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Tenant Records

Maintaining records for all of the housing units in your community is a good property management practice. Below is a list of items that should be included in the tenant file for each housing unit.

It's a good idea to keep up-to-date tenant records for all of the housing units in your community. This way, you'll know who's living in each unit and the terms and conditions of the rental. Good recordkeeping practices will also help you keep track of money owed as well as needed and completed repairs.

First Nation housing managers should keep the following tenant records on file:

Tenant application

A signed and completed tenant application can provide you with a lot of useful information. It'll allow you to make a more informed decision about who's the most suitable tenant for a vacant unit. It'll also help you assess applicants against your community's tenant-selection policy, if you have one.

Council should develop your tenant application form, guided by your housing policy and in consultation with the community.

Effective communication begins at the application stage. It's good practice to provide written notice of placement decisions to anyone who applies for housing in your community. A copy of the approval letter should also be kept on file.

Lease agreement

A lease is a contract that sets out the rental terms and conditions between a First Nation and a tenant. While they aren't legally required, they're good to have because they clearly lay out both sides' responsibilities and expectations. A formal agreement like this can greatly reduce misunderstandings and make it easier to handle problems that may come up.

Before tenants sign the lease agreement, you should always meet with them in person to go over it. Make sure they understand and agree to their responsibilities before they receive possession of the unit.

A typical lease agreement will include information about:

- lease length
- fees (including when they're due and what happens if they're not paid)
- persons entitled to reside in the premises
- requirements of the First Nation and the tenant (including who's responsible for repairs and renovations)
- what services and amenities are included in the lease rent/fees
- how the lease can be terminated by the tenant or the First Nation
- whether tenant insurance is required
- security deposits (if one is required)
- how ownership of rent-to-own agreements can be transferred (if applicable)

This isn't a complete list – and it's important that your lease agreements are customized to your First Nation. Sample leases can be found by searching the internet.

Tenant-related correspondence

Keep records of all correspondence with the tenant. Doing so will help prevent confusion should issues arise later.

Move in/out inspection / condition report

Do an inspection of the unit when the tenant moves in and when they move out. By making a record of the conditions, you'll be able to easily identify any damage to the unit. The tenant should be there when the inspection happens.

Rental charges form

This form should include basic information, such as the tenant's name, phone number, address and current rental charge. Use this form to record when a payment is made. Be sure to include the payment date, the period it covers and how it was paid.

Other important tenant records

First Nation housing managers should also keep these other important documents with their tenant files:

- tenant profiles
- site and building plans
- current and previous income verifications and rent-calculation forms
- a list of all repair requests made
- information on all repairs completed (including when they were done and how much they cost)
- a list of appliances that go with each unit (including models and serial numbers)

Contact your [First Nation Housing Specialist](#) for more advice and information on the typical duties of a First Nation housing manager.

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