

# Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Renters

## **How do I become a tenant?**

If you are interested in renting one of North Pacific Property Management's (hereinafter known as NPPM) vacant units, the first step is for all applicants 18 or older who will occupy the unit to fill out a detailed application, and follow the steps outlined in the application, including payment of an application fee for each adult occupant. NPPM does have criteria based on income, credit, and previous rental history. Once your tenancy has been approved, you will be asked to remit a deposit to hold the unit, and all occupants 18 and older will be asked to sign a lease and remit money for rent and security deposit. No unit will be held until a non-refundable cash deposit is remitted. Please read the lease and any attached documents very carefully, because they are legally binding. If you violate the lease in any way, you may wind up losing the right to live in your apartment. Rent collections are strictly enforced, as are noise rules and pet policies. If you plan to get a pet, be sure you find out whether or not a pet will be allowed before signing the lease. If there is anything in the lease, House Rules, or in the unit itself, with which you may have issues, be sure to discuss this with your Property Supervisor before you move in.

## **Will NPPM refuse to rent to me if my ethnic background is different from others in the building?**

NPPM strictly follows Fair Housing and does not discriminate based on racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age or other categories specified in Fair Housing regulations. We welcome your interest in any of our vacancies.

## **How do I pay the rent?**

Please look for instructions on your lease agreement. NPPM accepts payment by mail or in our office.

## **How do I report a repair which needs to be done in my home?**

You may go to our web site and email a Maintenance Request to NPPM, or you may call (800) 332-1058 and be connected to the Maintenance Department. If you have an after-hours emergency, when you call NPPM, you will receive the phone number for NPPM's hot line. Please call NPPM rather than repairing a maintenance problem yourself, as, except for specific circumstances provided for by law, you will not be allowed to deduct costs of repair from your rent. If there is a problem which was caused by you or your guests, such as an inappropriate item flushed down the toilet, you will be charged for the repair.

## **What is considered an emergency?**

An emergency is defined as a maintenance problem that will cause a safety hazard to residents, or an imminent damage to property, so that fixing it cannot wait until the next business day. A few examples would be an overflowing toilet, a broken pipe, or sudden electrical short. If there is a gas leak, call the gas company in your area first, and if there is a power outage, call the electric company in your area first to see if there is a general power outage in the area. The operator on the hot line will determine if you have a true emergency, and if so, the operator will contact the NPPM staff member on call, who will contact an emergency vendor.

## **Will NPPM notify me when a repair person is coming to my home?**

NPPM will give you a 24 hour notice to enter, unless you agree to allow NPPM's vendor to enter your home on an as-available basis. There is no requirement for you to be present, but you must provide access to your home, with proper notice, for purposes of repairs. There is no requirement for NPPM to give you notice if there is a suspected emergency, such as a burst pipe.

## **What happens if I don't pay my rent?**

If your rent is not received when it is due, generally by the first of each month, you will be served a legal notice to pay your rent or leave the apartment or house. If rent is not received by the time the notice expires, and you do not leave, you will be subject to eviction proceedings. If you plan to be out of town when rent is due, you still need to make sure before you leave that your rent is paid. Being out of town does not excuse you from paying the rent.

Rent must be paid regardless of any personal circumstances or problems you may have. This is part of your lease agreement, which is a legal document voluntarily signed by you. If your rent is late you will be subject to late fees, and if your check bounces, you will be subject to a bounced check fee.

If there are any problems you wish to discuss in regard to your rent, you may contact your Property Supervisor.

**I want to share the unit with a roommate. How does rent payment work? Can we each be responsible for half the rent?**

In a roommate situation, both roommates are entirely responsible for the rent. NPPM prefers one payment for the entire rent per unit. You must work it out between yourselves as to how you get the rent payment to NPPM; for example, there are times when one roommate may pay more rent than another, if that roommate occupies a room that is significantly larger, but that must be worked out between roommates and is not handled by NPPM. It is not NPPM's responsibility to intercede if one of you pays and the other doesn't. This will simply be considered non-payment of rent, and both your names may appear on a three day notice and any possible eviction. The security deposit only is refunded when the entire unit is vacant, and no partial refund is given when one roommate moves out. If one roommate wants to leave and someone else wants to live in the unit, that person needs to apply as a tenant and be approved. If you and your roommate do not get along, NPPM is not obliged to get your roommate to leave.

**When I move out, how can I get my security deposit back? Can I use my security deposit for my last month of rent?**

Security deposits are not to be used instead of payment of rent, since the purpose of a security deposit is to pay for any damage caused by the tenant or their guests. If you do not pay any rent, including the last month you are in the unit, you may be subject to eviction proceedings. You are entitled to an accounting of your security deposit as well as the appropriate refund, within 21 days of your moving out of the unit.

**I received a job transfer to another state, and need to leave before the end of my lease. What are my obligations?**

Inform NPPM in writing as soon as you know about your transfer, and give an exact date you will be vacating the unit. You will still owe rent until the end of your lease term, or until a new tenant is found, plus costs of advertising. However, the owner is obliged to make efforts to rent the unit as well. It would be to your benefit to keep your unit as presentable as possible, and cooperate fully with NPPM's showing the unit, so a new tenant can be found as soon as possible. You may even want to advertise the unit on your own, and introduce any interested parties to NPPM. This will help lower any costs you will have to bear.

**I want to have an additional person move in. What should I do?**

Any persons not on the lease may only occupy the unit only with the written permission of NPPM, and that person needs to be approved as a tenant by NPPM. You may be charged more rent if that person is in addition to, rather than instead of, a present resident. If an additional person is found to live in your unit, without permission of NPPM, you may be subject to eviction and/or increase of rent.

**My neighbor plays loud music late at night. What do you suggest?**

As a first step, if your neighbor is violating House Rules, we always suggest first talking to your neighbor in a friendly tone of voice. For instance, you may want to let him/her know that they may be unaware of the fact that it is late at night, their music can be heard in your unit, and is preventing you from sleeping. If you have already tried this, and the behavior continues, please inform Management, and NPPM will contact the tenant. If the behavior continues even after NPPM has made a direct request to your neighbor, please inform us, and further steps may need to be taken. If there is a loud party late at night and you feel you have no choice, by all means contact the Police Department.

**I want to change the color of the paint in my unit and make other changes. May I do this?**

As part of the lease agreement, renovations made by a tenant are only permissible with written approval by NPPM. You may, of course, hang paintings of your choice on the wall, provided you repair the holes upon vacating the unit. This rule against renovation without permission applies to all renovations, including changing your carpeting or other flooring, installation of built in appliances, etc. Please do not affix a satellite dish or other antenna to the roof, without acquiring permission first, as you will be charged for any damages to the roofing.

**What happens when I lose my keys?**

If it is during normal business hours you can come into our offices and, upon verifying identification, receive another set of keys for \$5 per key. If it is after hours, you can call the emergency line and we will send a maintenance person to let you into your unit. There is a charge for after hours lock outs.

**Can I get reimbursed for repairs I make on my own?**

You can only get reimbursed for repairs that were initially approved by the staff at NPPM.

**How long are your leases?**

All leases are for a minimum of one year unless otherwise noted.

**Do you accept Pets?**

No unless otherwise noted

**Can I smoke in my apartment?**

All of the NPPM properties are smoke free, we do not allow smoking anywhere on the premises.

**What do I do if a roommate leaves but I am staying?**

Contact the leasing or property management departments at least 30 days before he/she leaves. Your new roommate must come in to our offices and fill out our rental application to determine whether he/she is a qualified candidate for the rental. The new tenant will be placed on the lease. According to your specific lease, there might be a fee involved. If you are not planning on adding a new rent, you are responsible for the entire amount of rent.

**What happens to my deposit if a roommate leaves but I stay?**

Your deposit is a joint deposit that remains with the unit until it is vacated. It is the responsibility of the new tenant or remaining tenant to give back the portion of the deposit to the vacating tenant. If you contact our property management department they can give guidance as to what deductions may apply. We only issue deposit refund checks when all the tenants are moving out.

Let us know if you have any more questions.