

# HOMESEEKERS, INC

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

## TENANT HANDBOOK<sup>©</sup>

*HOW TO LIVE IN AND CARE FOR THE HOME YOU ARE RENTING*



**KEEP IN A SAFE PLACE FOR REFERENCE**

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## OUR PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU

Congratulations on the selection of your new home. Welcome to the Tampa Bay area and to your new association with HomeSeekers, Inc. Our Main office is located at:

232 W. Hillsborough Ave.  
Tampa, Fl 33604  
813/238-7550

We want to make your association with our firm a pleasant experience and hope you will look to us for all your RENTAL and REAL ESTATE needs.

If you have a home in another part of the USA, we may be able to locate a Property Manager for you through our association with the National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM). NARPM is a large association of professional Residential Property Managers, who subscribe to a high standard of service. If we can help you locate a Property Manager for your home, please let us know.

Should you decide to purchase a home, call the office and we will help locate a Realtor® who is knowledgeable in the area and price range you desire. The home you are renting may also be available to purchase. Please contact this office for more information about the home you are renting.

As Professional Property Managers, we have obligations to both you, as the resident tenant, and to the Owner of the home. This Handbook outlines our responsibilities to you and your responsibilities to us and to the home. Please read each paragraph carefully. A good relationship is possible when both parties understand and fulfill each of their responsibilities and obligations.

Clear communication is the key to a successful Landlord/Tenant relationship. We are always ready to answer questions or to discuss problems.

The Staff and Management of  
HomeSeekers, Inc  
Property Management Division  
Email address: [tjt@tampa-homesekers.com](mailto:tjt@tampa-homesekers.com)  
T. J. Tompkins, Realtor  
Office 813/238-7550  
Emergency pager 813/980-7008

## GENERAL RULES & REGULATION

**The Property** - You have leased a home . . . think of it as your own. During the term of this lease, you are in possession of the house and yard. Your obligations are similar to those of the Owner, and you are expected to care for and maintain the premises accordingly.

**Rental Payments** - *All rents are due and payable, in advance, on the first day of each month.* Monthly bills will not be sent. Payment should be in a check, money order or certified funds and made payable to:

HomeSeekers, Inc.  
P. O. Box 9126  
Tampa, FL 33674-9126

Please mail your payment to the above address. WRITE YOUR ADDRESS on your payment to assure proper credit. All accounting is done by address of the property. Also, to avoid any misunderstanding, please put your address on every correspondence with the office. Also, you may pay your rent on line from our web site at <http://tampa-homeseekers.com> via an ACH either one time or reoccurring for the duration of your lease

You may pay in person, Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm, at 232 W. Hillsborough Ave., Tampa, FL 33604. There is a drop box located next to the front door if you find us out. We do not accept post-dated checks or CASH. Rents remaining unpaid beyond the 5th day of the month are delinquent and are subject to a late fee. Rents remaining unpaid after the 5th day may be offered for collection and will be subject to all collection charges and fees incurred.

**Phone Number** - All residents are required to have telephone accessibility and to provide HomeSeekers, Inc with their home and work phone numbers. Please be sure to notify HomeSeekers, Inc. when you change home or work numbers. Even unlisted numbers must be provided to HomeSeekers, Inc. You should include your home and work numbers with your first rental payment after you move in.

**Returned Checks** - The amount of any bad checks, plus the returned check charge allowed by law must be paid in either certified funds or a money order within 24 hours of notification; otherwise legal action may be taken. After a check is returned to us for insufficient funds, you will be required to pay either with a money order or certified funds for the duration of your tenancy. If the returned check makes your rent payment late, a late fee will also be due. All amounts due must be paid in full at time of notification.

**Default of Rental Payment-** *If the rent is not paid by the 5th of the month; you will receive a 3-DAY notice.* You will be responsible for all magistrates' fees, court costs, and legal and collection fees incurred by efforts to collect the rent due. All charges unpaid by the end of the month in which they are charged shall be added as additional rent. All remedies and charges for collecting unpaid rent may be used to collect unpaid charges. If rent is paid while a legal action is in process, acceptance of rent will not necessarily stop the legal action. A separate agreement must be reached if legal action is to be stopped.

**Thirty Days Written Notice** - a thirty-day (30) written notice must be given to HomeSeekers, Inc. before vacating the premises. THE WRITTEN NOTICE IS REQUIRED EVEN IF YOU INTEND TO VACATE AT THE END OF THE LEASE. The notice should state a definite moving date. The lease stipulates the forfeiture of the entire security deposit if a 30-day notice is not given. (This does not apply to the military clause)

**Breaking Your Lease** - The forfeiture of the deposit as a penalty for premature cancellation of the tenancy does not excuse you from other obligations of your lease. You must leave the premises clean, undamaged and ready for occupancy. Check-in and checkout inspections are required.

**Keys And Locks** - Alterations or replacement of locks, installation of bolts, knockers, mirrors or other attachments to the interior or exterior of doors requires the written approval of HomeSeekers, Inc.

HomeSeekers, Inc. must have keys to each lock on the house. HomeSeekers, Inc. may gain access and re-key if at any time access is denied, and charge the cost to the Tenant. Copies of the new keys will be available at the

office during posted office hours. All keys, gate passes & garage door openers are to be returned to HomeSeekers, Inc. upon vacating the premises. Other wise there shall be up to \$100.00 charge against your Damage Deposit

**Trash, Garbage and Recycling** - All garbage, trash and recyclable materials must be placed in appropriate containers (HomeSeekers, Inc. does not provide these). All containers are to be discreetly stored. The Tenant is required to make arrangements to have garbage and trash picked up no less than weekly. Containers are not to be out of the storage area except on pick up days. Any recycling items collected must be properly contained and discreetly stored. A total of no more than two 50-gallon trash bags of recyclable materials may be kept on the premises at one time.

**Disturbances, Noise and Nuisance** - All Tenants, residents and guests are expected to conduct themselves in a way that will not offend or disturb the neighbors or passersby. Any activity that causes extreme or excessive noise, traffic or disturbance of any kind is cause for eviction. This includes loud, lewd music, or vulgar or profane language. If music or other sound can be heard outside the perimeter of the premises leased, it is considered too loud.

**Move-In/Move-Out Condition Report** - Included in your move-in Package is, a Property Condition Report. HomeSeekers, Inc. provides a copy of this form so that you can see what the Property Manager noted as the condition of the premises and listing all defective items. You will be asked to sign your name, date it and return it to us prior to moving ANY item into the house. This same report will be used for the move-out condition comparison after vacating the premises. If you do not contact the Property Manager within 5 days of move-in to add any defects to the report, the property will be assumed to be in acceptable condition and any defects brought to our attention after this date will be considered your responsibility. No exceptions will be made.

**Periodic Surveys** - As part of our agreement with the Owner of the property, HomeSeekers, Inc. will conduct routine surveys of the condition of the property. You will be notified of any problems, and given 14 days to remedy them. Any breach not corrected will be addressed as per the Florida Landlord Tenant Act.

**Parking/Vehicles** - All vehicles shall be parked in assigned areas (garages, parking lots, driveways, parking pads, etc.) or on the public street where allowed. You are not allowed to park on lawns, sidewalks and other areas not specifically designated for parking. **All vehicles must be registered, licensed and operable at all times.** No vehicle repair (except minor repairs e.g. changing a tire) is allowed at anytime. No oil/fluid stains are allowed on the garage floor, driveway, walkways or any other area on the property. If your vehicle leaks fluids, place a protective covering or pan under the vehicle to catch the leaks.

**Guests** - Any person or persons staying more than three weeks in a three-month period will be considered Tenants, Unless prior written permission is obtained from HomeSeekers, Inc. Only those persons listed on your rental application have permission to occupy the premises. You will be responsible for the behavior of your guests. All portions of this agreement also apply to your guests.

**Emergency Maintenance/Repairs** - An emergency exists when danger is present or property damage has occurred or is about to occur. To report an emergency, call the office phone number. Or if after office hours call our emergency pager at 813/980-7001. Do not abuse the emergency system with other types of calls. Be sure to report the specific emergency and include your telephone number in your message. See Emergency/Disaster Procedures for more information. **If the emergency involves a fire or similar emergency, please notify the proper authorities at 911 before calling our voicemail!!**

**Insurance** - It is required that you have tenants' insurance. A copy of your declarations page is to be given to us the first month you move in. Please notify your insurance company that HomeSeekers, Inc. is your landlord and must be notified of any change.

**Pets** - No pets, animals, snakes or birds, etc. of any kind are allowed on the premises unless you have written permission and have paid a pet fee that will not be refunded. This is for the privilege of having a pet, not for damage. You will be charged for spraying for fleas, carpet cleaning and/or repair of any damage caused by the pet.

You are responsible for your animal at ALL times. Having a pet is a privilege and permission to have the pet on the premises may be revoked at any time without terminating your lease agreement.

#### **WHEN YOU FIRST MOVE IN**

**Get to Know Your Property** - When you first move-in, locate the breaker box and note the ground fault circuit breaker (some of these are located by the sinks and not at the breaker box), where the stove, hot water heater and air conditioner breakers are. Also locate the water shut off for the house. It usually is in the front yard near the house, often close to a front spigot. If the shut off has been covered over, contact HomeSeekers, Inc. so it can be properly marked. Also locate the water shut off for the hot water heater and for under the sinks. Locating these items now may eliminate damage later. See page 6 for more information about circuit breakers.

**Put this Handbook Where You Can Find it** - Keeping it near the phone book works for most people. Before calling HomeSeekers, Inc., see if the answer to your question is in this handbook. We love hearing from our Tenants, but need to keep our time free for emergencies and urgent matters.

#### **IN AND AROUND THE HOUSE**

**Low Lying Homes** - We live in a warm, moist climate. It is important to keep the vents on the crawl space open, especially in wet weather. Closed vents may cause excessive damage to floor joists and other areas underneath a house. Watch for puddles of water that do not go away around the perimeter of the house. This is often a sign of a water problem underneath. For slab homes, be careful that grass, dirt, flowerbeds or other coverings do not grow up over the level of the slab. Keep the perimeter of the house clear of all matter. Stack wood away from the exterior walls and off any wooden deck or flooring. Report to HomeSeekers, Inc. any suspected water problems.

**Heat/AC Units** - All heat/AC filters need to be changed once a month and batteries for smoke detectors should be changed at least twice a year. A good rule of thumb is to change your filter and test your battery each month when you pay your electric bill, and to change the battery in your smoke detector each year when the time changes.

Many homes have heat pumps for heating and air conditioning. The air coming from the vents will not be hot in the winter or cold in the summer. Heat pumps are designed for the temperature to be set and then to **leave the control alone**. The air runs over the heating or cooling element, than gradually warms or cools to the desired temperature.

When the heat index is high, additional steps can be taken to lower the inside temperature. Close the window coverings, keep the doors closed, do not run hot appliances (oven, etc.) and take all other precautions given by public authorities. Do not set the thermostat at a low temperature when the outside temperature is over 95 degrees. Poor cooling may also be due to a clogged filter. Check and change the filters monthly.

If water drips from the inside unit, it is usually due to a clogged condensation drain line. Some drains are easy to clean with a vacuum cleaner. If the line becomes clogged, turn off the unit and clear the drain line.

**Circuit Breakers** - Circuit breakers move ONLY slightly when triggered. It may appear to be ON when it is has “tripped”. To reset, turn the breaker in the OFF position, then back ON again. The ground fault circuit (GFI) breaker detects even slight voltage changes and cuts the power during fluctuations. They are usually used for bathrooms, sink, exterior plugs, garages and some lights. If you lose power to a plug near a water source, it is usually the GFI circuit. Most GFI’s located at the breaker box are marked with a red or yellow button. Many homes have the GFI at the plug in outlet. When these “trip”, simply reset the breaker as outlined above, or per the instructions on the outlet cover.

**Extermination** - Please report any pest problem within three (3) days of possession. If not reported in writing, it is agreed that the premises have no infestation of any kind. Any future infestation of any kind, less termites, shall be your responsibility. You are responsible for reporting any suspected or known termite infestation. You are not responsible for termite control.

HomeSeekers, Inc. assumes no responsibility for the control of roaches, mice, squirrels, raccoons, possums, ants, fleas or other pests. You will be charged for any damage caused by uncontrolled pests.

**Changing Paint, Wallpaper, Etc.** No painting, wallpaper or any other alteration are allowed

**Maintenance, Damage And Repair** - You are expected to maintain the home and keep it in as good as good a condition as when you took possession. You will be charged for repairs caused by misuse or neglect.

**Maintenance Requests** - Call our office at 813/238-7550 between 9AM and 5PM for any necessary repairs. Be specific about the problem. If you are not contacted by a repair person within 48 hours, 8 hours if an emergency (not including weekends or holidays) after reporting a problem, please notify us so the call can be reassigned. You may fax your requests to us at 813/239-1258 or go to <http://tampa-homeseekers.com> and fill out on online maintenance request.

**Who Does What:** All “breakdowns,” system failures and structural defects must be reported to HomeSeekers, Inc. Immediately. If an urgent repair is needed (i.e. hot water heater leaking) *YOU are responsible for stopping further damage from occurring*, if possible. If there is a leak, stop the water source immediately. If the problem is electrical, turn off the breaker serving that appliance or area until the repairman arrives. HomeSeekers, Inc. will make any necessary repairs within a reasonable time. You will not be reimbursed for any unauthorized repairs you make.

*Some examples of maintenance you are expected to do at your own expense:*

- Replace light bulbs
- Torn or damaged screens
- Replace heat/ac filters EVERY MONTH
- Relight gas furnace or hot water heaters
- Treat for fire ants and other lawn pests
- Keep flower beds weeded and edged and add fresh bedding once a year
- Replace batteries in smoke detectors.
- Tighten loose screws on doors or cabinets

*Examples of repairs management will make at no expense to you:*

- Repairs to heat/AC systems from normal use
- Replace heating units for hot water tanks from normal use
- Repair leaks in roof
- Replace or repair any part of plumbing which fails from normal use
- Remove broken electrical components
- Repair/paint rotted wood
- Treat for termites

*Examples of repairs for which you will be held responsible:*

- Replace heating elements/hot water tanks if caused by empty tank.
- Any unusual damage or extraordinary wear on any of the floors, walls, ceilings, caused by pets, animals, children, guests, smoking or any unusual or unreasonable use
- Damage to windows, doors, screens, fences, outside walls, shrubbery, trees or plantings

**Unauthorized Repairs** - Do not make any repairs or authorize any maintenance without written permission from HomeSeekers, Inc. We must authorize all repairs. Except as provided in the FL Tenant/Landlord Act, rent cannot be withheld because of needed repairs nor can the cost of needed repairs be deducted from the rent.

**Lawns and Grounds** - You are expected to care for the lawn and grounds, keeping them in as good condition as when you took possession. This care includes regularly cutting the grass; fertilizing the lawn; trimming shrubs; edging all walkways; curbs and driveways; treating fire ant beds; regularly watering the yard, removing all debris and pine needles and keeping vines from growing onto the house. Please keep shrub and tree growth away from the roof, eaves, and sides of the house. You are required to report any condition that can cause damage, permanent or temporary, to the grounds and to treat for lawn pests. Flowering trees must be pruned at the proper time of the year for their species and all flowerbeds must be kept free of weeds, grass, etc. Whatever is in the beds as a cover (pine straw, pine bark, etc.) must be maintained by the Tenant. Do not leave hoses connected to exterior faucets with the water turned on.

**Light Bulbs** - At move-in, all light fixtures will be equipped with the proper light bulbs. All burned out light bulbs are to be replaced during the Tenant's occupancy (including floodlights). Upon moving out, all lights must be equipped with the proper number and kind of bulbs. For decorative bulbs, all must match. Light bulbs must be 60 watts unless otherwise specified on the lighting fixture.

**Plumbing/Septic Systems** - You are responsible for keeping all sinks, lavatories and commodes open. Please do not allow anyone to throw anything into the plumbing system or to use it for any purpose other than for what it is designed. You will be responsible for any damage or stoppage after five (5) days of occupancy unless it was caused by mechanical failure of the plumbing system.

**Waterbeds** - You must provide proof of flotation bed insurance at time of lease signing as required by Florida Landlord Tenant Act. You will be fully responsible for ANY damage caused by a waterbed.

**Walls and Ceilings** - Please keep the walls of the home clean and unmarred. Do not paint or wallpaper the walls. You are welcome to hang pictures on the walls as long as the walls are clean and unmarred when you move out. All walls, baseboards and trim must be washed before vacating. All ceilings must be dusted/vacuumed regularly and before vacating. **IF YOU ARE A SMOKER, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL SMOKE RESIDUE AND DAMAGE.** An additional deposit may be required for smoking on the premises.

**Vinyl Floor Coverings/Hardwood Floors** - With normal household use, vinyl and hardwood floors may be washed with a solution of warm water and soap. A thorough cleaning is necessary three or four times a year. Do not use gas, benzene, naphtha, turpentine or waxes containing these solvents. Rubber heel marks can easily be removed with the proper product. Do not apply varnish, lacquer or shellac to the floor. When waxing, use a water-emulsion, self-polishing types of wax such as Johnson's Vinyl Wax for vinyl and Johnson's Paste Wax for hardwood floors. Do not use any solvent-based waxes. You will be responsible for damage done by using improper cleaning materials. (You are also responsible for damage to flooring such as broken tiles or torn floor covering or improper cleaning procedures.)

**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 to eliminate the coarse particles that can act as an abrasive on the fiber. You must have a motor driven brush-and-beater type vacuum cleaner if the home you rent has carpet. Shampooing is usually required about once a year and is your responsibility. Before moving in, the carpets are professionally cleaned and you must have them professionally cleaned and deodorized upon vacating. A copy of the cleaning company's bill is required at the time of checkout. Please check with us before moving out for a list of acceptable carpet cleaning companies.

**Stoves** - If the oven or broiler will not operate, check the timer on the stove. Generally the knob will pop out if the timer is off. Turn the knob until it pops out. Instructions for other types are on the face of the stove. Be careful when cleaning the oven that oven cleaner does not drip onto the cabinets below or onto the floor. Do not use oven cleaner on self-cleaning or continuous cleaning ovens. You will be charged for damage to an appliance caused by improper use or cleaning, or by lack of maintenance.

**Dishwashers** - Use at least once a week. Seals may dry and the motor may be damaged by long periods of not being run. Clean the door and check the bottom of the dishwasher each use for items that may fall from the racks. Check the perimeter of the door for food items falling from the counter.

**Garbage Disposals** - Garbage disposals are not for bones, greasy items, meat or any other similar materials. If the motor buzzes, turn the switch off. Un-jam the disposal by turning the blade backwards. Reset the circuit breaker on the bottom or the side of the disposal (this is usually a small red or yellow button). If the unit turns easily by hand but not with power, call for service. Almost all disposal jams are from what is put into them or misuse.

**Washer/Dryer Hookups** - When you install your washer and dryer, it is a good time to check your hoses and washers to eliminate leaks. If you are going to be absent from the property for an extended period of time, turn off the hot and cold water supply. Check the wall and floor monthly for evidence of a hidden leak. When you vacate the home make sure the faucets are off and water is not leaking.

**Cleaning and Other Information** - We work hard to deliver to you a clean, well-maintained and comfortable home with all the mechanical equipment operating properly. Proper cleaning and maintenance will keep the home and its equipment safe and usable for you. The key to proper cleaning is to do it often. Set up a weekly schedule. Monitor the work and ensure that cleaning is performed as often as needed. A properly maintained home is a team effort involving the Owner who keeps structural and mechanical maintenance up-to-date; the Property Manager who keeps a record of necessary maintenance and places responsible people in the property; and the Tenant who keeps the property clean, performs cosmetic maintenance and promptly reports any structural or mechanical failure to Management.

#### **Minimum Cleaning Standards**

1. Keep windows and storm doors clean, inside and outside; interior cleaning at least once a month, exterior cleaning every six months. Wash between windows and screens quarterly.
2. Wash interior doors, doorways and walls in heavily traveled areas every 1- 2 months.
3. Clean dust, dirt and debris from the upper and lower sliding glass door tracks monthly.
4. Clean stove, drip pans, under drip pans, oven racks and drawer, broiler pan, hood, filter and vent biweekly.
5. Mop and wax vinyl floors biweekly.
6. Dust baseboards, windows sills, and window grids, tops of windows, ceiling fans, doors, ceilings and corners of the room monthly.
7. Clean AC/Heat air return grate and change filter each month. (TIP: When you pay your light bill, change your filter)
8. Clean and sweep out fireplace. Clean fireplace grate, screen and glass.
9. Replace burned-out light bulbs as needed, clean lighting fixtures as needed.
10. Curtains and blinds, if provided, should be cleaned or washed semiannually.
11. Bathrooms should be cleaned weekly. This includes toilet bowls and base, sink, mirror, floor, bathtub and shower (including walls). Wipe out medicine cabinet, drawers and cabinets.
12. Caulk tub as necessary.
13. Sweep out garage as needed.

**Counter tops and Cabinets** - Always use cutting boards and hot pads when chopping, cutting or placing hot items on counter tops. Do not use abrasive cleaners on counter tops, as they will scratch. All unpainted cabinets need to be cleaned regularly with a wood cleaner (such as Murphy's Oil Soap) and treated with a wood preserver (such as Scott's Liquid Gold). All cabinets must be vacuumed out and the drawer/door fronts cleaned as above before vacating.

**Kitchen Appliances** - Each kitchen appliance must be cleaned regularly. In particular, the stove hoods, the filter in the stove hood, the oven, under the burners on the stove and the drip pans. Please do not put aluminum foil on the drip pans. Please clean under the refrigerator, washer, and dryer regularly. Not cleaning all these items regularly can cause excessive wear and tear, for which you will be responsible.

**Fireplaces** - If there is a fireplace in your home, please do not burn pine or any other "sappy" wood. This causes a buildup of residue in the chimney and increases the possibility of fire. The fireplace is not a place to burn cardboard, Holiday wrappings, pine needles, etc. Chimneys should be professionally cleaned every two years.

#### **MOVING OUT**

**Put It In Writing** - Before notice to vacate is accepted by HomeSeekers, Inc., it MUST be put in writing. The notice must include the date you anticipate having the property ready for your move-out survey and where you are moving to (even if you don't have a forwarding address, list the city and state where you will be relocating) Notice must be received by us *one full calendar month* before you move out.

**The Move-Out/Check Out Condition Survey** - The Move out Survey will be done by your Property Manager within 2 days after you have completely vacated the home. You are not requested to be present. The Property Manager's report is final.

1. Survey's are made from 9:30am-5:00pm Monday through Friday. Please do not plan on an inspection to be made on weekends or holidays. The inspection takes from 30 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the size of the house.
2. Please arrange for your utility turn off to allow for electric and water to be on for 3 working days after you vacate the property. If this is not done you will be charged the turn on /off fee from your security deposit.
3. Surveys are made only after you have completely vacated the premise, the premises are cleaned, carpets are professionally cleaned and dry (receipt required, chemical dry cleaning is unacceptable), the yard is mowed and edged, all trash hauled off, shrubs trimmed, flowerbeds have fresh bedding, and you are ready to turn over the keys.
4. A room-by-room check will be made, including interior, exterior, grounds, appliances, windows, curtains, blinds, etc.
5. Appendix D provides some of the cleaning guidelines. Upon receipt of your written notice to vacate, another copy will be sent to you. Most Tenants who use the guidelines pass the survey on the first appointment.

**Breaking The Lease** - If you should break your lease, you will be responsible for all costs incurred in securing a new Tenant. We work diligently to reduce your costs should you break your lease. If you find you have to move before the end of your lease, we will market the property promptly. You must pay a full months rent for every month until a new Tenant is secured. When the new Tenant moves in, your obligation ceases. Forfeiture of your security deposit does not excuse you from other obligations of the lease. You must follow all procedures for marketing, cleaning and checkout. The following is a list of the most common charges for breaking a lease. These are some, but not all of the possible charges:

1. A re-leasing and/or breaking lease fee.
2. Rent until the new lease takes effect.
3. Lawn maintenance (you need to arrange for that before leaving).
4. Utilities (keep them on in your name until notified of a new Tenant).
5. Advertising.

**Return of The Security Deposit** - THE SECURITY DEPOSIT MAY NOT BE USED AS THE LAST MONTH'S RENT!!!! The security deposit will be refunded within 15 days of your final move-out survey if no claim is being made against it. If a claim is being made, it will sent by certified mail within 30 days of your vacating the unit.

The following are the requirements for a full refund;

1. Have given thirty (30) days written notice prior to vacating.
2. Have left the premises clean and undamaged and followed the check out procedures.
3. Have left all walls clean and unmarred. (Homes are NOT painted between each Tenant),
4. Have paid all charges and rents due.
5. Have removed all debris, rubbish, and discarded all items from the premises.
6. Have provided a forwarding street address and a telephone number. No P.O. Boxes are accepted as a forwarding address.
7. Have an acceptable move-out/check-out condition survey report by the Property Manager or Inspector.

## **EMERGENCY/DISASTER PROCEDURES**

**Appendices A, B, and C** - These are the procedures, plans and responsibilities for emergency/disaster related situations. Please read each of them carefully and regularly review them, especially during the summer months. Since a Hurricane is the natural disaster most likely to happen in our area, special emphasis has been placed on hurricane preparedness.

**Make Your Plan Now** - The key to safely and properly handling any emergency/disaster is pre-planning and staying calm during and after the event. Being prepared is every individual's responsibility. Don't rely only on the authorities. Take charge and plan now so you can be better prepared to take action when the time comes. Advanced planning allows for fewer mistakes and greater safety for you, your family, and the home you are caring for. It is easy to forget even little things in the anxiety, which often comes with an emergency. To avoid unnecessary stress, get ready now.

### **Two Types of Emergency**

1. The first type is one that is specific to the property you rent (i.e. a tree falls on this house, or the hot water heater bursts.) Appendix A addresses this Non-Disaster Emergency.
2. The second type of emergency is an area wide disaster (i.e. a hurricane or tornado) Appendix B addresses this type of emergency procedure.

Because we get advance warning for a hurricane, many people choose to leave town. If you leave, you still must secure the property prior to leaving. Then complete Appendix C, fax, email or bring it to the office before leaving. If the disaster does occur, please call before coming back to the property.

**Tenant Responsibilities** - Take steps to protect yourself and the property as you are able to do so. Your first concern should be for your family's safety. If damage occurs, try to minimize or stop additional damage. We have many thunder and lightening storms, power outages and high winds. An emergency could happen at any time. Be prepared.

**SUMMARY - This Handbook Is For You** - In the excitement of moving, we often don't remember all the instructions and requirements of the lease. This handbook was written to be used as a reference for you. Place it where you can easily find it. Before calling the office, look to see if the answer you seek is here. If you find something you think would be helpful to others, but are not included, please notify us. We are always looking for additional ways to serve you better.

## APPENDIX A

### NON-DISASTER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

(I.e. Kitchen fire, hot water burst, burst water pipe, tree on house, etc.)

**Upon first occurrence or discovery of problem, secure from further damage immediately.** The following is a summary of what to expect. Please post this note in a visible place. If any emergency does occur, notify the office immediately

#### **Resident Responsibility**

- Make sure everyone is safe.
- Take steps to prevent additional damage immediately.
- Turn off the source of water or electricity or gas, as the situation demands.
- Notify us, if it is after hours, leave a message.
- Make claim on Resident's insurance
- Notify HomeSeekers, Inc of Resident's insurance coverage
- Provide emergency (police, fire, etc.) report to us within 5 days of the incident.
- Provide access for insurance, repair people, etc. to assess and repair damage.
- Notify management of delays, "no show" appointments, and problems with repairs.

#### **HomeSeekers, Inc. Services Responsibility**

- Notify the Owner, insurance company and repair companies.
- Take pictures of damage for Owner report.
- Inspect and take pictures of finished work.
- Handle complaints/conflicts between Resident and Repair Company.

You will be contacted by the insurance company. They will assess the damage. Within 3-10 days, depending on the severity of the damage, the repairs will begin. Please remember that work is performed during normal daytime business hours, Monday through Friday and may require several days to complete. The repair company will set a time with you to work on the house. If you desire, they can check out a key from the office. You will need to call the office to coordinate with the office manager for key checkouts.

After the repairs are complete, management should call you to set up a time to re-inspect. If there is a delay, please contact the office. Sometimes the repair company is not prompt in scheduling the inspection. Your help is vital to this process.

*You are responsible for any loss to the Owner due to Resident negligence. If the damage was caused by a current resident or a guest, please be aware all charges not covered by insurance will be billed to you.*

## APPENDIX B

### DISASTER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. Have an emergency preparedness plan, a checklist and a storm kit. Each year The Tampa Tribune & St. Petersburg Times publishes a pull out section on emergency preparedness.
2. Upon first notification that a disaster emergency may occur, complete the **Disaster Plan-Tenant Form** (appendix C) in the back of this booklet.
3. Fax, email or deliver the Tenant Form to HomeSeekers, Inc. (Fax 813/239-1258)
4. Then mail the form immediately.
5. Stay tuned to the local news media and follow all recommended precautions and instructions. The Tampa Bay Area local governments have a thorough Disaster Plan, and the news media will keep us all informed.
6. During the storm or before leaving, please be sure to:
  - a. Turn off main breaker to house.
  - b. Turn off main gas line to house (Call Power Company for instructions).
  - c. Turn off main water supply to house.
  - d. Take all recommended precautions by the local news media and storm Bulletin publications.
  - e. Secure your pets, inside. If it is not safe for you outside, it is not safe for your pets either!
  - f. Secure all outside items:
    - Bring in swings sets, play houses, small planters, and anything that could turn into a flying object during high winds.
  - g. Secure house against damage:
    - Follow all recommendations by the local news and the emergency Preparedness teams for Bay County.
  - h. Make sure management has a key for your house.
  - I. If you are leaving town, call the office before leaving and before returning to verify the House is safe to return to.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURING THE HOME AGAINST POSSIBLE DAMAGE, BUT NOT FOR INSTALLING PLYWOOD COVERING UNLESS THE SHUTTERS ARE PRE CUT AND PROVIDED WITH THE PROPERTY.

## APPENDIX C

### DISASTER PLAN - TENANT FORM

Tenant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is your insurance carrier? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is your Agent? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you leaving town?  Yes  No

If so, how can we reach you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **HAVE YOU:**

- 1. Turned off electricity at main breaker box?**
- 2. Shut off gas?**
- 3. Shut off main water supply to house?**
- 4. Taken your pets with you or to a pet shelter?**
- 5. Secured all outside items?**
- 6. Notified management you are leaving and how to contact you?**

For more information on how to prepare for a natural disaster, call Hillsborough County  
Emergency Preparedness Division.

## APPENDIX D

### CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR MOVE-OUT CONDITION SURVEY

- 1.** Gently sweep ceilings for cobwebs and dust. Clean all ceiling fans, light fixtures, replace missing or burned out light bulbs. Use 60-watt bulbs unless fixture states otherwise.
- 2.** Clean all interior and exterior doors, walls, trim baseboards, windowsills and the window grids. Some paint is difficult to wash, but try to get off the smudges, fingerprints and marks.
- 3.** Clean blinds, windows, window sills/sashes, storm windows, doors and storm doors inside and out. Clean both sides of all doors (interior and exterior). Sliding glass door tracks must be clear of any dust, dirt, or sand and be moving freely. Check for any torn screens or broken windows that need repair.
- 4.** Change the heat/AC filter, clean the grate, vacuum all vents and bathroom vent fans. Clean and sweep out the fireplace. Remove all old logs and ashes. Clean fireplace screen and glass.
- 5.** Clean the stove, replace the burner drip pans, clean the oven, racks, oven door, broiler parts, and hood, under the hood, filter and vent. Leave the broiler pan in the oven. If there is woodwork under the oven, be careful oven cleaner does not drip on woodwork.
- 6.** Clean all cabinets, drawers and shelves, inside and out. Use a product such as Murphy's Oil Soap, then finish with a product such as Scott's Liquid Gold on all wood cabinets, paneling and unpainted woodwork. Please follow all manufacturer's and label directions.
- 7.** Clean refrigerator, if provided, with a mild soap. Follow with a vinegar solution and leave it turned on. Clean the underneath, behind, grillwork, inside all door gaskets, and the drip pan.
- 8.** Bathrooms should be thoroughly scrubbed to include toilet bowls and base, sink, mirror, vanity, floor, bathtub/showers and walls. Make sure all soap scum is off the tubs, showers and doors. Finish with a mildew resistant cleaner. Wipe out medicine cabinets; remove all soap and detergents (toilet paper may be left).
- 9.** Mop and wax all floors, where appropriate, and clean ceramic tile with a mildew resistant cleaner. All carpets must be professionally steam cleaned after the house is vacant. (Please contact office for a list of acceptable carpet cleaning companies) Save your receipt and give to management at the final appointment. A dry chemical cleaning is not acceptable. Any stains must be remedied.
- 10.** Sweep out the garage, clear out the attic. Leave any garbage cans inside the garage. Windows in garage must be cleaned.
- 11.** Mow the yard, trim the shrubbery, prune small trees, edge and sweep all walkways and driveways. Rake the leaves and pick up all the trash. Clean out the flowerbeds and replace with fresh bedding. Garbage bags may not be left out more than one day. Please arrange with friends or neighbors to put garbage out on collection day.