

TENANT GUIDE

To accompany you in your new dwelling



SERVICE D'AIDE AUX

NÉO
CANADIENS
depuis 1954

SHERBROOKE

530 Prospect Street
Sherbrooke, QC J1H 1A8
Telephone : 819 566-5373
Fax : 819 566-1331

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Welcome to Quebec! Welcome in your new dwelling!

This guide is to help you get settled in your new dwelling. You will find information regarding your obligations as a tenant when you sign a lease, the rules of living in a community, and how to keep your dwelling clean and in good condition.

If you cannot find answers to your questions in this guide, contact the person who is looking after you at the SANC, or speak to one of the person's colleagues, who can advise you and, if necessary, serve as mediator between you and your landlord, whatever the problem.

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Your obligations as tenant



During the Lease:

Pay the entire monthly amount of your rent on the specified date.

When signing the Lease, make sure that you understand everything. When and where do you have to pay the rent? To whom do you give it or send it? In what form, cash, check, etc.?

Always keep the dwelling clean. Clean it regularly.

Do not disturb the other tenants or the landlord. Common areas like hallways are not a playground for children. Do not turn up the music or television and disturb the others.



Mutual respect is a basic rule!

Notify the landlord or caretaker when something is not working well, or not working at all, such as the heating system, water is leaking, or the sink is clogged, etc..

At the end of the Lease:

Remove all your possessions.

Return the dwelling to the way it was when you moved in.

Give the key back to the landlord or caretaker.

You would like to move? At the end of your Lease or before? What are your options?



Above all, remember that moving is expensive. Moving means having to register with Sherbrooke Hydro: \$55; phone hook-up: \$50; cable: \$50 to \$100, etc.. Renting a vehicle or hiring someone to move your furniture and personal effects: \$50 to \$400. When your decision is made, you are moving ...

Moving at the end of your Lease

If you receive a notice for a rent increase from the landlord, you must send your notice of non-renewal of the Lease in the month following the actual date of receipt of notice from the landlord.

If you have not received a notice of rent increase, you still must send your notice of non-renewal of the Lease, and that, within a specified period (see the table below), so that your lease does not extend automatically for another year. You must send your notice by registered mail.

Table of deadlines for notices of non-renewal of a Lease by the tenant			
To terminate a Lease without an expiry date, or to avoid the renewal of a Lease with an expiry date...	The tenant has not received a notice of rent increase or a modification of another condition in the Lease...	The tenant of a room who has not received a notice of rent increase or modification of another condition in the Lease	A tenant having received a notice of rent increase or modification of another conditions in the Lease, including the tenant of a room.
Lease of 12 months or longer	Between 3 and 6 months before the end of the Lease	Between 10 to 20 days before the end of the Lease	During the month following receipt of the owner's notice
Lease of 12 months	Between 1 and 2 months before the end of the Lease		
Lease without an expiry date	Between 1 and 2 months before the desired end of the Lease	Between 10 to 20 days before the desired end of the Lease	

Moving before the end of your Lease

Do you assign your Lease or sublease your dwelling? The question you have to ask yourself is the following: Is it possible that I may want to go back to my dwelling?

If you go away for a few months for a job, or for a trip, and you want to avoid paying rent for an unoccupied dwelling, subleasing would be a good solution. You would remain the tenant with all your rights and obligations intact.

However, if you move to another city, and you prefer to terminate the Lease and all obligations, you should assign your Lease. Now, you can no longer return to your dwelling.

The formalities to assign a Lease or to sublease are identical



Notice of Assignment or Sublease

Have you found a person who is interested in your dwelling as Assignee or Sub-lessee? Immediately enter into a written agreement; an Assignment or a Sublease. This agreement is conditional upon the landlord's approval.

Then, notify the landlord in writing of the name and address of the interested person. You must provide this information. If the landlord wants the person's telephone number and the number of people who will occupy the dwelling, you have to ask the potential tenant's permission first. The notice must also include the foreseen date of the Assignment or Sublease.

Make sure to send the notice by registered mail, or have the landlord or caretaker sign a copy of your notice in your presence, with the date of receipt. Then, the landlord has 15 days from receipt of the notice to indicate whether he accepts or rejects the proposed tenant. If he does not respond, he is deemed to have accepted the Assignment or Sublease.

If the owner refuses the potential tenant, he must notify you and indicate his reasons which must be valid.

An Assignment and its consequences...

...for you:

You transfer all your rights including the right to maintain occupancy to the person who moves into your dwelling. You are released from any obligations from the date of transfer. You do not have to send a notice of non-renewal of the Lease to the owner.

...for the landlord:

Once the Assignment is in effect, the landlord is bound to the new occupant. It is now up to him to forward any notices regarding the Lease and the rent he receives.

...for the new occupant:

He accepts the dwelling in the condition in which it was during his visit, with all of a tenant's obligations.

A Sublease and its consequences

When you sublease your dwelling, **you remain fully responsible for all obligations of the Lease.**

Before the conclusion of the Sublease, you must give the sub-lessee a copy of the rules of the building, if applicable. The Sublease must contain all the main obligations that have to be followed with regard to the landlord, or make reference to these obligations.

In the latter case, you must give the sub-tenant a copy of the Lease.

You are obliged to deliver the dwelling in good habitable condition, clean, well maintained and in good repair.

You have an obligation to provide the dwelling for the tenant's "quiet enjoyment."

WARNING: You continue to be responsible for the Lease. To avoid renewal, you must give the owner notice of non-renewal of the Lease in a timely manner.

However, the landlord himself can terminate a Sublease that has lasted over 12 months, whether consecutive or not.

At the same time, you also keep your right to terminate your lease in the manner and time provided by law (see table of possible non-renewal of a Lease on page 5).

If you do not renew your Lease, the sub lessee who wants to remain in the dwelling must try to sign a new Lease with the landlord.

Note: The sub lessee is not required to leave, unless it receives a notice from the tenant or owner to vacate the dwelling within 10 days.

If the sub lessee fails to meet its obligations and causes serious harm to the landlord or other tenants or occupants, the law specifically provides that the landlord can request termination of the tenant's Lease or, the sub lessee's Lease.

Rules of Living in a Community



Living in an apartment building with others means respecting the members of one's own family and also the neighbours.

In order to maintain good relations with your neighbours and the owner, you must avoid making too much noise, such as screaming, or having the television or the music too loud.

The municipal by-law does not allow any noise after 11 p.m..



You must supervise your children in the hallways and in the building, and ensure that they do not jump and scream excessively. Do not leave young children alone outside the building. The parents are responsible for the acts of their children.

When you enter your dwelling, remove your shoes, to avoid making noise for your neighbours below when you are walking.

Ask the landlord or caretaker about the rules in your building. You will then know what to do to maintain a good relationship with your neighbours!

Maintenance of your Dwelling



All family members should help keep your home clean and tidy.

Storage

You should store your household items in cupboards, and clothes in closets, not on the furniture so that you can easily move around in your dwelling. You can buy items for storage, such as coat hangers, boxes or furniture.



Maintenance of the floors and furniture

Each area of your home, the living room, kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, and hallways must be kept clean. You need to vacuum every week. If liquid is spilled on the floor or furniture, you wipe it off with a cloth and clean the stain immediately.

You must also sweep and wash the floors regularly. When you wash the floor, do not pour water directly on the floor but use a wet mop or cloth and wring it out.

Dust furniture, shelves, heaters, etc. regularly. Leave a space of at least 15 centimetres in front of the heaters for better heat circulation, and to prevent fires.



Your bedroom

The bedroom is a place to rest; a quiet place. Clothing should be in dressers or the closet or, in cartons if the clothes are used during a particular season, such as the winter. These clothes should be washed and dried before storing them. The floors and furniture have to be cleaned every week.



Your kitchen

Cleanliness and hygiene are essential in your kitchen!

Work surfaces, such as countertops, table, and the stove must be cleaned with an effective cleaner to remove the fat from frying, etc. after each meal. The dishes are washed after each meal and stored in the cupboards.



Dry food or non-perishables such as rice, sugar, biscuits, flour, etc. are stored in sealed containers in the pantry to prevent contamination by insects and moisture.



Perishables are placed in the refrigerator, in appropriate containers, according to the food; plastic bags, plastic containers, plastic wrap, wax paper or aluminium foil. The period of storage varies depending on the food. For example: three days for raw meat, a week or more for fruits and vegetables.

Frozen foods must also be appropriately packaged in plastic bags, plastic containers, or plastic wrap. The shelf life also varies depending on the food and the type of packaging; between 3 and 6 months. If food is thawed out, you must cook it immediately and not freeze it again unless it is cooked; this applies especially to raw meat.

Place hot pans on an insulating surface such as a wooden board or other insulating material so as not to burn the counter tops, and floors.

To cut fruits and vegetables use a wooden or plastic cutting board, not the counter.



When you are cooking, turn on the range hood to remove fumes, grease and cooking odours. If there is too much smoke or humidity, the smoke detector may come on. When that happens, remove the pot from the element, and turn off the stove. Wave a towel under the detector to stop the alarm. However, do NOT try to turn off the detector during a major fire. **Instead, call 911 for help, and leave your dwelling immediately.**



When you leave your dwelling, make sure that all the elements on the stove are turned off and the oven as well.

Never pour hot oil in the sink in the kitchen or in the bathroom. You must let it cool down and then pour it into a jar that you close tightly. Then you can put it in the garbage.

Cooking in a microwave oven must be done with dishes that can be used for this purpose ONLY. Never use metal containers, foil or dishes with borders in gold or other metals. Cover food with a loose fitting lid or with plastic wrap to avoid splashing, without sealing the container.



Your bathroom

Cleanliness and hygiene go together here too.

Wash and disinfect the toilet bowl every week. Wash the sink and bath regularly with cleaners and disinfectants. Store hazardous cleaning products and medicines out of the reach of children, or lock them up.

Hang wet towels on wall hangers to dry them and to prevent them from growing mould. Turn on the bathroom fan when taking a shower or a bath to avoid too much humidity in the dwelling. Do the same thing when you dry clothes. Too much humidity creates the growth of mould which will affect your health: allergies, respiratory diseases such as rhinitis, bronchitis, asthma.

Do not throw anything into the toilet bowl other than toilet paper. **Do not dispose of diapers or sanitary napkins in the toilet bowl.**



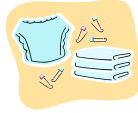
Wash your clothes every week and let them dry well before storing them in drawers or closets. You can either dry them in the dryer, on the balcony, if the landlord permits it, on a special clothes dryer made for that or in the bathroom if it is a small amount, with the fan running. If you use a dryer, you can dry a whole load of laundry in it.



If you have a laundry room in your building, you can use the washer and dryer. Do not leave your clothing unattended when washing and drying.

General Advice

Babies must always wear diapers to avoid soiling the carpet and the furniture. You can also put a waterproof sheet on the mattresses of children who still wet their bed..



Window frames and the windows must be cleaned at least twice a year.



The battery in the smoke detector must be changed once a year. Always change it on the same date to help you to remember; on the day of the time change in the fall, for example.

Do not let the water run, either hot or cold; it is a waste of a precious resource.

If you want to install a satellite dish, or an air conditioner, first ask the owner for approval, and then, have the installation done by a professional in order to avoid damaging the dwelling.



Winter

During winter time, the temperature of the dwelling must be between 21 and 24° Celsius. Never put the thermostat to the maximum because it will be too hot and uncomfortable. Just wear warm clothing and slippers.

Keep the windows closed to avoid heat loss and to pay for heating unnecessarily. Heating costs are one of the biggest expenses in a dwelling. You can open the windows for 5 or 10 minutes per day, but not too long, because ice can form and then the window will not close any more.



When you go into your dwelling, take your boots off, and put them on a waterproof mat near the door. This way, you avoid dirtying the carpet and the floors. Clothing that is wet from the snow should be put on hangers to dry properly for the next morning: mittens, toques, socks, pants and snow suits.

Garbage, Recycling, and Composting



Put your garbage into plastic bags and then put them into one of those large black bins outside the building so that they don't make your apartment smell bad and attract insects.

There are green bins as well for recyclable material such as glass, metal, plastic, and paper. You can ask the landlord for more information.

Finally, there are also brown bins for compostable waste. Food leftovers, egg shells, etc., are collected every day to be composted.



Some juice containers, pop and beer bottles are returnable. They must be returned to the grocery or convenience store for a refund based on the number of containers returned.

For large items, the City of Sherbrooke organises the collection of bulky waste and wood.

Bulky Waste	Wood Waste Only
3 times a year: May, July and October	3 times a year: May, July and October
Carpets, blinds, mattresses, armchairs, sofas and all other wooden furniture. Attention: Televisions, electronic and electric equipment is excluded; they must be taken to a recycling eco centre.	Painted wood, unusable furniture made entirely from wood or melamine.

ATTENTION: In order to avoid an infestation of insects, do not pick-up old sofas that have been on the side of the road for a while and that may have gotten wet; do not pick-up old cartons either.

How to prevent an infestation of cockroaches



A quantity of food and water that seems very small to us can support a large population of cockroaches. It is for this reason that it is very important to eliminate everything that may be a source of food and water for the insects.

It may seem like a lot of work, but it is worth it!

Things to do every day, even if you have not seen any cockroaches:

- ◆ Clean the kitchen counters and the dining room table after each meal;
- ◆ Do not leave dirty dishes on the counter overnight. If you have to soak a pot or pan, fill it with hot water and dishwashing liquid;
- ◆ Remove the grease from the top of the stove and the burners every evening;
- ◆ Quickly clean up all food spills, especially on carpets and furniture;
- ◆ Garbage and compost must be placed in closed containers and disposed of as often as possible;



- ◆ If you have a fan in your bathroom, turn it on after each bath or shower to remove the humidity.

Things to do regularly, especially when there are cockroaches already:

- ◆ All food items in kitchen cabinets must be placed in completely sealed containers;
- ◆ Sweep and vacuum regularly to get rid of food scraps;
- ◆ Areas that are difficult to clean are the major sources of infestations and must be checked every month, if possible. Pull out the refrigerator and the stove, so you can clean in behind, the sides and underneath. Also, clean the outside of the appliance;

- ◆ Clean the inside of your stove regularly and the vent above your stove that removes grease;
- ◆ Make sure that faucets are not leaking and that there are no leaks in the piping under the sink and washbasin.



Once the cockroaches are deprived of food and water, the number of places where they find refuge must be reduced. They like very narrow and enclosed spaces. Get rid of clutter in cabinets, so that the cockroaches do not have dark places where they can hide.

Checklist

What to do if...	Who can help?
...you have insects in your dwelling?	Speak to the landlord or caretaker to find a solution. If the problem persists, or is not being corrected, you can also ask for help from the person who looks after you at the SANC.
...you have black spots on the walls and in corners?	You have a problem with humidity. Speak to the landlord or caretaker to find a solution. If the problem persists, or is not being corrected, you can also ask for help from the person who looks after you at the SANC.
...your heating system is not working?	Speak to the landlord or caretaker to find a solution in order to quickly solve the problem.
...your sink is clogged?	Speak to the landlord or caretaker to find a solution.
...an appliance, included in your Lease, is not working? (Refrigerator, stove or fridge)	Speak to the landlord or caretaker to find a solution.
...you suffer a sharp increase in rent?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Contact l'Association des locataires [Tenants' Association] 2- Speak to the person who looks after you at the SANC. 3- Contact the Régie du logement [Housing Authority], at 819 820-3375 or by going to their office at 740, Galt Street West, in Sherbrooke.

Organisations and Services looking after Tenants

ACÉF Estrie (Association coopérative d'économie familiale) [Cooperative Association of Home Economics]

187 Laurier Street
Sherbrooke, QC J1H 4Z4
Tel.: 819 563-8144
www.consommateur.qc.ca

Mission: To defend and promote the rights and interests of consumers, with special attention to those with low or moderate incomes.

Service économie d'énergie Éconologis (Energy Saving Service) A home visiting program to save energy. Tel.: 819 563-1585

Association des locataires de Sherbrooke [Sherbrooke Tenants' Association]

185 Wellington Street South
Sherbrooke, QC J1H 5E1
Tel.: 819 791-1541
www.aide-internet.org

Mission: To support social housing development. Put your name on the list to apply for social housing in the greater Sherbrooke area.

Régie du logement [Housing Authority]

740 Galt Street West
Sherbrooke, QC J1H 1Z3
Tel.: 819 820-3375
www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca

Mission: To decide cases before the courts, to inform citizens about rights and obligations contained in the Lease, and to promote conciliation between landlords and tenants.

On the web site of the **Régie du logement** [Housing Authority] you will find forms, such as the "Notice of non-renewal of Lease" by the tenant, "Assignment of Lease," etc.

Office municipal d'habitation de Sherbrooke (OMHS) [Sherbrooke Municipal Housing Office {SMHO}]

22 William-Ives Street, Suite 100
Sherbrooke, QC J1E 2C2
www.omhsherbrooke.qc.ca

Mission: To offer dwellings, mainly for persons and families of moderate and low income.

Note that you must be a permanent resident and have resided in Quebec for at least one year to be eligible to apply to the SMHO in order to obtain affordable housing.

FCHE (Fédération des coopératives d'habitation de l'Estrie) [Federation of Housing Cooperatives in the Eastern Townships]

548 Dufferin Street
Sherbrooke, QC J1H 4N1
www.cooperativehabitation.coop

Mission: To find dwellings for 40 Cooperatives (from an inventory of 1,360).
Cooperative dwellings are subsidised. All tenants of the cooperative participate in the management and maintenance of the building.

Pictograms



Hello / goodbye



Is this for the rent?



A coffee / tea?



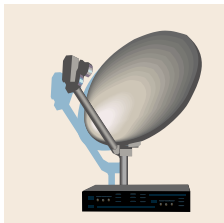
Rules



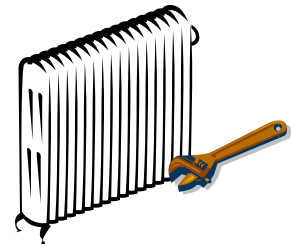
Yes



No



May we install a satellite dish?



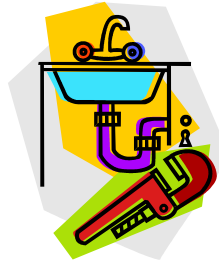
I have a problem with the heating.



The tap leaks



Problems with my toilet



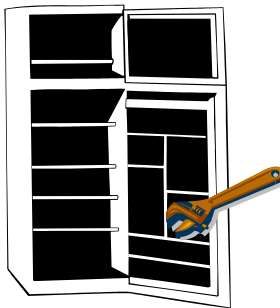
My sink is clogged



Too much noise



My washer is broken



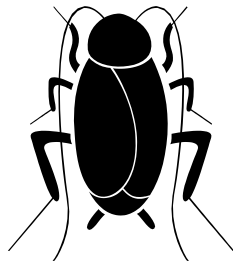
My fridge is broken



My stove is broken



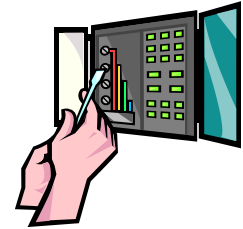
Mosquito screen to repair



Invasion of insects



No animals allowed



The door-entry system is broken



I have a problem with the lock



The door is broken



I have water damage



To paint, or fresh paint



Kitchen



Room



Living room



Bath



Parking