



## **Welcome!**

Each year we help hundreds of tenants enjoy and find peace in their new home and we've created this guide to help with questions that frequently arise. We believe in being a property management company that professionally approaches each situation.

We're excited that you are going to be with us and we look forward to helping you however we can. Our hope is that this Handbook will assist you. If you have any suggestions about how we might improve for future editions, please let us know!

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## **GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- A. Lease Agreement:** The duration of your lease agreement is specified in the lease agreement. Your lease agreement is for a fixed term. Any early termination or extension must be discussed with your Property Manager. During the term of the lease, you are responsible for the home/property as well as the yard maintenance, unless otherwise specified in the agreement. Your obligations are like those of the property owner and you are expected to care for and maintain the premises.
- B. Tenant Contact:** All tenants are required to have telephone accessibility and provide this to our office. This could be home, work, cell or emergency contact. Email is frequently used in our office. All contact should be updated frequently or as needed.
- C. Rent:** Rent is due on the first (1st) of each month. Payments not received by the fifth (5th) of each month will be assessed a late fee on the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>). This includes weekends and holidays (e.g., if the 5th of the month falls on a Saturday, and a tenant does not make a payment until the following Monday (the 7th), the late fees will begin accruing on Sunday).
- a. Late Fee: \$50.00 fee assessed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month for any rental payments not received by close of business on the 5<sup>th</sup>. \$5.00 additional fee for each additional day of nonpayment starting on the 7<sup>th</sup>. This will continue to accrue until the full balance is paid.
  - b. Legal Fee: Legal fees are assessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month for tenants that have not paid their rent. This starts the eviction process.

There are several payment options to ensure that your rent is received in our office timely. Some of these options have fees that will be incurred by the tenant for processing.

- **Tenant Web Access:** We encourage you to use our online payment system. Our secure, online system allows you to send your rent directly (ACH) from your bank account or credit card (Visa, MasterCard and Diners Club) to us.
- **Mail:** Tenants may submit rent payments by postal mail. All tenants, regardless of location, can mail payment to the address below or to your local property management office. Ensure that your payment is mailed timely. We post rental payments based on date received, not postal or check date. Acceptable forms of payment for mail include: Personal check, money order, or cashier's check/certified funds. Please note that we do not accept personal checks after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Wilder Property Management  
Attn: Accounting  
1730 Main Street  
Columbia, SC 29201**

- **CashPay:** While we do not accept cash in our offices, our online payment system, PayLease has an agreement with several locations that will allow our tenants to pay via cash or debit card to several large retailers like Walmart, Kroger, or Kmart. Please ask your Property Manager for more details.
- **Monthly ePay:** This service is offered for tenants that do not want the hassle of remembering when to pay their rent. You can set up an account with your property manager and your rent would be withdrawn from the account of your choice on the same date each month.

- D. Utilities:** Tenant is responsible for maintaining the utilities in the home. Utilities must not be disconnected while living in the home for any reason. If utilities are disconnected, this could be considered a breach of the lease agreement. Utilities could include water, sewer, gas or electric.
- E. Property Inspections:** As part of our agreement with the property owner, we will conduct routine inspections of the condition of the property. You will be notified when this may occur, at least 24 hours ahead of time. We also conduct at least 2 inspections during your lease agreement. You will be notified of this as well. In the event we determine that inspection issues are tenant caused you will be notified in writing and given proper time to correct the problem. If we must remedy the problem, you will be charged for the repair with the following months' rent.
- F. Disturbances:** All tenants are expected to conduct themselves in a way that will not offend or disturb neighbors. Any activity that causes extreme or excessive noise, traffic, or disturbances of any kind could be cause for lease violations. This includes loud, lewd, vulgar, or profane language. If music can be heard outside the perimeter of the leased home, it may be considered too loud.
- G. Pets/Assistance Animals/Service Animals:**
- a. **Pets:** Pets are only allowed with the written approval of the homeowner and Wilder Property Management. Many of the homes we manage do NOT allow pets. Having a pet on the property is a privilege and may be revoked at any time without terminating your lease agreement. We also require you to obey all local ordinances of your neighborhood or area. Understand that on final move out inspection, we have a zero-tolerance policy for pets in homes that do not expressly allow pets.
  - b. **Assistance/Companion Animals:** a companion animal is an animal whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, therapy, companionship, therapeutic benefits or promote emotional well-being and are not service animals for persons with disabilities.
  - c. **Service Animals:** a service animal is an animal that may perform tasks for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who are visually impaired, alerting people who are hearing impaired, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and/or protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. Service animals are working animals, not pets.
- H. Keys and Locks:** Alterations or replacement of locks or installation of additional locks require prior approval. If you are locked out of your house after hours and require the use of a locksmith, you may not rekey or replace the property locks. You may have the locksmith make duplicate keys for the current locksets. We must retain keys to each lock of the property. If we determine that you at any time have changed the locks and our access is denied we will change the locks and you will be charged. If you are locked out of the house during office hours you may borrow a key from us. There will be a \$40.00 deposit on the borrowed key until it is returned. Any borrowed key must be returned within 24 hours.
- I. Grounds**
- a. **Lawn Maintenance:** You are responsible for maintaining your yard. Upkeep of the

lawn, flowerbeds, hedges, edging, weeding, etc., is a responsibility that's included in your lease. This includes raking leaves, trimming shrubbery, cleaning gutters, removing weeds from flower beds, keeping vines off the roof and house. If the property has a lawn irrigation system, it is the tenant's responsibility to have the system winterized. If you have specific questions about your yard, please ask your Property Manager.

- b. **Trash/Garbage/Recycling:** All garbage, trash and recycling materials must be placed in the appropriate containers, provided by the city/county or the homeowner. All containers are to be discreetly stored. The residents are required to contact the city/county that offers the trash service to ensure that trash, garbage, and recycling is picked up according to schedule. Containers are not to be out of the storage area except on pick up day.

## J. Maintenance

- a. **Reporting Service Requests:** There are multiple ways that you can submit service requests to us.

Non-Emergencies:

- Call the Service Manager at (803) 728-8400 ext. 204 during normal business hours. If it is after hours and is not an emergency, you can call the number above and leave a message. Your call will be answered/ returned the next business day.
- Go to your Tenant Web Access (TWA) and submit a request online. This is for non-emergencies only.
- Send an email to your property manager and they will get to the Service Manager.

Emergency service:

- DO NOT submit an email or place the service through TWA.
- Call the Service Manager at (803) 728-8400 ext. 204 during normal business hours.
- After hours, call the Emergency Service Number at (803) 983-1204.

Please remember: Renting one of our homes is very different than renting from an apartment community. With our properties, we do not have an onsite maintenance department to take care of maintenance issues. All our repair work is completed by dependable outside contractors or vendors. Much of the work that is done at your home must be approved from the home owner or go through a home warranty system. There can be delays in some repair work because of this. We will do our best in ensuring that your service and comfort is top priority.

Also, we determine the cause and effect of the repair or damages based on what our trained contractors and vendors report to us. We rely on them to identify causes of damages or repairs. This will determine if you are responsible for the repair or the owner. Our job is not to deny services, but rather complete the work/service and sort out the additional details afterwards.

- b. **Routine Maintenance:** As you settle into your new home, please remember that you are responsible for routine maintenance inside the home. Here are some of the tasks that are your responsibility:
  - Replacement of light bulbs
  - Replacement of furnace filters
  - Replacement of batteries in smoke detectors and CO2 detector
  - Lighting pilot lights
  - Thermostat battery replacement

- Resetting breakers or GFI outlets
  - Any issue that is the result of damage or misuse
- c. **Walls and Ceilings:** Please keep the walls of your home clean and unmarred. **Do not paint or wallpaper the walls without prior written approval.** You are welcome to hang pictures on the walls if the walls are clean and unmarred when you vacate. All walls, baseboards, and trim must be washed before vacating
- d. **Flooring:**
- **Vinyl/Ceramic Tile Flooring:** With normal household use, vinyl floors may be washed with a solution of warm water and soap. Do not apply varnish, lacquer or shellac to the floor. Do not apply any type of wax to ceramic tile floors. Tenant will be responsible for damage to the flooring such as broken tiles, torn vinyl or improper cleaning procedures.
  - **Hardwood Floors:** Dry mop, sweep or vacuum floors regularly. Do not wet-mop wood floors. Standing water can dull the finish and discolor and damage the wood. Do not let any water drip, pour or accumulate on floors. Clean liquid spills with a dry cloth and sticky spills with a slightly dampened cloth. Do not use soaps, detergents or oil soaps on your wood floors. When mopping is needed, use a wood cleaner applied lightly with a cloth or mop and then buff dry. Tenant shall not shellac or refinish floors without prior written approval. Use fabric-faced guides under the furniture legs to prevent scratches. Do not drag or slide furniture across the floor. Tenant will be responsible for damage to the flooring.
  - **Carpet Care:** Routine carpet care requires a thorough vacuuming at least once a week to remove the soil from the carpet and to keep the pile erect. Heavy traffic areas require more frequent vacuuming. Before moving in, the carpets are professionally cleaned. The carpet must be professionally cleaned as a part of the move-out process.
- e. **Electrical:** At move in, all light fixtures will be equipped with the proper watt light bulb. Never use any bulb higher than a 60-watt light bulb. When you move out all light bulbs must be working in all fixtures.
- f. **Heating and Cooling:** Filter must be replaced every 60 days to ensure that the systems are operating properly. The air coming from the vents will not be warm in the winter or cool in the summer if not replaced consistently. You should also maintain the vents. If you have floor/wall vents, make sure that objects are not blocking it or obstructing the airflow. Many homes have heat pumps for heating and cooling. Heat pumps are designed to be set and left alone. If you set the temperature too cool in summer, the unit will freeze up. If you set it too high in winter, the unit will not heat any faster. During high heat or cold spells, the heat pump might not keep the house as hot or cool as you would like. In high heat, the heat pump cannot cool the house more than 15 degrees cooler than the outside temperatures. To help units run better, close all windows, storm windows, drapes and blinds. If you have a gas furnace, this will produce a warmer temperature than a heat pump. The area around the condenser (outside unit) should also be kept clear of grass, debris and other obstructions. Do not allow grass and/or weeds to grow around the condenser unit. If you have a thermostat that runs off batteries replacing the battery is tenant's responsibility.
- g. **Plumbing:** You are responsible for keeping all sink, lavatories and toilet drains open. Do not allow anyone to throw anything into the plumbing system or use it for any purpose other than what it was intended for. The only items safe to put down the

drains of the property are human waste and toilet paper. Do not flush: sanitary napkins or tampons, baby wipes, excessive amounts of toilet paper, wet wipes, Q-tips, condoms, or paper towels. You will be responsible for any damage or stoppage unless it was caused by mechanical failure of the plumbing system. It is recommended that you purchase hair strainers for tubs, showers and sink drains. If the home is on a septic tank sewer system, in addition to the items listed above, do not flush wet paper towels, facial tissues, cigarette butts, and other non-decomposable materials into the property sewer. These materials will not decompose and will fill the septic tank and plug the system. Regular septic tank maintenance is critical to avoid blockage, backing up of waste into the property and responsibility for costly repairs. Tenant must purchase an appropriate enzyme product and flush into the functioning toilet, as directed on product. Tenant will be responsible for any damage or stoppage unless it was caused by mechanical failure of the plumbing system.

The following items must NOT be flushed down the toilet, even if the item says flushable:

- Feminine sanitary napkins or products
- Baby wipes
- Paper towels
- Medicines, especially creams
- Grease
- Plastics of any kind (baggies, wrappers, etc.)

Any plumbing bill that is the result of any of the above will be billed back you for payment.

- h. **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** It is the Tenants responsibility to regularly test the smoke detector(s) and carbon detector(s). You must notify the property manager immediately of any problems, defects, malfunctions or failure of the detector(s). Test the detector(s) regularly to ensure operation. Make sure that batteries are being replaced, as needed, or every 6 months. To change the battery, slide battery door open, remove old battery, install new 9-volt battery, close battery door and test the smoke detector by using the test button. It is advised that you turn the power off at the service panel to smoke detectors that are hardwired when replacing a battery. Clean the smoke detector cover once a month with a soft brush or wand attachment from a vacuum cleaner to remove dust, dirt and debris which can build up on the housing and reduce functionality. You may also use a damp cloth to clean the smoke detector cover.
- i. **Appliances:** Appliances in the home at move in are the responsibly of the owner, but it is the tenant's responsibility to maintain them in operational condition. Cleaning the stove, refrigerator, microwave (if applicable), and dishwasher is important in its upkeep. Be mindful when cleaning with chemicals, as some appliances require certain cleaning solutions. Clean stainless-steel appliances with appropriate cleaners.
  - Cleaning ovens with oven cleaner should be done cautiously and ensuring that there is proper ventilation. Do not use oven cleaner on self-cleaning

ovens. For solid surface stoves, use only cleaners approved for those surfaces.

- Run the dishwasher through a cycle at least once a week to ensure that the seals do not dry out or that there is standing water.
- Garbage disposals should not be used for bones, celery, onionskins, greasy items, pasta, rice or any other similar materials. If the motor buzzes, turn the switch off. Something may be jamming the blades. Verify that the object jamming it isn't something that shouldn't be placed in the disposal, such as a bottle cap or kitchen utensil. There is usually a reset button on the bottom or the side of the disposal (this is usually a small red or yellow button). Almost all disposal jams are from items put into the disposal. If a work order is placed and technician discovers an item has jammed the disposal, the tenant will be charged the service fee.
- Check washer/dryer hookups and make sure that all hoses and washers to prevent leaks are installed properly. When installing a washing machine, use "burst resistant stainless steel braided" washing machine hoses only. If you are going to be absent from the property for an extended period, turn off the hot and cold-water supply valves. Check the walls and floor by the washing machine monthly for evidence of leaks. Keep dryer vent and lint trap clear of lint or other build up as this can cause a fire.
- If you have an electric water heater that is not functioning, you may want to check to see if the reset button or the breaker may have been tripped. If you have a gas water heater; the pilot light may have gone out. Check manufacturers instructions or contact the gas company.

j. **Pest Control:** Please report a pest problem within your first 3 days in the home. If not reported in writing, it is agreed that the premises have no pest issues of any kind. Any future issue of any kind, less termites, is considered tenant responsibility. Tenant is responsible for reporting any suspected or known insect infestation. We are happy to refer you to our pest control contractor in your area. ALL treatments for bed bugs will be the responsibility of the tenant.

k. **Miscellaneous:**

- Always use cutting boards when chopping or cutting on the counters.
- Use pads when placing hot items on counter tops.
- Do not use abrasive cleaners on tops.
- Do not line the cabinet drawers with paper or drawer liners.
- Make sure that cabinets are cleaned regularly to avoid grease or dirt buildup throughout the home.
- When using grills outdoors, make sure that they are placed in an area not too close to the home or trees/vegetation.
- Do not allow water to build up from spills or leaks. This could cause water damage.
- Make sure that you have shower curtains that are inside the tub or that the shower doors are completely closed while showering.
- Circuit breakers move slightly when tripped. If you have an electrical issue it may be due to the breakers being tripped. It may appear to be ON when it has "popped" or "tripped". The Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) breaker or switch detects even slight voltage changes and cuts the power during fluctuations.



- Most circuit breakers are located where a water source may be present (e.g., bathrooms, kitchens, exterior plugs and garages). If you lose power to a plug near a water source, it is usually the GFI circuit. Most GFIs located at the breaker box are marked with a red or yellow button. Many houses have the GFI at the top plug outlet. There may be more than one GFI plug in the house. If these “pop” or “trip”, reset them.
- If you want to change the house décor in any way, please put your proposal in writing (e-mail) and submit it to Wilder Property Management with a sample of the paint/wallpaper or drawing of the proposed work (e.g., adding a fence). If approved, you will receive written confirmation. Tenants are not permitted to make alterations without prior written permission.
- These changes or modifications are the tenant’s financial responsibility. The cost(s) of returning the property to the original condition, if any, is also the responsibility of the tenant. If you have specific questions, your Property Manager will be happy to help you.
- Wilder Property Management must authorize ALL repairs and/or maintenance that the tenant requests. Please do not make any repairs or authorize any maintenance without written permission. Rent cannot be withheld because of needed repairs nor can the cost of needed repairs be deducted from the rent.

**K. Vehicles and Parking:** Only operational vehicles that are properly titled may be parked in the designated areas at your home. Each home may vary slightly (depending on HOA covenants), so please check with your Property Manager if you have a question about parking a boat, RV, camper, or other vehicle. There will be no parking on the lawn, sidewalks or other areas not designated for parking. No vehicle repairs (except minor repairs such as changing a tire) are allowed at any time. No oil stains are allowed on parking areas. All vehicles must be properly licensed & registered.

**L. Insurance & Liability:** It is the tenant’s responsibility to have renter’s insurance coverage. You may contact your property manager and they can give you information on acquiring it with us or you may reach out on your own. Either way, we must have a copy of the forms in your file for reference.

**M. Security Deposit:**

a. Overview:

- Your security deposit cannot be used to pay rental charges.
- When you move on to your next home, we want you to get as much of your security deposit back as you can. Any repairs above normal wear and tear may be charged back to you and deducted from your security deposit.
- The final inspection of your home will be compared with the initial inspection sheet that you returned to us.
- Your security deposit will be returned to you within 30 days of vacating the property and all keys have been turned in, provided there are no damages and a forwarding address has been provided.
- The deposit will be made out to one leaseholder when more than one is named on the

lease.

- You are not considered officially vacated until all keys have been returned to your Property Manager. Rent will continue to be charged until such time.

b. Details:

Our experience has shown that establishing clear expectations for your eventual move-out is beneficial to all parties. As a tenant, you have an obligation to return the home to its original state as when you moved in. The following list highlights areas within the home that have frequently caused frustration for tenants. Note that this list is not comprehensive, but here are the standards that we use for the most common areas problems we see tenants have:

### **Air Conditioning Filters**

All filters in your home must be replaced before move-out.

### **Appliances**

All appliances (e.g., microwaves, refrigerators, etc.) must be cleaned on the inside, outside, and behind with an appropriate antibacterial disinfectant.

### **Carpet Cleaning**

Carpets must be cleaned by a professional carpet cleaning service as a part of your move-out. We are happy to schedule this service for you. Do-it-yourself carpet cleaner rentals are NOT acceptable and will not relieve you of this obligation. If you elect to contract your own professional carpet cleaning service, you **must** provide a receipt indicating the date that the service was performed.

### **Fireplaces**

If your home is equipped with fireplaces, all ashes and/or fuel must be removed.

### **Grass/Yard**

The grass must be mowed and the yard in good repair on the date of move-out. The hedges must be trimmed. Any flowerbeds or garden boxes must be kept in good repair.

### **Holes in Wall/Painting**

If there are holes in the walls (e.g., from nails used to hang portraits), the **entire wall** (and possibly the entire room) must be repainted, at your expense, with the same shades of paint used. The reason for this policy is that even when spot repairs are attempted, it is impossible to match the original paint with the paint on the spot repair. The resulting patchwork-like paint on the wall diminishes the value of the home.

### **Light bulbs**

Every light bulb in the house must be in working order upon your move-out. Any bulb that is not functioning should be replaced before your move-out inspection.

c. Wear and Tear vs. Damages:

Normal wear and tear means that “*deterioration which occurs, based upon the use for which the*

rental unit is intended, without negligence, carelessness accident, or abuse of the premises or equipment By The tenant or members of his household or their invitees or guests.” Damage can therefore be defined as “*deterioration which occurs due to negligence, carelessness accident, or abuse of the premises or equipment by the tenant or member of his household, or their invitees or guests.*” **Notice that normal wear and tear does not include dirt.** Dirt is considered negligence, carelessness, accident or abuse.

The following list is intended as a guide to reasonable interpretation of the differences between wear and tear from normal residential use and irresponsible, intentional or unintentional actions that cause damage to a property.

WEAR & TEAR	DAMAGES
1. Small nail holes caused by a 6-penny nail or smaller. A 6-penny nail is 2 inches long and is used for hanging picture frames and other items on walls	Large holes from hanging shelving, pictures, screws, wall anchors, flat screen television brackets or any other wall hanging that causes damage larger than a 6-penny nail
2 Light smudging on walls, near light switched that can be cleaned	Crayon, marker, decals that leave residue or take off paint when removed
3. Loose or stubborn door lock	Broken or missing locks
4. Worn out keys	Broken, lost or unreturned keys
5. Loose hinges or handles on doors	Damage from a door from forced entry, or damage from using feet to open doors
6. Worn carpet traffic patterns, fraying carpet due to seams unraveling	Torn, burned, stained, missing, ripped, scratched, or snagged carpet, pet stains
7. Linoleum worn thin	Linoleum with tears, chips or holes
8. Worn countertops due to daily use	Burned, cut, stained, scratched or water damaged Countertops, not using cutting boards

9. Stain on ceiling from rain or bad plumbing that was reported as specified in the lease agreement	Stain on ceiling from rain or bad plumbing that was NOT reported in a timely manner as required in the lease agreement
10. Stain on ceiling from water damage from a property above the unit	Stain on ceiling from mold or mildew from running water without using the exhaust fan
11. Drywall cracks from settling	Holes in walls, doors, screens or windows from misuse, negligence, carelessness, accident, or abuse
12. Faded, chipped or cracked paint, Loose wallpaper	Unapproved or poor tenant paint job Ripped or marked up wallpaper
13. Dirty window and door screens, Sticky window	Torn or missing screens, Broken window
14. Running toilet or wobbles	Broken toilet seat, tank top or chipped or cracked toilet bowl
15. Musty odor	Urine or pet odor throughout unit
16. Closet bi-fold door off track	Damaged or missing bi-fold door
17. Garbage that stops working because motor dies	Garbage disposal stops because fork was put inside
18. Stains on old porcelain fixtures that have lost their protective coating	Grime coated tub & shower