as possible, and we will try to sort it out with you. Late rent, even by a day, can result in an eviction notice. The landlord can also charge extra fees for rent being late.

Rent needs to be paid, even if you have maintenance, or repair issues in your unit.

If your utilities such as heat and hydro are not included in your rent, make sure these bills are paid in full and on time. It's recommended to apply to OESP as soon as possible. As soon as you know you will be moving in, contact Ottawa Hydro to notify them. This will help in two ways:

1. When letting them know you will be moving in or providing your name as the tenant to receive your new bill, you could save money since it's a name change and not a brand new activation fee.
2. You can request the account number and then reference this in your OESP application.

Secondly, many people who are on ODSP or OW arrange to have heat and hydro paid directly. Your ODSP worker, OW worker or Case Manager can help you with applying for the OESP. Having ODSP process the application results in a faster processing time, instead of mailing or doing an online application (according to OESP staff). This is important as your bills come in after a month (four weeks) and the sooner the OESP rebate pays off the balance (or a portion of it), the better.

*Use LEAP resource to help pay if no payment and notice of from hydro received

Unit Condition at Move-In

As a tenant, you are responsible for keeping your unit in good condition. That said, the place you are moving into may not be in the best condition to start with. To protect yourself and to help get your landlord to make necessary repairs, it is always a good idea to do a move-in inspection with your landlord. You will find a sample checklist you can use in Appendix B, or your landlord might have one they use. Do a move-in inspection right when you are moving in. Fill in the checklist and keep a copy for yourself.

Unwanted Guests

Your apartment is your space, so you are allowed to have people over. But if they are causing problems (stealing your things, breaking your things, eating your food without your permission, breaking your tenancy rules, etc.) then you may have to ask them to leave. From your landlord's point of view, you are responsible for your guests, and their behaviour, so make sure they follow the rules too.

Before letting someone into your apartment, make sure they know what you expect of them and what rules they should follow to avoid any problems. For example, “no drugs in the apartment,” “keep your voice down to not wake the neighbours,” or “please take off your shoes before entering.”

It's important to choose wisely when inviting guests. Before letting guests into your apartment, ask yourself:

- How has this person acted while in your apartment (or friends' apartments) in the past?
- Will this person obey the rules you have in your apartment?
- If you want this person to leave, will they cause a problem?

It's also important to let them know what time they should leave your apartment. This isn't rude. You have responsibilities, and may have to be up early for work, so it's okay to ask people to leave. Whether you just need to go to bed or your guest is causing problems, ask them to leave in a polite (but assertive) manner so you don't offend them.

If you are having problems with unwanted guests, you may be experiencing a Home Takeover. See the Home Takeovers section in Section 6. You can get help from your case manager, the housing coordinator and your landlord.

What Does My Lease Say?

Recently, the Ontario government has told landlords to use a standard lease, which is quite simple to read. But it is long and landlords can add extra attachments with more rules to the lease. In order to help you focus on the things in your lease that are most important, you can use the “What Does my Lease Say” worksheet in Appendix D. If you need help, ask your Case Manager or Housing Coordinator.

Section 3: Your Building

Garbage

Where you put your garbage will depend on where you live. Your building may have a garbage chute, big garbage bins, or you may have your own garbage bins. Check with your case manager where to put your garbage. When you move in, your landlord will probably show you too, and explain how getting rid of garbage works in your building.

It is very important to not let your garbage pile up. It's easier to deal with when you take it out often, and you won't attract pests like flies, roaches or mice. On garbage day, make sure to take it out early in the morning on that day or the night before. You can buy garbage bags at the supermarket or at the dollar store.

Recycling is another part of taking out your garbage. Check with your landlord or case manager about where to put your recycling. You may have small recycling bins in your apartment, or big recycling bins in your building. Small recycling bins are colour coded – black bin for paper, cartons and cardboard; a blue bin for plastic, metal and glass; and a green bin for items that are compostable. Make sure that any plastic, metal and glass has been cleaned before going into the blue box and that items you throw into the green bin can be composted. You can also check with your case manager to get a list of items that you can recycle, or compost.

My garbage goes here: _____

My plastic recycling goes here: _____

My cardboard recycling goes here: _____

My compost goes here: _____

Laundry

Depending on where you live, you may have a laundry machine and dryer in your apartment, or you may have to go to a laundromat. In a public laundromat, do not leave your clothes unattended. They might get stolen. Bring a book or activity to do while waiting. It takes about 30 or 40 minutes to wash the clothes and about 50 to 60 minutes to dry them.

The closest place to do laundry is: _____

Cost for Washer is: _____ **Cost for Dryer is:** _____

Sometimes a laundry card needs to be purchased in order to use the laundry machines.

If you need a laundry card, you can get it here: _____

It costs: _____

Instructions for Washing Machines and Dryers

It's important to follow the instructions on the washing machine because every machine is different.

Separate Your Loads

Before you start the washing machine, separate your white clothes from your dark clothes and coloured clothes. You will need to wash the white clothes separately, or else the dark-coloured clothes might dye your white clothes a different colour. Read the labels on the clothes if it is your first time washing them. Some might say to hand wash them. Others might say to only wash in cold water.



Choose Your Load Size

Put one of your separated piles of clothes in the washing machine. Don't overload and pack the washing machine with clothes or they won't wash properly.

Depending on how big your load of laundry is, choose the 'cycle' size on the washing machine (small, medium or large). Do the clothes fill the washing machine to the top? Then it's a large load. Do the clothes fill the machine halfway? Then it is a medium load. Are there only a few items of clothing? Then it is a small load.

Choose Your Water Temperature

Hot water might fade your clothes or shrink them. It's best to use warm water, or cold water on your clothes. It's best to use hot water for really dirty clothes, rags, and towels.

Start Your Load

Depending on your machine, you will need to pour laundry detergent over your clothes once they are in the machine or pour detergent into the laundry machine itself, where it tells you to. To know what amount to pour, follow the instructions on the bottle.

Just a reminder: laundry detergent is different from fabric softener. Fabric softener makes your clothes smell nice, but won't clean them.

Some washing machines might require you to choose what type of wash. It is easiest to choose the 'normal' wash for normal clothes, towels, rags, bed sheets, etc. When the clothes are ready to wash, close the lid of the washing machine, and press 'start'.

Starting your load of laundry may vary slightly depending on the type of machine you are using. If you are at a laundromat, don't be afraid to ask a worker how to use one of the machines.

Remove Your Load

When your load of laundry is done, try to remove your clothes to dry them as soon as you can. Wet clothes might start to smell musty if they are left in the washing machine, or sitting around too long (a few hours or more).

Using the Dryer

Put the clothes you want to dry in the dryer. Some items you may want to hang-dry (letting them air dry). It is best to hang-dry silk, wool, bras, and other delicate materials. To figure out if you should hang-dry your clothes, read the label on the clothes and it will tell you.

To use your dryer turn the dryer's dial/knob to 'normal dry' or something similar. Close the door and press start. If you want to make your clothes smell nice you can throw in one or two dryer sheets.

Most dryers have a lint trap that must be cleaned each time you use it. If you let the lint build up the heat from the dryer can maybe start a fire with the lint.



Maintenance

Emergencies

A maintenance issue becomes a maintenance emergency when it puts you or the property at risk. For instance, leaks and floods, overflowing toilets that you cannot unclog, no heat, electrical problems.

For maintenance emergencies in your unit call:

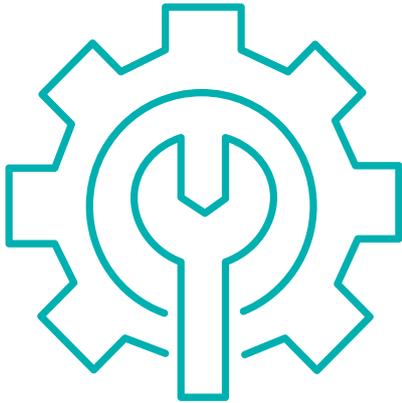
Gas Leaks

Some apartments are heated by gas, or may have a gas hot water tank. If you smell something like rotten eggs, there might be a gas leak. If you suspect a gas leak, leave the area immediately. Don't use your phone, electrical appliances, and don't smoke or use matches, lighters or candles. Once out of the area, call the Enbridge emergency number or 9-1-1. Also let your landlord know.

Enbridge emergency number: 1-866-763-5427

General Maintenance

No matter where you live, you are likely to have a maintenance issue at some point while living there. Your landlord is responsible for the maintenance and repair of your rented home. This includes fixing what came with your place, such as appliances. It also includes keeping the common areas such as halls, elevators and laundry rooms clean and safe.



Your landlord must fix or replace anything that is in bad condition or that does not work properly. It does not matter if your lease or rental agreement says something different or if you knew about the problem when you agreed to rent the place. The law says your landlord is responsible EXCEPT when you or your guests break anything accidentally or on purpose. In those cases you must fix it or pay for the repair. You also must keep

your rental unit clean and free of pests/bugs.

Reporting Maintenance Issues to Your Landlord

First thing to do is to talk to your landlord about what is wrong and ask to have it fixed. The longer you wait, the longer it will take to be repaired. Keep notes for yourself about when you talked to your landlord and what you talked about.

When reporting a maintenance issue it is sometimes helpful to take photos of the problem and put the date on them. If your landlord does not fix the problem soon, write a letter asking your landlord to do the repair. Make sure to keep a copy of the pictures or letter yourself. Or if your landlord has a form for repair requests, fill one out, and keep a copy.

It is safest to keep paying your rent while you are trying to get your landlord to deal with repair problems. If you do not pay all your rent for any reason your landlord can try to have you evicted. Give your landlord a reasonable amount of time to fix issues in your unit after you report them.

Getting Maintenance Issues Fixed

Under tenants' rights, you must be given a written notice 24 hours in advance before the landlord can enter your apartment unit. Landlords can only enter an apartment between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

After your landlord gives you a 24-hour written notice to enter, make sure your landlord and/or repair people can access your apartment safely. If you have a dog you can make arrangements for someone to be there or to take the dog out of the unit during the visit, or the dog can be locked away in another area of the unit.

If you've tried getting your landlord to fix things and it isn't happening, get help.

Property Standards at City of Ottawa
Housing Help
Action Housing
Community Legal Services

call 311
613-563-4532
613-562-8219
613-241-7008



Tips to Avoid Maintenance Issues

- Always turn on kitchen fans during cooking and bathroom fans during showers to avoid mold from moisture.
- Take out your garbage frequently.
- Do your dishes often.

Mail

Mail is delivered Monday to Friday, except on holidays. Check your mail at least once a week. It is against the law for other people to open your mail.

If you lose your key to your mailbox call your superintendent. There will be a fee usually around \$20.

Your mailbox is located: _____

If you would prefer to have your mail delivered somewhere other than to your apartment, you can set up a community mailbox. To find out more contact Canada Post.

Pest Control

Report insect (bed bugs, cockroaches, etc.) and vermin (mice, rats, etc.) infestations to your landlord as soon as you notice them. The longer you wait, the harder and more expensive it will be to get rid of the pests.

There are a couple of things you can do to prevent pests from coming into your home:

- Do not leave food in the open in your apartment.
- Dispose of garbage often.
- Get rid of open water or liquid (open cans of pop, water in the drain, etc).

Landlords are responsible for the cost of pest control but could pass this cost onto you if you/your apartment is proven to be the source of the pest infestation.

You are required to cooperate with the landlord to allow the pest control response to happen. You are responsible for preparing the apartment and you need to allow the pest control operator into the unit.

Under tenants' rights, you must be given a written notice 24 hours in advance before the landlord/ pest control operator can enter your apartment and the spraying should happen between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are small insects about the size of an apple seed often found on your bed or box spring. They are oval with broad shaped bodies, no wings, and a short, broad head. They can be anywhere from brown (unfed adults), blood red (after feeding) and yellow-white (nymphs).



Bed bugs usually bite at night. Usually the bites are around the neck, face, upper torso, arms and hands. The bites usually appear as a group of three and are red, itchy, flat sores.

Bed bugs are very difficult to get rid of and can be less of a problem if you find them early. If you think you have a bed bug problem, contact your case manager as soon as possible.

It is the landlord's responsibility to try to control the bed bug problem and as a tenant you are responsible to help your landlord try to manage the problem.

A landlord can't evict a tenant for reporting an infestation of bedbugs. Tenants are responsible for preparing their apartment for treatment. This may mean washing clothes, clearing shelves, and moving furniture away from walls. The landlord is responsible for informing the tenant on how to prepare. External social service agencies may be able to help. Speak to your case manager.

Make sure you do what your landlord says if you have a bed bug problem to avoid being charged. If you do end up being charged money, the landlord must bring this issue to the Landlord Tenant Board, and you will be given a chance to explain why you may have missed an appointment or not prepared your apartment before an extra charge is given.

If a landlord refuses to help with the bedbug problem, you may obtain assistance and advice from legal clinics, the Landlord and Tenant Board, or from Ottawa Public Health.

Anyone concerned about bed bugs can call the City of Ottawa at 3-1-1. Calls are forwarded to a Public Health Inspector for follow up.

Fruit Flies

Fruit flies are a very common problem and can be difficult to get rid of. Unlike bed bugs, rats, or other pests, thankfully there is an easy trick you can do on your own to get rid of them:

- First get rid of all your rotting fruits and vegetable. Store remaining fruits and veggies in the fridge.
- Put a few drops of soap and cider vinegar or a piece of fruit in a small container.
- Cover the container with one layer of saran wrap.
- Put an elastic around the container to fully seal the saran wrap.
- With a fork, poke holes in the saran wrap. The fruit flies will fly in through the holes to get the vinegar or fruit and will not be able to get out.
- Leave it in your kitchen to trap the fruit flies.

Pets

Having a pet is a responsibility and requires you to be a responsible pet owner. It is your responsibility to clean up after your pet to make sure your apartment stays clean and they do not cause any damage.

Do not allow your dog to use your balcony as a toilet. Immediately clean up after your pet in your yard and anywhere else on the landlord's property. Make sure your pets do not make loud noises that bothers your neighbours.

Here are specific rules the City of Ottawa has for pets:

- Do not keep pets that are on the City's Prohibited Animal list.
- You can have up to three (3) dogs in an apartment or house, and up to five (5) cats.
- If you have cats and dogs, you can have a maximum of five (5) in total. Three (3) dogs is still the maximum you can have. You can't have four (4) dogs, and one (1) cat, but you can have three (3) cats, and two (2) dogs.
- Puppies and/or kittens under 20 months old (1 year and 8 months) do not count as part of the three (3) dogs, and five (5) cats rule.
- As a pet owner you must try to prevent your pet from constantly barking. Respond immediately and do not let it continue. Train your dog not to constantly bark.
- Always make sure your dog has water, shelter, food, and is walked often. This will prevent him from barking a lot.

You are responsible for the actions of your animals. You may be evicted if your animals cause problems for the other tenants.

Condos are allowed to make special rules about pets and they can prohibit pets completely. When you live in a condo you must follow the condo rules.

Smoking and Vaping

You, your housemates, your guests, or anyone else you allow onto the property must only vape or smoke in places that are approved by your landlord. If you live in a smoke-free property make sure to smoke off the property.

Do not put a lit cigarette on any surfaces. Always use an ashtray.

Discuss with your landlord if you can vape in your apartment or if you have to use the designated smoking areas.

Storage

Apartment buildings sometimes have special storage available to tenants. Sometimes it is included in the rent or sometimes you need to pay for it separately. Follow the building rules about how and where to store things like bikes.

Do not use your balcony or parking spot as storage space. If you need storage and your building does not have it, you may have to find somewhere else to store your things.

Section 4: Your Daily Life at Home

Bills and Budget

One important responsibility when living on your own is paying the monthly bills. It helps to write up a budget. When the bills come in, review them to make sure the charges are correct.

If you have a bill it is important to pay it by the date it is due or there will be extra charges.

Write out your list of monthly expenses here:

Rent: _____

Utilities: _____

Phone: _____

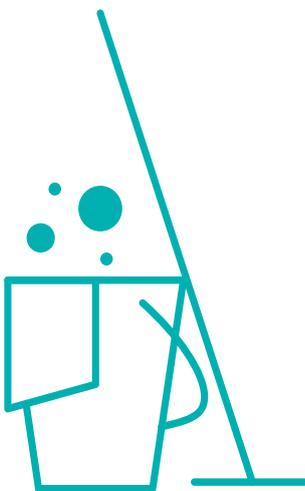
Internet: _____

Food: _____

Other: _____

If you have problems paying your bills, discuss this with your Case Manager. Do not wait. At the back of this handbook in Appendix E is a detailed budgeting worksheet called The Honest Budget. Use this to get a real handle on your budget.

Cleaning



To follow the rules of your tenancy, it is important to keep your house clean so you can live in it comfortably and with good hygiene. Make sure to clean up after yourself and throw out garbage or stuff you don't need. Take care of your unit and appliances, and keep them clean. If you have a yard or balcony make sure you keep them free of clutter and clean, as per your lease.

Do a little bit of cleaning every day. Fifteen minutes a day will keep your place looking great and will make you feel good. If you're not sure how to clean your apartment ask your case manager. You can ask your case manager for cleaning supplies.

Do not write or let anyone put graffiti on your walls. Dirty walls make people dislike their housing and it makes their place feel like a back alley instead of a home.

Get rid of your garbage, recycling and compost the right way and be sure to properly sort it all. If your landlord has communal bins, get rid of all items in the right bins. If your landlord doesn't have communal bins, store your bins in a spot your landlord is okay with, put out the bins for collection

at the right time, and pick up your bins after they are emptied by the City. See Appendix F for a sample schedule of cleaning tasks that you should do daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.

How to Clean Surfaces (countertops, tables, etc.)

Spray them with a disinfectant and wipe them with a cloth. A mix of water and vinegar (half and half) can be used as a disinfectant.

How to Clean the Floor

Make sure to always throw out any garbage lying around. Hardwood floors should be swept with a broom. If you have carpet, it should be vacuumed.

Cleaning Your Kitchen

Make sure to clean the dishes often. Throwing away rotten food will prevent bad smell and pests. Check expiration dates on food and throw out food that is expired. An open container of baking soda in your fridge will soak up the smell from food.

Clogs

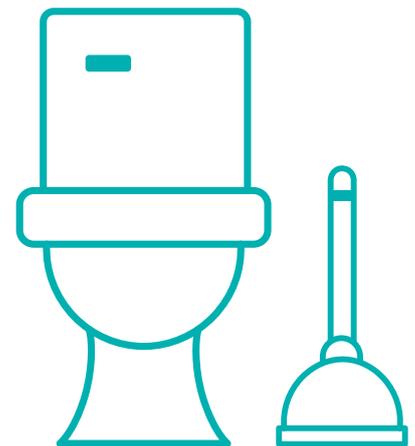
Fixing Toilet Clogs

There should be a plunger in every apartment. A plunger has either a wooden or plastic handle with a rubber suction cup at the end of it. If there isn't one in your apartment ask your case manager.

If your toilet is clogged and isn't flushing properly, you can try and use the plunger to fix it.

How to Use a Plunger

- Cover the drain hole in the toilet with the suction cup.
- Push the plunger up and down a few times without moving the suction cup.
- Repeat the up and down motion but this time pull up the plunger quickly, removing the suction cup from the drain hole.
- If this doesn't work and your toilet is still clogged or the water is rising, call your superintendent, it is their duty now to fix it. If you are too shy to talk to your superintendent, talk to your case manager.
- Don't flush the toilet if it's clogged.



Tips to Avoid Toilet Clogs

Do not flush:

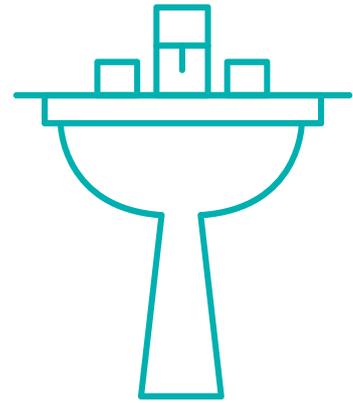
- Condoms and dental dams
- Tampons, tampon applicators, pads, or liners
- Drug paraphernalia (needles, pipes, etc.)
- Q-tips
- Paper towel
- Cigarette butts
- Kleenex
- Cardboard

Fixing Shower or Sink Clogs

If the water in the shower or in the sink isn't draining:

- Soak up the overflow of water with a rag.
- Use your plunger to try to unclog the drain. See the steps in How to Use a Plunger.

If your sink has two holes (one at the top for overflow of water) you need to cover the top hole when you use the plunger. Use a plastic bag to cover the hole, then a wet rag to keep it in place. If it doesn't work, call your superintendent, or your case manager if you are shy.



Tip to Avoid Clogs

Take out the hair in the shower or in the sink before it goes through the drain.

Cooking and Groceries

Cooking

There are different kinds of containers and cooking tools that you can use on stoves and microwaves. Make sure to only use pots and pans on the stove. Never put plastic in the oven because it will melt. Make sure to turn off the stove or the oven when you are done cooking.

Warning! When using a microwave, don't put metal, aluminum or Styrofoam in the microwave. It could catch on fire.



Grocery Shopping

Grocery shopping on a budget can be tough. Here are some tips to help you out:

- Check the weekly flyers for sales and coupons.
- When you go grocery shopping always make a list.
- Keep track of everything you put in your cart or basket to stay within your budget.
- Discounts on meats happen when the expiry date is the next day. If you freeze it or use it

right away it will be good.

- Bread, bagels, buns, etc. can be kept in the freezer, so if you don't want them to go bad just freeze them and defrost them overnight or in the microwave when you need some.

Some affordable stores for groceries are:

- Giant Tiger
- Food Basics
- Wal-Mart
- Freshco



Best Grocery store options near me: _____

- Use a food bank when you need to. You can find food bank info in Section 5 - Your Community.
- Other food programs and cooking groups are listed in Section 5

Furnishing Your Apartment

When you are first starting out in your apartment you need to have enough furniture to make it comfortable and so you can actually enjoy spending time in your unit. Talk to your worker about what you need to furnish your apartment with. Here are some resources that might help you:

City of Ottawa: Trudel Start-up Kit

Contact:

The City of Ottawa, Community & Social
Services Department
(613) 560-0622 ext. 4

Contact your worker for referral to the following agencies.

Matthew House Furniture Bank

340 Legget Drive, Door 53
(613) 591-6681

Helping with Furniture

5350 Canotek Road, Unit 9
(613) 612-6228

Value Village

1221 Cyrville Road
(613) 749-4977

St. Vincent de Paul

1620 Merivale Road
(613) 695-7162

Keys



It's very important to always know where your keys are. Make sure they are safely in your pocket before leaving your apartment and make sure to lock your door when you leave.

If you have lost your key, call your superintendent to get a new one or talk to your case manager. Don't break your door down to get in your apartment if you have lost your keys, call the building superintendent.

Never give your keys to anyone. The only other person who should have a set of your keys is your landlord or the person living with you. You can also make a copy and give it to your Case Manager if you are worried you will lose them.

Lightbulbs

Before changing your lightbulb, make sure the bulb has the right wattage. Wattage is a number followed by W (which means watts) located in the lamp.

There is also a number written on the light bulb. The wattage in the lamp and written on the lightbulb need to be the same.

Steps to Change a Lightbulb

1. Make sure to turn the light switch off so you do not get electrocuted.
2. Unscrew the old light bulb.
3. Throw out the old light bulb in the garbage.
4. Screw in the new light bulb. Don't press it too hard, or it may break.



Loneliness

“All alone! Whether you like it or not, alone will be something you’ll be quite a lot.”
–Dr. Seuss, *The Places You’ll Go*

Loneliness is real and common. Moving into a new place can create isolation and loneliness for anyone. Here are some ways to support yourself if you feel lonely:

- Have a list of people to call, including distress centres or warm lines
 - **The first person I’ll call when I feel lonely is:** _____
 - **Distress line: Distress Centre of Ottawa:** 613-238-3311
 - **Crisis line: Distress Centre of Ottawa:** 613-722-6914
- Connect with a community of your choosing – look for a local library, community centre, coffee shop, or community drop-in.
 - **Comfortable places for me to drop by in my community are:**

 - **To get there I will:** _____

- Build a routine that involves leaving the house, e.g.: Wednesday morning support at PSO, Wednesday afternoon yoga on the hill.
- Consider reaching out in the community, instead of pulling in. Volunteering and working are often where connections are made. See the section on Work and Volunteering.
- Have a basket or box with items to use when you feel bored, like your favourite movie, computer game, knitting, art supplies and puzzles.
- Decorate with photos of loved ones and with quotes and pictures of things you enjoy and give you a sense of belonging

- Say hi to the people you encounter in your building and your neighbourhood.
- While in-person contact generally gives people more satisfaction and wellness, “virtual” connection can also help with loneliness.
 - Emails, internet forums, chat groups and Facebook might be ways to feel connected to others.
 - The Big White Wall is an online mental health and wellbeing service offering self-help programs, creative outlets and a community that cares. Check it out at <https://www.bigwhitewall.ca>
 - Listen to radio or TV talk shows or podcasts on your computer, on topics that interest you.

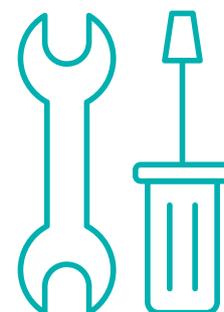
My ideas for dealing with loneliness are:

Caution: Sometimes feelings of loneliness lead to people to invite others to their home who end up taking advantage of the situation. They might not leave or they might become problematic guests. Think about the people you fully trust to invite into your home and those you would be better to meet in the community. See the Home Takeover section for more info.

Repairs

If something in your apartment is broken, call your superintendent. It is their duty to fix it. If you try to fix it, you might make it worse. If you are too shy to talk to your superintendent, talk to your case manager.

If you broke something, you might be charged for it, so remember to be careful.



Substance Use

If other tenants in your building are using drugs and their use is causing disruption to your enjoyment of your home, speak to your case manager and to your landlord to make a plan about what to do.

Illegal drug use in your apartment by you or your guests puts you at risk in getting in trouble with your landlord and being evicted.

If you use drugs, talk to your Case Manager. They can help you with harm reduction supplies. They can bring you sharps containers, safe injection or inhalation (crack pipe) supplies, and naloxone kits to have at your apartment. They can also link you to harm reduction and addiction treatment.

The best way to dispose of sharps containers/needles is: _____

Section 5: Your Community

City of Ottawa Services

2-1-1

Call 2-1-1 for an information and referral helpline to community, social, government, and health services.

Here are some examples:

- Non-emergency police concerns
- Food banks
- Walk-in clinics
- Alzheimer's support
- Mental health help
- Meals on Wheels
- Emergency shelters for homeless
- Services for domestic violence victims
- Public health
- Telehealth Ontario
- Crisis services
- Provincial and local helpline phone numbers
- Settlement help for newcomers
- Housing help centres
- Youth drop-in programs
- Child, youth, and family counselling
- Emergency utility assistance
- Understanding which government service might help
- Disability support programs
- Parenting programs

3-1-1

Call 3-1-1- for information about municipal government services, including OW and Essential Health Services, noise complaints, property maintenance complaints, and public health information.

9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies only. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate help from the police, fire department or paramedics.

Here are some examples:

- A fire.
- A crime, especially if in progress.
- A car crash, especially if someone is injured.
- A medical emergency, such as someone who is unconscious, gasping for air or not breathing, experiencing an allergic reaction, having chest pain, having uncontrollable bleeding, or any other symptoms that require immediate medical attention.

Community Information Bulletin

Keep an eye on or subscribe to “Community Information Bulletin” for community news, employment, training and volunteer opportunities, workshops, support groups, health info, and general info.

<http://www.cominfo-ottawa.org/bulletin.html>

(Left hand side to click subscribe)

Community Health and Resource Centres

Community Health and Resource Centres are located across Ottawa and each serve a specific neighbourhood. The range of health and social services at community health and resource centres does vary but they all offer a number of programs and they can tell you about other services and programs in your neighbourhood.

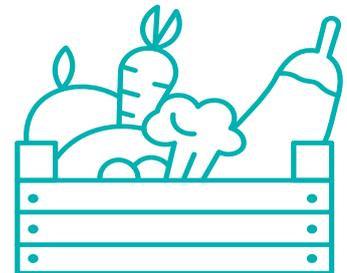
The Community Health and/or Resource Centre for my neighbourhood is:

Employment

There are many programs available in the community that can help you find work or volunteer opportunities. Talk to your support worker about your interests and goals for work or volunteering.

A good source of information for all types of community services and program, including employment programs is the Community Information Line – dial 2-1-1 or visit the website:

<https://easternontario.cioc.ca/>



Food and Cooking Programs

Ottawa Good Food Box

The Ottawa Good Food Box is a non-profit community-based program that helps members buy fresh fruits and vegetables at a low cost.

Community Cooking Groups

Basic Skills, and Vegetarian: Learn some new weekly recipes and join other friendly people to plan, cook, and eat together. Some communities have specialized cooking groups, such as Indigenous and Inuit food programs.

Ask your Case Manager if you need help to identify the food programs you would like to try.

The food programs near that I might try are:

Food Banks

A food bank is somewhere you can go if you need groceries and are unable to purchase them. Food banks are usually set up by neighbourhood.

The food bank closest to me is: _____

Phone: _____

Operating hours: _____

Frequency: _____

Some foodbanks will serve anyone in the city. For example:

Name	Contact and Location	Operating Hours	Target Areas and Groups
Salvation Army	171 George St. 613-241-1573	Mon, Wed, Fri: 9:00am-11:30am, and 12:30pm - 3:30pm Tues: 9:00am - 10:50am, and 12:30pm - 3:30pm Thurs: 9:00am - 11:30am	Ottawa Eligible once every 3 months
Shepherds of Good Hope	233 Murray St. 613-789-8210	Wed and Fri: 10:00am - 1:00pm	Ottawa Once a month

* Ask your CMHA Ottawa worker about access to Parkdale Food Centre
If you are a CMHA Ottawa client, you are eligible to attend Parkdale Food Centre for their food bank regardless of where you live.

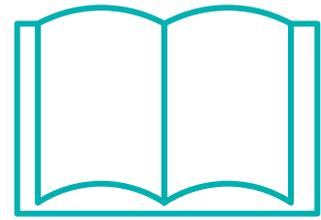
Referral/support letter is required. Please send ahead of time if possible.

Contact: Karen Secord, Executive Director: karen@parkdalefoodcentre.org

Libraries

Visit the library to borrow books, magazines, movies, passes for museums, musical instruments and more! You also have free access to public Wi-Fi.

The main branch of the library is at 120 Metcalfe St, Ottawa, ON K1P 5M2



My closest library is: _____

Parks

My nearest parks are: _____

*Note: Some parks may or may not allow dogs, on leash or off.

Recreation

Recreation centres (rec centres) are full-service sites where you can register for courses and activities in your neighbourhood. At a rec centre you can find pools, theatres, hockey arenas, sports fields and gymnasiums for sports, all available for a fee. Most of them even have free public Wi-Fi available for use.

Ottawa's Hand-in-Hand program can help pay for rec programs that have costs that you are interested in. Visit ottawa.ca/en/residents/older-adults/financial-assistance for more information.

Recreation activities I like to do are:

The locations I can do these at are:

Free fun

Free museums on Thursday 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. include...

National Gallery of Canada, Canadian Museum of Nature and Canadian Museum of History (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization).

Free between 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. daily:

Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, Canada Aviation and Space Museum and Canada Science and Technology Museum.

Check out www.ottawatourism.ca for updates.

Shopping

My pharmacy is: _____

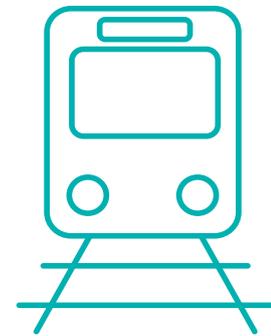
Other shops I need/use are:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Transit

Travel Training

Feeling comfortable getting around the City on public transit from your home to shopping, appointments, recreational activities etc., is important. If you are anxious about taking public transit ask your Case Manager to help you. OC Transpo has travel training supports that can include arranging to have an empty bus for you to practice getting on and sitting in it for awhile to help you feel more comfortable. Also ask your worker about OC Transpo's Travel Training bus pass. This free pass is available to people and their supporters to use while you are learning the routes and getting comfortable on public transit.



Affording Public Transit

Public transit isn't cheap so take advantage of special passes and programs that might be available to you to make it more affordable. Build public transit costs into your monthly budget.

ODSP and Medical Travel

If you receive ODSP and you have a number of medical appointments in a certain month you may be eligible for an extra amount on your ODSP cheque that will help pay for public transit. Talk to your support worker about this.

If you ever end up taking an ambulance during an emergency, ambulance bills should be provided to ODSP or OW and they will have the bills canceled.

Community Pass

In order take advantage of the Community Pass discount, you need to:

- Receive benefits under the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Live in Ottawa
- Complete the required forms and submit them to OC Transpo.

EquiPass

If you aren't receiving ODSP and have a low income, OC Transpo offers the EquiPass. The EquiPass is:

- For persons who are below the low-income threshold
- The EquiPass monthly pass is about half the cost of an adult pass (\$58.25 per month in 2018)
- The EquiPass single-ride fare is half the cost of a regular fare (\$1.75 per ride)
- Only available on a Presto card or ParaPay

Seniors

People 65+ can get the seniors discount on passes and fares. You need to get a Presto Card set up with the Seniors setting on it. Take your ID to an OC Transpo service centre to get this. Once you have your Presto Card with Senior setting you can also ride transit for FREE on Wednesdays and Sundays!

Access Pass

For Para Transpo users who also use OC Transpo buses and the train services, an Access Pass will let you save one-third of the single-ride fare. The Access pass is the same price as the Community Pass. If you are a Para Transpo customer who never uses OC Transpo, you should not buy the Access Pass. The pass will not offer you any savings.

Find out more about the different passes and fares that can save you money, go to the OC Transpo website section on reduced fares:

www.octranspo.com/en/fares/reduced-fares

Schedules and Routes

To help plan your route, use the travel planner: <https://plan.octranspo.com/plan>

Or call Customer Services at 613 741- 4390.

Para Transpo

To be eligible for Para Transpo you need your health-care professional to complete application form. You must have a disability that impairs your functional ability to use regular transit. Connect with ParaTranspo for information about door-to-door transit services for people with disabilities.

Para Transpo

Phone: 613-741-4390 **TTY Phone:** 613-244-4833

Website: octranspo.com/accessibility/para_transpo

Volunteering

Specifically for volunteering, you can connect with Volunteer Ottawa:

<https://www.volunteerottawa.ca/volunteering.html>

(613) 736-5270

info@volunteerottawa.ca

My goals for work or volunteering are:

I'm going to start by doing this:

Section 6: Your Safety

9-1-1 Emergencies

9-1-1 calls are answered by a dispatcher. If all dispatchers are busy, your call is placed on hold and will be answered as soon as possible by the first available person. **DO NOT HANG UP** and try again, because your call will be placed at the end of the list.

When the dispatcher answers, say what you need. For example:

- “I need an ambulance.”
- “I need a fire truck.”
- “I’m reporting a break and enter.”
- “I’m reporting an unconscious person.”
- “Someone has stopped breathing.” (You don’t have to say it’s because of drugs.)

Your call will be transferred to the appropriate department. The dispatcher will ask you questions while another dispatcher will put your call out on radio to the emergency personnel. Be prepared to answer **WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE** and **WHY** questions. For example:

- “What is happening?”
- “Where is the situation occurring?”
- “When did the incident occur?”
- “Who is involved?”
- “Is there a weapon involved?”

On a home phone the dispatcher can find you, so even if you call 9-1-1 and hang up, an emergency personnel will be sent to your house. On a cellular phone the dispatcher cannot find you, so you need to know and tell them exactly where you are.

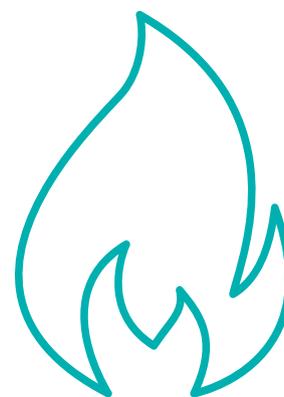
Always stay on the phone until emergency personnel arrive.

Fire Safety

Fire safety is not only important to you but everyone else who may live in your building. You always need to respect the fire code. Here are some common rules you may find on your building’s fire code

- Every apartment must have a working fire alarm, and every apartment building must have fire alarms in the hallway for the entire building.
- If your fire alarm is broken or you do not have one in your apartment, contact your landlord/superintendent. They are responsible to replace it for you.
- It is against the law to tamper with or disable your smoke detector and the door closures on the door to your apartment. These are life saving features to protect you and the other tenants in the building.

See the Ontario Fire Code for more information on fire safety.



General Fire Safety

- Test your fire alarm to make sure it is working by pushing down the “test” button, which will sound the alarm until you release your finger.
- Do not let anyone sleep in an area where there are not two exits or where there is a furnace that is not in a well-ventilated room.
- Do not disable your smoke detector. Immediately report smoke and carbon monoxide detectors that don’t work to your landlord.
- Clean up grease after you are done cooking.
- Do not leave stoves or burning candles alone.
- Be careful with lit cigarettes. Always use an ashtray.
- Do not store flammable liquids in your unit or on your balcony.
- Do not have BBQs on your balcony.

How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Remember the acronym P.A.S.S.:

- **P**ull the pin. This will allow you to discharge the extinguisher.
- **A**im at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze the top handle or lever.
- **S**weep from side to side.



Harm Reduction

Harm reduction lets you choose how to reduce the harm that substances (crack, cocaine, meth, weed, alcohol, etc.) do to you through non-judgmental and optional programs. Harm reduction is totally up to you and can be done exactly the way you want to. CMHA Ottawa is here to help you live a safer and healthier life - only if you choose to.

At CMHA Ottawa our harm reduction approach use includes programs, services, and practices like giving out harm reduction supplies. For example, clean syringes, stems, cookers, and nicotine replacement. We also provide naloxone and instructions on how to use it to save you or somebody you know. All these supplies are available at the CMHA Office (311 McArthur, 2nd floor).

Harm reduction services like the Site Needle and Syringe Program distribute supplies (such as needles) for safer drug use. They also teach about safer drug use and can refer people to other health and social services. The City of Ottawa’s Site Needle and Syringe Program prevents the spread of diseases like HIV and hepatitis-C virus, which makes drug use safer.

The program helps:

- Give out injection and inhalation supplies.
- Give out condoms and lube.
- Give health education.
- Give substance use counselling.
- Give general counselling and support.
- Give overdose help with Peer Overdose Prevention Program (POPP). Find out more in the

Overdose section of this handbook.

Here is where you can find Harm Reduction Services:

Location	Day	Time	Telephone
CMHA Ottawa 311 McArthur, 2nd Floor	Monday – Friday	9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	(613) 737-7791
Site Needle & Syringe Program and Supervised consumption services 179 Clarence St.	7 days a week	9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.	613-580-6744 ext. 29047
Site Mobile Van	7 days a week	5:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.	613-232-3232 Collect calls accepted
Ottawa Inner City Health Shepherds of Good Hope (SIS) 230 Murray St. (Trailer)	7 days a week	24 hours	613-241-6494
Sandy Hill Community Health Centre 221 Nelson St	Monday - Friday	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	613-569-3488 ext. 2101
Somerset West CHC Overdose Prevention Services 55 Eccles St	7 days a week	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	613-238-8210 ext. 2246

Home Takeovers

A home takeover is when you may find yourself unsafe, physically, financially, or psychologically because people are in your home that you may or may not be able to get to leave. These people can be your friend, relative or someone else you know. They may use it to crash, sell drugs, do illegal activities or steal from you. As the tenant you are responsible for what happens in your home, so if a home takeover happens you need to get help.

If you have guests that won't leave, get help by calling someone you trust, your support worker, your landlord or Ottawa Police Services (613-236-1222 ext.7300).

You can learn more about home takeovers by reading this section and Appendix G or by visiting: www.crimepreventionottawa.ca/en/initiatives/neighbourhoods-initiatives

Preventing a Home Takeover

To prevent a home takeover and to stay safe, never let others deal drugs in your home. Don't let too many people into your place at once and never give your phone or keys to someone else. If you feel that your neighbour or someone you know is in danger, take action and get help. Don't let someone take over their home or yours.

Here are some tips to prevent a home takeover:

- Have a good relationship with your neighbours. Get to know them and your community so that you can all look out for each other.
- Have a good relationship with your Case Manager, landlord and local police. It may not prevent a home takeover but will help you solve one quickly.
- Learn about the risks of a home takeover and how to know one is happening. You can learn more with your Case Manager or landlord.
- Have an agreement with your landlord so they can inform the police if you ever get in trouble with a home takeover.

Recognizing a Home Takeover

It's important to know the warning signs of a home takeover and what you can do about them. Someone who is trying to take over your home may ask to crash on your couch, give you free dope, offer to clear your debt, or promise you women for sexual favours and protection.

Remember that someone who cares about you will not try to take over your home. Someone who cares about you will never:

- Ask for your keys.
- Eat all your food.
- Take your phone.
- Use your shower without permission.
- Threaten or hurt you.
- Sell drugs or other illegal stuff.
- Steal from you.
- Sexually assault you.
- Force you out of your home.

During a Home Takeover

During a home takeover, stay calm and do not do anything to upset your unwanted guests. The key here is to stay safe and protect yourself. If you are going to speak to your landlord, support worker or the police, do so in a quiet private place. You don't want your unwanted guests to find out you are trying to get them to leave until you have a plan in place.

After a Home Takeover

Once a home takeover has been dealt with, steps must be taken to stop other home takeovers from happening or any retaliation against you. Here are some things you can do after a home takeover to stop it from happening again:

- Have your locks changed.
- Check in with your Case Manager often.
- Discuss with your Case Manager what you need to feel better and what you can do to stop a future takeover.

- Consider moving if you are still feeling very unsafe. Speak with your Case Manager if you feel like this.

Your Landlord's Role in Home Takeovers

If you have complained to your landlord about a home takeover, or are uncomfortable in asking your unwanted guests to leave, your landlord can help. They can ask your guests to leave or call the police.

If you are afraid of what your guests might do if they find out you have spoken to your landlord, let your landlord know. Ask them to call the police and warn them about the situation.

Your landlord should help you because their property is at risk of being damaged if your home has been taken over. It is very important to have a good relationship with your landlord. Be friendly to them and they will be happy to help. If you can, introduce them to any of your support workers so you can all deal with a home takeover as a team if one ever happens.

If the people in your apartment are not leaving, making you feel uncomfortable, or making you worry about your safety or your things, then you can call the police if you want to.

Overdoses

Anyone can overdose, even first-time and long-time users, youth, and older adults. If you haven't used drugs in a long time, you are also taking a risk to overdose.

Here are some overdose prevention tips:

- Avoid using alone. Fix with a friend and leave the door unlocked.
- Avoid mixing drugs with prescription and over the-counter drugs alcohol, benzos (Xanax, Valium, etc.), other opiates, and/or uppers like cocaine or crack.
- Use one drug at a time if you are mixing and take a break between drugs.
- Inject, snort, or smoke a very small amount first to test its strength.
- If you are feeling sick or under the weather, use less and be more careful.
- Use less when your tolerance is low (like when you haven't used in three or more days).
- Let your Case Manager know if you notice any changes with your drugs.

Be Careful with Fentanyl

Fentanyl is being cut (mixed) into both opioid, and non-opioid drugs. It is much more toxic than other pharmaceutical opioids, and is often made as a powder, and mixed with other drugs. Fentanyl is also being pressed into pills. It is around 50 to 100 times more toxic than morphine. This makes the risk of accidental overdose much higher. There is no easy way to know if fentanyl is in your drugs. You can't see it, smell it or taste it.

How to Recognize a Fentanyl Overdose

Never leave someone who you think is overdosing alone. They should be kept awake and upright. Fentanyl overdoses can be deadly, so call 9-1-1 right away if you suspect an overdose may have occurred.

A person overdosing on fentanyl may show these signs:

- Small pupils.
- Weak muscles.
- Dizziness.
- Very slow heartbeat.
- Very low blood pressure.

- Confusion.
- Extreme sleepiness.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Dangerously slow or no breathing.
- Blueish tint to nails and lips.

Other signs of an overdose

Uppers (cocaine, meth, MDMA, etc.)

- Huge pupils.
- Doing the chicken (seizure).
- Shortness of breath.
- Really fast breathing.
- Chest pain.

Downers (heroin, morphine, fentanyl, etc.)

- Tiny pupils.
- Blue skin around the mouth.
- Slowed or no breathing.
- Passed out.
- Can't wake them up.
- Cold skin.

What to do if someone is overdosing

If you use drugs, whether prescribed or not, or know someone else who uses drugs, carry a naloxone kit with you. Naloxone is a drug that temporarily reverses (for about 30 minutes) the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone kits are available through pharmacies, health-care workers and some community-based organizations, sometimes for free.

Free nasal spray naloxone is available, without an Ontario health card, from needle exchange programs, hep C programs or Public Health Units across the province. Naloxone kits are also distributed through community organizations such as shelters, outreach organizations, AIDS services organizations, Community Health Centres, withdrawal management services and participating hospitals.

Overdose prevention sites (OPS) and supervised consumption sites (SCS) can offer drug checking services (test strips to check what's in your drugs) and can respond quickly with naloxone. Visiting OPSs and SCSs can save your life.

SCSs in Ottawa:

Sandy Hill Community Health Centre
221 Nelson St., Ottawa,
ON K1N 1C7
(613) 789-8458

Somerset West Community Health Centre
55 Eccles St., Ottawa, ON
K1R 6S3
(613) 238-8210

Shepherds of Good Hope
256 King Edward Ave.,
Ottawa, ON K1N 7M1
(613) 789-8210

We also recommend not using drugs when alone. The risk of overdose is higher for people who do drugs alone at home since there is no one around them to use naloxone or call 9-1-1.

References

CMHA National - <https://cmha.ca/>

CMHA Ottawa - <https://ottawa.cmha.ca/>

Crime Prevention Ottawa - <https://www.crimepreventionottawa.ca/>

Ottawa Public Health - <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/index.aspx>

Appendix A – Sample Crisis Plan

Sample crisis plan

Version _____

Date _____

In a life-threatening emergency CALL 9-1-1.

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

Health Insurance: _____

Emergency/medical contacts:

1. _____

Telephone: _____

2. _____

Telephone: _____

3. _____

Telephone: _____

Support worker name:

Telephone:

Support worker back-up or
team leader name:

Telephone:

Depending on the situation, I may also use these community resources when in crisis:

Name of community resource	Telephone

Understanding and managing a crisis

My definition of a crisis is:

Things that cause me to go into crisis are:

The signs that I am about to go into crisis are:

If you notice I am saying or doing _____, give me space:

In the past, to deal effectively with a crisis, I have:

If I am in a crisis, it is best that these people be contacted:

If I am about to be in crisis or am in crisis, these are the special arrangements or things that I need to have taken care of for me:

In the event of a crisis, I would like my crisis plan shared with my support network, as deemed appropriate by my worker Yes _____ No _____

Participant signature: _____ Date _____

Worker signature: _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Move-In Inspection Form

Directions: This worksheet is designed to help you inspect your apartment when you move in. Examine everything on this list and write down ALL the things you see. This is important for two reasons: First, you and your landlord can talk about what problems should be fixed and when. Second, the list can be used when you move out if there is any disagreement between you and the landlord about the condition of the unit when you moved in versus the condition when you move out.

Ask your landlord to inspect the unit with you and initial the items he/she agrees to repair. Be sure that you both sign and date the form. If your landlord cannot conduct the inspection with you, send a completed copy to him/her and ask that he/she sign it and return it to you. You may also want to provide a copy to your support worker. Remember to keep a copy of this form so that you have proof of any pre-existing damage when you are ready to move out.

Move-in inspection for address: _____

Date of Inspection: _____

Item	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Kitchen				
Are the lights working in the kitchen?				
Are the electrical outlets working?				
Is there a sink with hot and cold running water? Does the water drain quickly?				
Is the stove in good working condition? (Do the burners work? Does the oven work? If it's a gas stove, do you smell gas when the stove is turned off? Are there any broken or missing parts?)				
Is the refrigerator in good working condition? (Do the refrigerator and the freezer seem cold enough? Are there any broken or missing parts?)				
If there is a dishwasher, is it in good working condition?				
Are the countertops in good condition?				
Are the cupboards in good condition?				

Item	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Bathroom				
Is the toilet in adequate condition?				
(Flush the toilet—Does it empty? Does it fill? Does the water keep running after the bowl fills? Does it look like there have been leaks around the toilet? Where is the shut-off valve? Does it work?)				
Is there a sink with hot and cold running water? Does the water drain quickly?				
Is there a tub and/or shower with hot and cold running water? Does the water drain quickly?				
Are there signs of mold?				
Is there ventilation from a fan or window in the bathroom? Does the fan work, or the window open?				
GENERAL UNIT CONDITION				
If there is air conditioning? Does it work?				
Does the heating work? (If it's cold enough outside for the heat to be turned on, is there enough heat? Too much? Is the apartment temperature hotter or colder than the thermostat setting?)				
Do all of the windows open and close? Do the windows have working locks?				
Are any of the windows broken? Are any of the storm windows or screens broken or missing?				
Do all windows have curtains, blinds, shades, or other coverings?				
Is there a working deadbolt lock on the front/back door of the apartment?				

Item	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Do you see any water stains on the walls or ceilings? If so, has the leak been fixed?				
Is the flooring in all the rooms in good condition? If not, note which rooms have problems and what the problems are.				
Are there any holes or large cracks in the walls or ceiling?				
Are there places where the paint is peeling or flaking? (If so, find out if the unit was built before 1978. If so, and if children will be living in the unit, repair of the paint is very important because it could cause lead poisoning.)				
Do you see any exposed wires, missing light switch or outlet covers, or broken or missing ceiling lights?				
Is there any evidence of bugs or rodents?				
GENERAL BUILDING CONDITION				
Is there a fire exit that is easily accessible?				
Is there adequate lighting in the stairwells and hallways?				
Are the stairwells and hallways free of garbage, graffiti, and hazards?				
Are the mailboxes locked and in good condition?				
Are there problems with the yard: trash, broken fence, hazardous sidewalk, etc.?				

Appendix C – My Personal Guest Policy

What time of the day will you allow friends and family to come over?

Is there anybody that you do not want to come over?

What are your house rules? (e.g., don't yell; only people I know can come over to my home; be respectful in the hallways; can people eat my food or use my things; take off your shoes; etc.)

How will you manage guests that get out of hand?

If someone wants to sleep on your floor or couch and your lease does not allow it, how will you deal with that and not put your own housing at risk?

What's the best part of having your own place that you don't want guests to wreck for you?

If you have unwanted guests you can't get rid of, what will you do?

Appendix D – What does my lease say?

What Does My Lease Say?

Directions: Bring a copy of your lease to your Case Manager so that you can review it together. Use this worksheet to write down the rules about your lease and keep it in your files so you can review it if you need to. It is important that you understand your lease, because if you break any of the rules you could be charged extra fees or even evicted.

Paying for my apartment	
How much is the rent each month?	
How is the rent getting paid to the landlord? (E.g. rent direct from ODSP? Housing allowance direct to landlord? Do I pay directly myself?) How much is coming from where?	
What do I need to do to make sure the full rent is paid each month to the landlord?	
When is my rent due?	
Is there a fee if the rent is late? How much is the late fee?	
When does the landlord start charging a late fee?	
If my cheque bounces, does that mean it's a late payment?	
When does the landlord start eviction if the rent is not paid?	
What utilities do I have to pay?	
What else do I have to pay? (For example, extra charge for pets, garage, laundry, key deposit, service fee if my cheque bounces?)	

RULES FOR MY APARTMENT	
What are the rules about noise?	
What pets are allowed? (Kind of pet, number of pets, size of pets.)	
Are there rules about how I have to do my house cleaning? Do I have to do any yard work?	
What happens if something breaks or someone damages my apartment? What should I do?	
Can the landlord come into my apartment anytime he wants to?	
What are the rules about someone living with me? How long can someone visit me (if they aren't living with me)?	
What happens if there is a police call to my apartment or someone in my family is arrested?	
What happens if someone in my apartment uses illegal drugs?	
How long is my lease? What happens if I want to move before my lease is up?	
What happens when my lease expires?	
If I want to move out, how soon do I have to tell my landlord?	
What do I have to do to get the last month rent deposit back and the interest on the deposit? (This will depend on who paid the deposit.)	

Acknowledgement: This resource was adapted from the City of Ottawa's HBCM Guide.

Appendix E – The Honest Monthly Budget

The Honest Monthly Budget

Version _____

Date _____

The things I have to spend money on:	The formal ways I get money are:
Rent:	Job:
Utilities:	Social Assistance:
Food:	Pension:
Other:	Other:
Other:	Other:
Other:	Other:
TOTAL:	TOTAL:

Other areas I spend money on:	The informal ways I get money are:
Child Support:	Odd Jobs:
Debts:*	Day Labour:
Cigarettes:	Treasure Hunting:
Coffee:	Binning/Bottling:
Alcohol/Other Drugs:	Babysitting:
Health Stuff:	Friends/Family:
Household Stuff:	Busking:
Friends/Kids:	Panhandling:
Cable/Internet:	Honorariums:
Transportation:	Theft/Pawning:*
Legal Stuff/Fines:	Gambling:
Sex:	Sex Work/Drug Running/Dealing:*
Gambling:	Other:
Other:	Other:
TOTAL:	TOTAL:

All the things I spend money on =
All the ways I get money =
Positive () Negative () Difference =

*Are you being used by someone else to do something you don't want to do, or to pay off debts?
Are you making money in ways you'd rather not? Are you a victim of human trafficking? Please talk to your Case Manager and see how they can help you.

Appendix F – Cleaning Schedule

Cleaning Schedule

Adapted from: <https://www.myfirstapartment.com/2013/10/complete-apartment-cleaning-checklist/>

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
Kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Throw out garbage (especially important if you have a pest problem). – Wash all dishes and clean out sink. – Clean counters with water and soap or cleaner. – Wipe spills off the floor. – Wipe spills off the stove and inside microwave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sweep the floor. – Wash the floor. – Microwave: Wipe inside completely and wash the inner dish. If there is extra tough residue, soften it by microwaving a bowl of water with a little white vinegar on high for 2 to 3 minutes. – Refrigerator: Throw away everything that is expired or spoiled. – Dishwasher: Clean trap of food residue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Walls and cupboards: Wipe off any stains and splatters. – Stove: Take out all removable parts and wipe all surfaces with cleaner or vinegar solution. – Oven: Take out all racks. Remove all crumbs and food particles. Wet all tough residue with cleaner. Scrub with brush. Wash racks. – Refrigerator: Remove all the contents and stack on a nearby surface. Throw away anything that is expired or has not been used in a while. Wipe all the containers that have a residue on the outside. Wash and dry all the shelves and drawers and put them back inside. Put your food back in. Wipe the outside of the fridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cabinets and drawers: Throw away expired and old items. Wipe down inside and outside of cupboards. – Dishwasher: Wipe out all residue, including anything on door seals. If you are having dishwasher issues, run a whole cycle or two with white vinegar or rust/lime remover. (Check manufacturer's instructions first.)

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wipe sink. - Clean hair out of drains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First, put cleaner into the toilet bowl to sit and soak. Be sure to get it into the cracks along the rim of the bowl. Spray other excessively dirty areas to soak. Scrub the bowl, wipe down the seat, tank, and base. Be sure to get all the dust behind the base. - Clear off all counters and surfaces – you can stack all your items in a nearby space or rotate them from area to area as you clean. - Spray the mirror with glass cleaner or vinegar water. Wipe away in a circular motion until all the streaks are gone. - Clean every surface, including the corners and small spaces where dust collects. - Scrub the tub. - Clean the floor. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean out medicine cabinet. - Throw out old cosmetics and other product. Take old medications back to the pharmacy – don't flush them and don't put them in garbage.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
Bedroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tidy items and find a space for them all to “live”. – Remove all food and trash. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wash and change your linens. – Clean the floor. – Move your bed and furniture to get every space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wash your pillow. – Wash blankets and comforters. 	
Living Room/ Dining Room Whole Unit Your Cleaning Tools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dust every surface. Remove all items and get under everything; don’t forget baseboards and window sills. – Sweep, mop, and/or vacuum all floors and under all furniture. – Vacuum: Check bag and change if needed. Wipe outside of vacuum. – Broom and Brushes: Wash, and air dry. – Trash Can, Dust Pan, and Buckets: Wash and soak in soapy, vinegar water if needed. Scrub with baking soda if needed. 		

Appendix G – Welcomed Guest or HomeTakeover

WELCOMED GUEST OR HOME TAKEOVER?

Here are some questions to ask yourself about your guest

Having friends or family members stay in your home for a visit should be enjoyable. Sometimes that can change. You may feel that you are no longer in control of your home, unsafe or worse. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

	YES	NO
Is my guest doing something that might get me in trouble with my landlord or the police?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would my guest say 'No' if I asked them to leave?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest ever make me feel unsafe or afraid? (my heart is beating quickly, my stomach is upset, I feel dizzy or I am not sleeping well)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest make me do things that I do not want to do?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest invite other people to my home without my permission?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest owe me money, or pressure me to lend money?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do I owe my guest money? If so, do they use that as a reason to stay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest do anything to upset my neighbours?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest stay with me because they give me drugs, alcohol, food, sex or money?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does my guest stop me from coming and going from my home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'YES' to any of these questions, you might be experiencing a home takeover. **Get help.** Here's who you can contact for support:



Or talk to your support worker, your landlord, a family member, a friend, or someone else you trust.

If you think your life is in danger, call 9-1-1.



Based on a Toronto Dream TEAM resource. Visit thedreamteam.ca.