Rental Touring Checklist

☐ Take a friend—never tour a rental unit alone.

☐ Make sure you see the actual unit you will be renting, not a model.

☐ Are there safety features such as smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors? Do they work?

☐ Do all of the door locks and deadbolts work, and do the bolts stick out at least one inch?

☐ Do windows open and close properly? Do they lock? Are window coverings provided?

☐ Check out the area at night with friends to see if it’s well lit and to get a feel for the neighborhood.

☐ Check your cell phone reception in the unit—can you send and receive texts and calls? (Test it out!)

☐ Does the plumbing work? Check all faucets and showers, and flush all toilets. How is the water temperature and pressure? Is there any sign of water leaks?

☐ Do the fans in the bathrooms work? Do you see signs of mold?

☐ Do the appliances work? Turn them on to make sure.

☐ Check for damages from current tenants, pets, rodents, insects, water, and fire throughout the unit, especially on the floors, walls, and ceilings, and inside cabinets, drawers, and closets.

☐ Are there enough electrical outlets throughout the unit? Do they work? (Hint: Bring your phone charger and plug it in to check).

☐ Do the lights work in all of the rooms?

☐ Does the unit have enough storage space? If you need parking for a bike, moped, or car, is it available?

☐ If there are any items that need to be repaired or replaced, discuss what repairs or improvements will be made with your prospective landlord, and write them into the lease.

☐ If you are seriously considering a rental property:

  • Ask for a copy of the lease and addendums. This will give you a chance to review the documents.

  • Read the lease carefully. Pay special attention to “Non-standard Lease Terms.”

  • Consider asking the current tenants about their experiences with the owner or management. Are they pleasant and professional? Do they respond quickly to maintenance and repair requests?

  • Contact the City of Madison Building Inspection Unit to ask about building-code violations.

  • Contact utility companies to inquire about average costs for heat, electricity, cable, and internet service.