

# **HOW TO FIND A RENTAL UNIT**

## **Where to Look?**

Check out websites that offer rental units by searching “units for rent in Peoria County”  
Check the website PHA uses for tenant search at [www.ILHOUSINGSEARCH.org](http://www.ILHOUSINGSEARCH.org)  
Check the classified section of the local newspapers under Houses for Rent or Lease and Apartments for Rent or Lease.

Check bulletin boards in Laundromats, supermarkets,, credit unions, etc.

Check with friends or neighbors, they may know of places that are available.

Look for yard signs in the area where you want to live offering “House for Rent”.

Check with Real Estate Offices or rental agencies. (Warning: you may be required to pay a fee; payment of a fee does not guarantee that you will find satisfactory housing).

## **Questions to Ask Prospective Landlord(s)**

The name, address and phone number of the owner and/or his agent.

The full address of the home.

The number of bedrooms in the home.

The amount of rent being asked.

What, if any, utilities are included in the rent. Do they supply garbage service and water?

Any special restrictions the Landlord has, such as no pets or children.

## **Make an Appointment to look at the unit**

If the house might be what you are looking for, ask for an appointment to see it. Be sure to keep the appointment and be on time. You may want to arrive early to look around the neighborhood. Make sure you are 100% satisfied with the unit prior to having the owner complete your paperwork.



# HOUSING LOCATION WORKSHEET

## Section A

Questions to ask initially:

1. How much is the rent? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How much is the deposit? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are utilities included in the rent? \_\_\_\_\_  
Which utilities are included? \_\_\_\_\_  
Which utility payments are not included? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the average cost of utilities? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who is the Landlord? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What appliances are furnished with the unit?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Section B

### Be sure to see the exact unit you will rent!!

Some items to examine when viewing the unit:.

- Enough electrical outlets in each room?
- Does the door have a deadbolt lock?
- Do all the windows open and lock properly?
- Does air leak through the doors or windows?
- Is there evidence of roaches?
- Do you see any brown water spots on floors or ceiling that could be a water leak?
- Are hallways and entrances well lit?
- Is furniture in good condition?
- Are utilities individually metered?
- Is there any exposed wiring?
- Do the burners on the oven work?
- Does the refrigerator work properly?
- Does the toilet work properly? (**Try flushing it**)
- Does hot water come out of hot water taps? (**Check**)
- Is there a smoke alarm? (**Test it**)
- Is heating sufficient?
- Does the walls need painting?
- Does carpet need to be cleaned?

Try to talk with a few current tenants in the building to see if they have any complaints about the Landlord.

## **Before you sign a lease:**

1. Is it a good idea to put money down to hold a place? Chances are good that you'll lose all of your money if you change your mind or can't agree with the Landlord on terms. Please be advised, that if you decide to pay to secure a unit, it is at your own risk.
2. It is a good idea to bring a copy of the lease to the Peoria Housing Authority for review.
3. Be sure to have the name, street address, (not a post office box) and telephone number of the Landlord. Inability to reach one's Landlord can be a problem.

## **Some important matters to include in the lease before you sign:**

1. The exact parking space number you will be assigned if you expect parking.
2. A clear statement exactly what furniture, and or appliances will be furnished by the Landlord.
3. All promises for decorating, painting, cleaning, etc., should be put in writing. Landlords do not have to do any of these things unless you contract for them. Include a specific completion date for all work promised.
4. All promises of any kind, oral promises cannot be proven and are not binding. This includes:  
\_\_\_\_\_ If pets are allowed  
\_\_\_\_\_ Specific repairs to be done  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pest Control, snow removal, lawn care, or other services provided by the Landlord.
5. A clear statement addressing which utilities you pay for and which utilities that the Landlord is responsible for.
6. Terms and conditions for deposit return after the lease is up. This is essential with properties with less than 10 apartments; the law does not specifically address period of time for refund of deposit at these properties.
7. A full description of the exact property you are renting (apt #, garage included, etc).

**DO NOT SIGN A LEASE WITH A LANDLORD WITHOUT LOOKING AT THE "ACTUAL" UNIT YOU WILL RENT.**

**DO NOT ACCEPT KEYS TO A UNIT IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE UNIT.**