



# City of Fitchburg

## Tenant Rights & Responsibilities

Regardless of your status as a student, if you are renting an apartment off campus, you have rights and responsibilities as a tenant and resident of the University Neighborhood.

### Types of Tenancy

A lease: a written agreement between tenants and the landlord, and lasts for a pre-determined length of time

A tenancy-at-will: An agreement between tenants and a landlord that does not have a pre-determined length of time. Generally these agreements are not in writing. Either the landlord or the tenant can decide to end the tenancy by giving a one month notice before the due date of the next rent payment.

Regardless of which you have, **your landlord can't just evict you, change the locks or increase your rent without proper notice and sometimes cause.**

The lease must include the name, address, and phone number of the owner, the person responsible for maintenance, and the person to whom the tenant can give copies of formal notice.

Visit [www.mass.gov/guides/the-attorney-generals-guide-to-landlord-and-tenant-rights](http://www.mass.gov/guides/the-attorney-generals-guide-to-landlord-and-tenant-rights) for more information.

### Your Rights as a Tenant

- You have a right to **safe and decent** housing.
- Your landlord must give you 24 hours' notice or make arrangements with you to enter the property unless it is an emergency.
- Your landlord should make timely repairs once reported.
- If you rent an apartment with other roommates, all roommates must have access to the common areas of the apartment.

### Your Responsibilities as a Tenant

- Pay rent on time.
- Follow the rules agreed upon with the landlord.
- Keep the apartment in good condition/ accept responsibility for damages to the property beyond normal wear and tear.

### Health and Safety

Appliances, lights, outlets, heat, plumbing, doors, windows, smoke & CO2 detectors, etc. should be in decent working condition and the apartment should be free of pest infestations.

If your apartment lacks water, heat in the winter, or other basic amenities, contact your landlord immediately.

If the landlord does not make the repairs in a timely manner, **you have the right to call the City's Board of Health to request an inspection.** If the landlord fails to maintain your apartment in safe and decent condition, the City will require the owner correct any violations of the State Sanitary Code. We strongly suggest you give your landlord the opportunity to make repairs before you call the City.

## Emergency Parking Bans

During snow and ice storms, the City may issue a parking ban. This is necessary for plows to clear the streets. The University may have temporary parking at the commuter parking lot at the Landry Arena during snow emergencies. More info on City parking bans is here: [www.fitchburgma.gov/459/Parking-Information](http://www.fitchburgma.gov/459/Parking-Information)

## Snow and Ice Removal

The City requires property owners to clear snow off the public sidewalks and the State requires that property owners keep all exits clear of snow and other hazards. More info on the City's requirements here: [www.fitchburgma.gov/461/Sidewalk-Clearing](http://www.fitchburgma.gov/461/Sidewalk-Clearing)

## Trash and Recycling

Fitchburg uses green trash and recycling barrels for trash pick-up. Please **place your cart at the curb with the serial numbers facing the street**, leaving 3 feet between barrels and **do not place them behind an obstruction like telephone pole, parked cars, signs etc.** The Trash removal truck uses an automatic arm and can't pick up the barrels if they are not positioned correctly. The University area is a dense neighborhood, please don't put your barrels out more than 12 hours before trash pick-up and remove them promptly. More info here: [www.fitchburgma.gov/808/Trash-Dos-and-Donts](http://www.fitchburgma.gov/808/Trash-Dos-and-Donts). Recyclable items are listed here: [www.fitchburgma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4839/Recycling--Trash-Dos-and-Donts?bidId](http://www.fitchburgma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4839/Recycling--Trash-Dos-and-Donts?bidId)

## Quiet Hours & City Noise Ordinance

The University neighborhood is dense, please be considerate of your neighbors. **Noises above 50 decibels is not allowed between the hours of 11PM and 7AM.** Violators can be fined. Refer to the ordinance (Code of Fitchburg, Chapter 132-49 through 132-61) here: <https://ecode360.com/13232337>

## Fitchburg State University Good Neighbor Policy

The City appreciates FSU's Good Neighbor Policy (in your student handbook) and expects students living and visiting off campus to adhere to those policies. Please be advised, if the police are called to an off campus location and **identify illegal activities**, including serving alcohol to minors, those students hosting events or otherwise responsible will be **referred to the Director of Student Conduct. Multiple incidents will result in fines to students and landlords.**