TRUSTART
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TENANT'S HANDBOOK

1101 Foulkrod st 1F,
Philadelphia PA 19124

(267) 929 1500

info@trustartrealty.com
www.trustartrealty.com

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Trustart Realty Welcomes You

Trustart Realty welcomes you as a new resident.

To achieve a successful tenant/management relationship, we prepared the *Trustart Tenant Handbook* to assist you with your tenancy. We recommend that you keep it in a convenient location so that you can refer to it easily.

You will find maintenance guidelines, rental payment instructions, general information, safety tips, vacation guidelines, emergency instructions, holiday tips, and more.

We have also included forms for you to use when necessary. Trustart Realty wants you to be prepared throughout your tenancy. Therefore, we want to provide important information and documents that you may need in the future.

The owner of the property has retained Trustart Realty as their Property Management Company and representative to manage the property you are renting. Therefore, you need to contact Trustart Realty when you need assistance.

If you have questions or concerns on any of the information contained in this documentation, contact our office at any time. We are here to help you.

We wish you a successful and enjoyable tenancy in your new residence.

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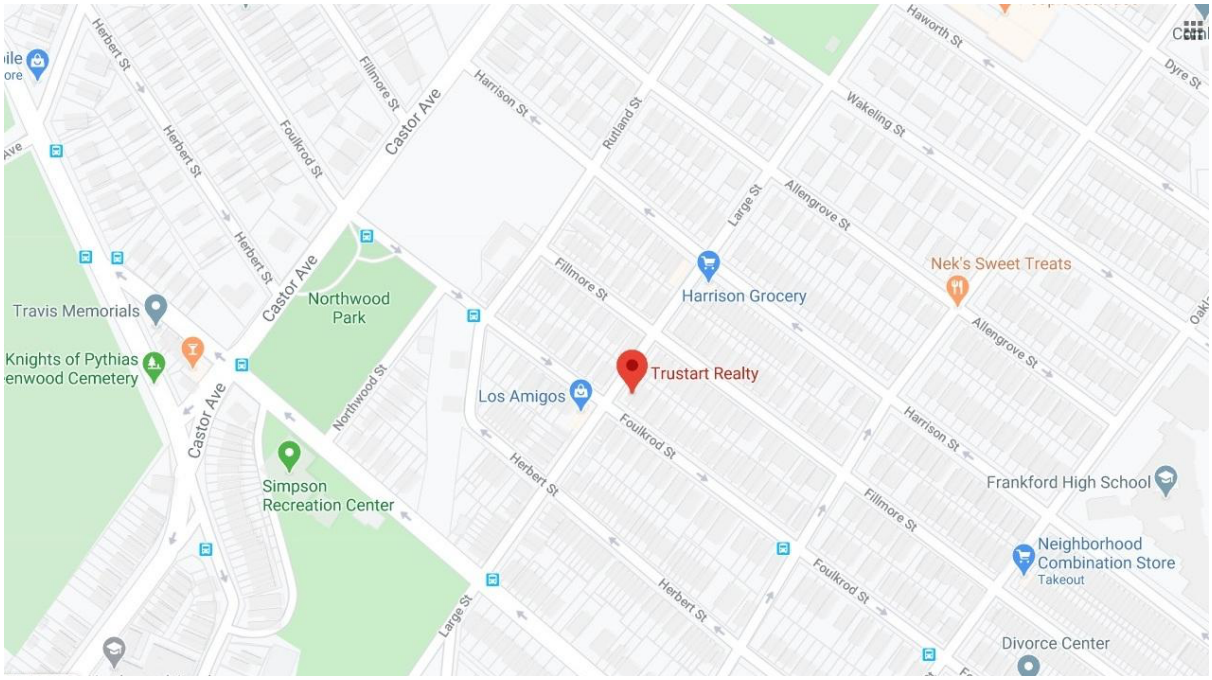
General office information

Address Information

- **Mailing Address –** 1101 Foulkrod St 1F, Philadelphia PA 19124



Communication

- **Business phone # -** 267 929 1500
- **E – mail –** info@trustartrealty.com
- **Website –** www.trustartrealty.com

Office Hours

- **Monday – Friday –** 9am to 6pm by appointment only
- **Saturday –** Closed
- **Sunday –** Closed
- **Holidays -** Closed

After Hours Emergencies

- 267-225-2029 option 7

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Resident Benefit Package

The benefit package is included with all new leases and renewals for additional monthly fee. You cannot opt-out of the package services.

- Build your credit history with credit reporting ($10 value) - Tenants receive the benefit of positive credit reporting for all on-time rental payments. Increase your purchasing power with on-time rental payments. Potentially pay lower interest rates with improved credit standing. Positive rental payment history is beneficial for future rental applications.
- Utility concierge ($100 value) – the Utility Concierge service will assist you with turning on or transferring utilities to your new home. The services include electric, gas, cable, internet, security or phone services. When available, the concierge also negotiates discounts on services on your behalf. Our partner One Source solutions help new tenants establish utility connections at no cost to the tenant. Services include basic utilities such as gas & electric, and OneSource Solutions also provides the tenants with unbiased comparisons for their television, internet, home phone and home security.
- Collect your information and set up all needed utility services for you.
- Multiple payment option ($5 value) – Pay your rent online and you'll never have to mail your check again! You can pay online with a credit/debit card or with a bank account. Set up autopay and never worry about missing a payment!
- One-time waved Late fee ($55 value). Good for use once Annually (10 days max forgiveness, Once Annually).
- One-time returned payment forgiveness ($50 value) - We will grant a one-time waiver of a returned payment fee (Once annually).
- Online resident portal ($5 value) – with 24/7 access to your tenant portal to submit maintenance requests, pay online using all included payment options, as well as access to electronic documents.
- Property Inspections ($90 value) – we inspect your home during your lease to make sure that there is no repair need and no safety issues.
- Maintenance requests right from your phone app – You can submit a maintenance request right from your phone app and attach any photos/video and your comments to it.
- 24/7 maintenance hotline ($10 value)- 24/7 Maintenance Hotline with Live Phone Support. Residents can reach a live person after hours for emergency maintenance concerns. Call handlers will troubleshoot with you and when necessary, dispatch vendors.
- Online document signing and no-contact move-ins – we can have fully no-contact process for move-ins, including application, move-in inspection and lease signing.
- Landlord reference – we proved references for your future applications if you choose to move to a different property. That helps your approval process.
- Home purchase assistance – when you're ready we can help you with your own home purchase, mortgage pre-approval and help you through the whole process. And our free credit reporting may help you with the home buying power.

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Our Tenant Portal – Resident Center

It is our constant endeavour to provide our tenants with efficient service and peace of mind.

Keeping this in mind we provide our customers access to our online portal – Resident Center to manage their rentals with us.

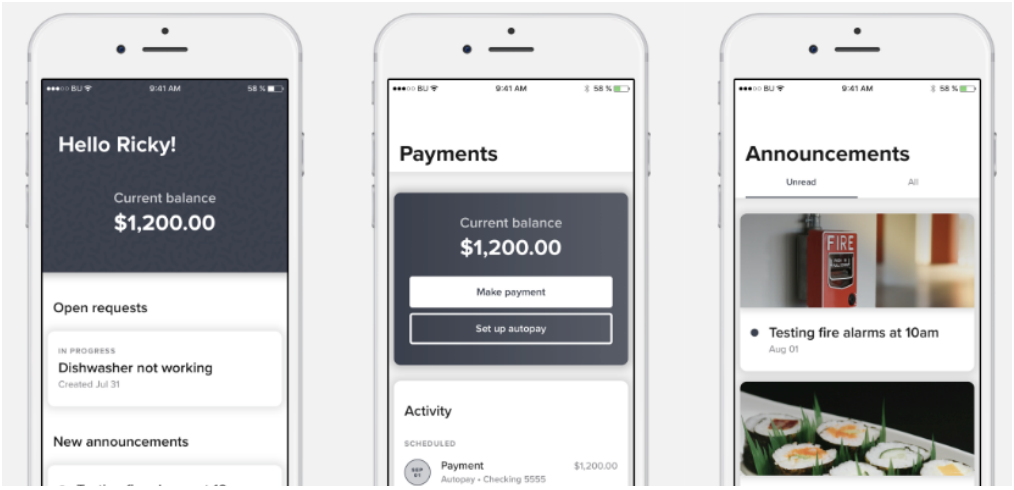
In our Tenant Portal you will be able to:

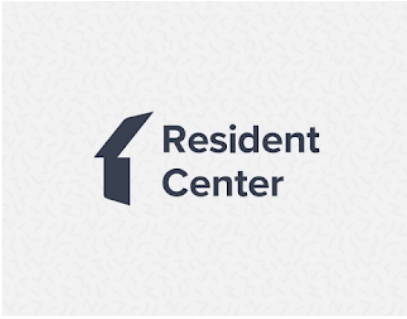
- Pay Rent Online and set up AutoPay;
- Submit maintenance request and general inquiries;
- Purchase your renter's insurance policy and record details;
- Keep track of all your rent payments;
- Use phone app or desktop center access and much more!

You will also receive a text message request to confirm your phone number so that you will be able to communicate with us by text.

Here is an updated list of the different transaction fees charged for different payment methods:

- Every payment made outside of the Resident Center – by check, money order will be charged a $2.00 processing fee. Please make sure to add $2.00 per transaction to total amount of your payment if you are using above mentioned payment method.
- Credit card payment process fee is 2.95% + $1.00 per transaction.
- Electronic payment (EFT) convenience fee $1.00 per payment.





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Change of information

It is important that you notify us of any changes in telephone, fax, cell numbers, or email.

Protect Your Rental and Credit History

Some day you will eventually move out of the property. It is important that during your residency, you care for your rental history and credit. Most likely, you will either rent again or purchase a home. In either case, you will need good rental references and a good credit report. Avoid late rent payments, care for the property, and move out properly. Give us the pleasure of being able to provide a good reference for you when you vacate the property.

Rental/lease agreement

You received a copy of your rental/lease agreement, including maintenance instructions, move-in property review, and any other necessary documentation.
We recommend that you keep this paperwork with this Handbook for easy reference. Please always remember a rental/lease agreement is a binding agreement. If you have any questions regarding your lease, please call your management team.

Utility/Cable Companies

When you rented the property, we cancel the utilities, in the owner's name, on the 1st day of your rental agreement. To avoid discontinuation of service, contact the utility companies immediately. The move in checklist contains the telephone numbers of the utility services.

Rental payments

Rent is due on the first of each month and late if not received by the sixth. If you know that you will have a delay or problem paying by the due date, contact your management team immediately. Lack of communication can affect your payment record.

Fees/charges

If you fail to pay rent on time and in full, you could incur the following charges:

▪ Late fee – the late fee is charged according to your lease if rent is not received by the sixth.

▪ Notice Service fee – the service fee is $**50,** if a notice to pay or quit is served because your rent is not received in a timely manner. This fee is in addition to other late charges.

▪ Maintenance charge – we will bill you if you have made an appointment with a vendor but failed to meet them at the scheduled time. If we receive a service call billing, you are responsible for reimbursement.

Early Lease Termination

In a nut shell, when you want to move early and wish to do so in a way that follows the lease agreement and avoids negative consequences, all of the costs of *your decision to terminate early* must be absorbed and paid by you, not the property owner. This is a simple concept for most to understand. The owner of your rental has no obligation or desire to subsidize your moving costs by absorbing lost rent and other turnover expenses created by your early departure, so all of the financial consequences of your decision to leave early belong to you. The following steps must happen:

- You must provide written notice of your intent to terminate early, including a move-out date.
- Your written termination notice must be received by us 60 days prior to your move date so we can market the property.
- You must continue paying rent each month on the first, until a replacement tenant is found and starts paying rent or your lease expires.
- You must continue your utility services after vacating, until a new tenant moves in or your lease expires.
- You must arrange for lawn service after you vacate, until a new tenant moves in or your lease expires.
- You must allow us to market and show the property.
- You will be responsible for owner incurred charges such as but not limited to rekeying, new lease fee, etc.
- All other terms and conditions of your lease agreement must continue to be met.

Once this is accomplished, you leave with a good rental history, receive any remainder of your deposit refund after damage charges, and have completed your lease agreement

on good terms. You haven't technically "broken" the lease, but instead satisfied the requirements of Early Termination. It should be noted, however, that you are still legally obligated until the end of your remaining lease term or new tenant is placed.

Maintenance reimbursement

Generally, we assign a vendor to perform work you request in your residence. However, if you have contacted us and requested to perform a minor maintenance item and we have agreed to reimburse you:

▪ Pay the bill and send the receipt to us. We will reimburse the amount due to you.

▪ Do NOT deduct the amount from your rent.

Getting to know your residence

When you move into a property, it is helpful to know where important items are located. Take the time to know or locate the:

- Main circuit breaker in the event power goes out.
- Gas shut off valve – turn off during emergencies/disasters for safety.
- GFI plug(s) – so you can check them if your plugs or appliances in the bathroom, kitchen, patio or garage fail to work.
- Electric and/or gas meters to check your utility bills.
- The main water shutoff valve in case of major flooding.
- Water shutoff valves below the sinks and behind toilets in case of water leaks.
- Method of cleaning for the oven so you use the right products.
- Time bake knobs on the oven – in the event the oven will not work, these may be on.

If you are uncertain about any of the above items, contact our management team for help.

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Maintenance

We believe you and your family deserves a safe and comfortable home. You should maintain the property as if it were your own! When you rented the property, your lease contained items of tenant responsibility such as changing of AC filters, batteries in smoke detectors and/or thermostats, preventing drain clogs, mold due to moisture neglect and so-on. Please review them before requesting a work order. We have more tips in this handbook. Of course we will take care of maintenance issues as they arise but you could be charged for the maintenance cost if we determine that you are responsible for the issue.

Tenant Renovations/Alterations

It is our policy that tenants do not do repairs or alterations. You are also not allowed to hire your own vendors to do repairs even if you think it is taking too long to make repairs. You must contact us to let us know the work order has not been completed. You agreed to this in the rental agreement/lease. If you do want to make a special request for renovation or repair to the property:

- Submit your request in writing before making any changes.
- Do not proceed with any work until you are notified by us.
- We will consult the owners to see if the request is acceptable to them.
- If the request is acceptable to the owner, tenants must do one of the following prior to vacating the property:
    - Leave the alterations if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair.
    - Return the property to its original state if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair and pay for any necessary repairs to restore the alteration/repair to its original state.
    - Sign an agreement regarding the alteration/repair.

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Tenant Maintenance responsibilities

The property owner has a duty to maintain your residence to uniform codes of safety for landlord/tenant law. Therefore, we have provided you with ways to request maintenance when there are legitimate repairs. We want you to report maintenance items. However, there are items that are the tenant's responsibility:

- Replacing smoke alarm batteries.
- Reporting non-functioning smoke alarms immediately if batteries do not solve the problem.
- Replacing light bulbs with the correct size.
- Replacing HVAC filters and cleaning drain line (MONTHLY).
- Reporting all necessary repairs.
- Professional steam cleaning yearly of carpets while residing in the property.
- Normal insect control.
- Normal rodent control, such as mice.
- Landscape cleanup if a service is not provided.
- Reporting lack of landscape cleanup if a service IS provided in your rental agreement.
- Landscape watering unless there is a homeowner's association that provides this.
- Reporting malfunctioning irrigation systems or sprinklers, even if it is the responsibility of an association.
- Disposal of all garbage in the proper receptacles and using the weekly pick up service.
- Disposal of animal feces on the property even if you do not have a pet.
- If the residence has a fireplace, use caution and care when operating the fireplace and disposing of ashes or coals. Do not dispose of coals in the fireplace until they have cooled outside for a week.

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- Check to see if damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace.

- Disposing of toxic waste properly in accordance with local and county laws.

Procedures for requesting maintenance

Before contacting Us:

1. Determine if there is a true emergency or a non-emergency.

2. Check to see if you can determine the cause of the problem that you are experiencing, unless you have an emergency.

If there is an emergency

There are few emergencies. An emergency is a life-threatening situation such as a fire, flood and/or uncontrollable water, electrical problem, smell of gas, etc.:

- Emergencies causing immediate danger such as fire, call 911.

- Emergencies involving gas call the gas company and if necessary, 911.

- Emergencies involving IMMEDIATE electrical danger, call the utility service or 911.

- After contacting one of the above sources, then call our office and report the problem.

Emergencies such as backed up plumbing or active leak/flooding, call the us at 267 929 1500 and if necessary, call 911.

An emergency is NOT A/C, heat, non-working dishwasher, or water leaks exterior of the home like sprinklers. However, we recognize this is important and will make it a priority with vendors to have the heat working as soon as is possible.

Non-emergencies:

- Create a request in your Tenant Portal.

- Work order requests are available 24/7, through the Resident Center Tenant portal.
- We will then assign a vendor to contact you.
- We do not give vendors keys to the residences, unless we have your approval.

- Vendors are required to make appointments with tenants.

- Remember, this is a NON-EMERGENCY item and in most cases, the vendor will not be able to make an appointment immediately.

- Failure to show at an appointment can mean a charge to you. Therefore, be certain to call the vendor as soon as possible if you are unable to make the appointment.

- If you do not hear from a vendor or repairperson within **3** business days, call us and inform your management team or a staff person that a vendor has not contacted you. Please also feel free to call the assigned vendor directly to schedule.

- Our staff member will contact the vendor to find out the cause of the delay, and then inform you when to expect the vendor to call.

- After a repair has taken place, if you have trouble, call us and state you had a recent repair but there is still a problem.

- Recent repair means within the last 60 days.

If you fail to report an unsolved recent repair, and there is further damage or expense, you may be responsible for the cost, per your rental agreement.

- **Do not hire your own vendor** to make repairs even if you feel it has been too long for repair to be completed. You will not be reimbursed.

  PLEASE NOTE: **We do not make cosmetic repairs.**

Preventative cleaning tips

Cleaning is easier when you use a "preventative approach."

- Always put away food and wipe up food debris.

- Clean pet bowls regularly to avoid attracting ants and other insects.

- Do not allow grease to build up in kitchens; use a sponge and soapy water regularly on counter tops, stovetops, and hood filters.

- Avoid cooking with very high heat. This will add to more grease build-up and cause damage to appliances. It can also be dangerous.

- Avoid mildew by venting rooms and bathrooms properly, particularly after baths and showers
- Clean bathroom tile or other surfaces regularly to prevent the buildup of grime.
- Clean toilets regularly to avoid buildup of grime, rings, and mildew.
- Mop tile, wood, and linoleum to avoid “dust bunnies” and the buildup of grime.
- Do not use wax on linoleum or tile.
- Do not use “cleaning products” on tile.
- Vacuum all flooring regularly, particularly carpets. This will save in carpet cleaning bills.
- Regularly pick up debris and pet feces in outside areas.

Additional cleaning tips

It is not always necessary to purchase expensive cleaning products. Vinegar, baking soda, ammonia, and salt are some inexpensive cleaning products with many uses. They also are helpful for people who have allergies to cleaning products. They can be better for the environment than commercial products.

- Air freshener:
  o Place a bowl of vinegar in the kitchen or bathroom to absorb odors.
- Drains
  o For a great once-a-month drain cleaner, pour 1/2 cup baking soda into the drain, follow with 1/2 cup white vinegar -- it will foam. Cover and let sit 30 minutes and then flush with cool water.

  o For stubborn, slow-running drains, pour 1-cup baking soda and 1-cup salt down the drain. Follow this with 2 quarts boiling water. Let sit 30 minutes, and then flush with cool water.

- Tile countertops:

o To clean ceramic tile, where mold and mildew accumulate, use a combination of 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup white vinegar, 1-gallon warm water, and 1-cup ammonia.

o Alternatively, regularly clean kitchen surfaces by using a spray bottle mixed with ½-cup vinegar and a quart of water.

- Glass cleaner:

o When glass-cleaning products leave residue on bathroom mirrors, mix 3 tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a clean plastic spray bottle.

o Spray glass and wipe with a clean paper towel

• Dishwasher:

o Empty the dishwasher, pour in a ¼ cup of vinegar, and run the dishwasher again.

o Even if you prefer not to use the dishwasher, run at least once a week to keep seals from becoming hard and cracked.

• Refrigerators

o Clean regularly and place a cup of baking soda in a bowl on a refrigerator shelf to absorb odors.

o A cup of dry unused coffee grinds can also absorb odors when placed on a refrigerator shelf.

• Washing machine:

o A half cup of baking soda can be added to the washing machine with regular detergent to help with mild odors

• Toilets:

o Remove waterline marks in the toilet bowl by pouring in 2 cups of white vinegar. Let soak overnight, then flush to rinse. If this does not work, rub the waterline mark with a wet pumice stone.

• Carpet stains:

o Vacuum the carpet if the stain is dry.

o If the stain is still wet, blot gently to remove excess – blot, do NOT rub.

- o Lightly soak the carpet stain with clean water first to remove the stain – blot, do NOT rub.
- o If the stain remains, mix a 3 Tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a spray bottle and spray the stain; blot again; do NOT rub.
- o If this fails, consult a professional carpet cleaner immediately; the longer you wait may mean the stain may not come out.

• Carpet odor:

o Regular vacuuming cures most carpet odors, but if carpet odors persist, lightly sprinkle the carpet with baking soda and vacuum thoroughly, removing all baking soda from carpet. Repeat if necessary.

Energy saving tips

Saving water is important for the environment and can mean a lower utility bill for your residence as well:

• Always report water leaks to us as soon as possible.

o Report water dripping under sinks.

o Report Running toilets.

o Report malfunctioning sprinklers.

o Report standing pools of water.

o Report malfunctioning water appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines that come with the property.

• Run the dishwasher when it is fully loaded.

• Replace your old washing machine with an energy efficient one – you could save the cost of the machine in water and energy bills.

• Check water hoses on washing machines for leaks; change hoses every three years.

• Adjust the water level to match the load, using less water for small loads.

• Avoid using flushing toilets to dispose of ordinary trash.

• Take shorter showers.

• Avoid letting the water continually run while shaving, brushing your teeth, or washing your face

• Be sure your water heater temperature is set properly. Note: do not turn the water heater up to “hi,” this is a dangerous temperature level.

• Counsel all children on how to prevent wasting water.

• Do not “over water” landscaping; it is not healthy for plants and simply wastes water.

To lower air-conditioning bills

During warm or hot months, close the windows and doors to your home early in the day to “keep cool air in,” particularly when the air-conditioner is running.

• Close window coverings on the sunny side of the house during different times of the day; this can lower the temperature dramatically.

• Replace the air filter often and with the right size, at a minimum of every three months. A clean filter helps the air-conditioner to run more efficiently.

• When leaving your residence, turn the air-conditioner up a few degrees, a closed house without activity normally stays cooler. This is particularly important when going on vacation.

• There is no reason to keep the residence in a frigid state while you are gone, but do not turn the air off on very hot days – it will only take longer and more energy to cool down.

To lower heating bills:

• During the cooler months, keep all windows and doors tightly closed.

• Report any major drafts to us.

• Use a “reasonable” level of heat in the residence. Sometimes, turning down the heat just a few degrees can reduce an energy bill.

• Turn the heat down during the night and use warm covers and comforters.

• When leaving home, turn down the temperature on the thermostat.

• Do not turn the heat completely off. It will take more heat for a cold house than it will save. In addition, this could cause pipes to freeze, which will cause more problems.

• If there is a fireplace, close the damper if you are not using it, but please be sure to open the fireplace if you do start a fire.

• Replace the furnace filter often, at a minimum of every three months. A clean filter helps the furnace to run more efficiently

Renters insurance

Property owners generally carry a standard fire and liability policy, and have additional coverage with “landlord/rental” insurance, but they normally cannot cover the contents or possessions of the resident. The reason that insurance companies do not provide this type of coverage is because they are “non-owner” occupied properties. Therefore, it is very important for you to have adequate insurance coverage for your contents and liability.

If you think it is not important, sit down and write out a list of your possessions in one column. In a second column, list how much it would cost to “replace” them. You will be surprised how the list can really add up.

You can purchase renters insurance in your Resident Center portal or contact an insurance agent if you do not have renters insurance. You can find them in the telephone directory, search the Internet, or ask a friend. The Internet can also provide both information and comparison-shopping. **To avoid a loss, acquire renters insurance now and provide us with a copy of your policy**.

Safety Tips

The safety of you and your family is important to us and many things can affect it. Here are some tips to follow:

• Unplug all heat-producing appliances like toasters, irons, and coffee makers when they are not in use to prevent fire hazards.

• Never leave a stove or oven unattended; turn off all stove and oven appliances when you leave the house.

• Never leave heating pads and electric blankets on indefinitely and turn them off when you leave the residence to prevent fire hazards.

• Never leave water running unattended in a plugged bathtub or when leaving the residence.

• If you have an upstairs bathroom and you see water in the ceiling below, particularly in a light fixture, report the leak immediately to us.

• Do not operate electrical appliances while standing or sitting in water.

• Avoid using blow dryers, curling irons, radios, TVs, or other appliances while in a bathtub or over a sink filled with water.

• If you have small children, use child protector plugs when you are

• Do not overload extension cords with too many appliances.

• Place lamps on level surfaces and use the correct wattage.

• Avoid running extension cords over walkways, under rugs, or any other place that could cause tripping.

• If you suspect an electrical problem, report it to us immediately.

• Do not remove smoke alarms, particularly if they are beeping. Smoke alarms are for safety and removing them can endanger all residents and guests. Change the batteries if needed.

• Do not allow children to leave toys on walkways and sidewalks.

• Replace outside light bulbs so you can utilize lights properly when it is dark.

• Report any exposed tree roots to our office.

• Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen and the garage; they are available in hardware supply stores.

• If you use a grill or BBQ, use common sense, never leave grills unattended.

• If you have a fireplace, be sure to store hot ashes and coals away from the residence. Do not place ashes in garbage receptacles unless certain they are cold.

• Do not store fireplace wood against the residence.

• Always be certain the damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace.

• Do not build “roaring” fires in the fireplace; build reasonable fires suited to the size of the fireplace.

Vacation checklist

When going on vacation, here are items to check before leaving:

• If going out of town for an extended period, please notify us how long you will be gone, and supply an emergency telephone number. Then should any problems arise concerning your residence, there is someone to contact.

• Check your rent payment to ensure it will not become delinquent. It would be a sad thing to come home to a late notice and charges.

• Notify all necessary parties such as your next-door neighbours, the paper delivery person, the post office, or any related service people. By doing so, you will avoid any panic that something is wrong.

• Select someone to pick up items on your doorstep to avoid giving signals to dishonest people.

• If leaving a vehicle in the driveway, remove any valuables and garage door openers that can be stolen, giving access to your home.

• Put garbage cans away or arrange for someone to take care of it.

• Place valuables and jewellery in a safe deposit box.

• Avoid leaving a message on your answering device telling people you are out of town and for how long.

• Set timers on interior lights, to deter burglars.

• Be sure to check all windows, window locks, and doors before leaving.

• If you have an alarm, be sure to set it.

• Turn off the water valve to your washing machine.

• Turn off all appliances, large and small, such as stove burners, coffee pots, irons, curling irons, etc.

• Unplug TVs and computers in the event of lightning or power surges.

• Turn your water heater to low or “vacation” setting, but do not turn the water heater off.

• Anything else living in your house besides you, such as plants or pets? Then be sure to water plants and have someone take care of your animals. Do not leave pets in the residence unless a reliable person is going to care for them daily.

Holiday tips

Everyone enjoys the different holidays, but it is important to exercise care during the celebrations and remove decorations when each season is over.

• Hang lights and decorations properly and carefully.

• Before hanging, check for bad plugs and loose wires. If you find defects, dispose of the lights.

• Only use lights and decorations during holiday seasons; remove them immediately when the season ends.

• Dispose of holiday trees properly; never burn them in a fireplace.

• If you use extension cords, do not overload, do not staple them to the residence, and if outside, use only cords approved for outside use.

• Never leave holiday lights on when leaving your residence to avoid fire danger.

• For fireworks celebrations:

o Do not use illegal, dangerous, or explosive devices.

o Only buy legal fireworks and check where you can use them.

o Use common sense safety rules with fireworks.

o Do not use fireworks in or around your residence.

o Keep all fireworks away from any dry grass, trees, or roofs.

o Attend a fireworks celebration instead of buying them and enjoy the fun without the responsibility.

Emergency/disasters

Unfortunately, emergencies and disasters happen all around the world. The best solution is to be prepared.

There are different emergencies

▪ Maintenance emergencies:

o We have reviewed them in this handbook.

o Please follow the maintenance instructions and call us when appropriate.

o We request that you treat our staff courteously while under stress of the situation – we will do everything we can to help you as soon as possible.

▪ Area emergencies or disasters:

o When major emergencies or disasters such as a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or some other force of nature occur, everyone experiences great inconvenience and difficulty. Remember this and be considerate of others and the degrees of different problems.

o We request that you call emergency services first in a disaster.

o Then notify our office as soon as possible what has happened.

o We will assign priorities to work and during an area emergency/disaster, will work to assist you as much as possible

o When calling our office, we ask you to be patient and calmly state what problems you are experiencing. We will handle the problems as quickly as possible.

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Frequently asked questions

We have put together a list of the most frequently asked tenant questions that may answer many of your concerns in advance.

Why did I receive a notice when I paid the rent on the 7th of the month?

• As outlined in this Handbook before, the rent is due on the **1st** and late if not received by the 6**th** of the month. Once the 6**th** of the month passes, we begin preparing Ten Day Notices to Pay or Quit. We served the notice before we received the payment. We serve Notices based on state landlord/tenant law requirements and obligations to the owner of the property.

Why can I not clean the carpet myself?

• We require professional steam carpet cleaning to preserve the life of the carpet. Using a rental or home machine will damage the carpet and void the carpet warranty. If this happens you could be charged to replace the damaged carpet.

Can I install extra telephone lines?

• You can install extra telephone lines if you pay the expense and disconnect them when you leave. However, you must notify us and obtain written permission to install the lines.

Can I have a satellite dish?

• No. Satellite dishes causes damage to the roof or walls of the property. If the dish is installed without out permission you will be responsible for removing the dish and **repairing any damage.**

I did not have a pet when I moved in; can I have a pet now?

• Your lease states if you allowed to have pets. Notify our office of your request for a pet. You will need complete a pet application at petscreening.com and pay the $350 pet fee. Do not move a pet into the property without permission. The Property Manager will contact the owner and submit your request. If the owner does allow a pet, you will need to pay a pet fee of $350 and possibly an increased security deposit may be required and a pet addendum signed. If the owner says no, abide by the decision and your rental agreement.

What happens if my pet dies or runs away, can I have my increased security deposit back?

No, all security deposits remain in effect until all tenants vacate the property.

What happens if I want another pet?

Notify our office of your request for a pet. You will need complete a pet application at petscreening.com and pay the $350 pet fee. Do not move a pet into the property without permission. The Property Manager will contact the owner and submit your request. If the owner does allow a pet, you will need to pay a pet fee of $350 and possibly an increased security deposit may be required and a pet addendum signed. If the owner says no, abide by the decision and your rental agreement.

My roommate wants to move, but I want to stay. What do I do now?

Your roommate needs to submit a partial notice to vacate. We will need documentation from you to show you can support the property by yourself. We will not partially refund part of the security deposit to your roommate since it is a condition of your rental agreement. You and your roommate will have to settle any funds owed to each other, including any or all of the security deposit.

I want to add a roommate, now what do I do?

• The prospective roommate will have to submit an application and we must approve the person PRIOR to them moving into the property. They can apply online at trustartrealty.com. Contact the office if you have questions. If we deny the applicant, they cannot move into the property. If approved, you and the approved applicant must sign new rental/lease agreements.

Why do the owners want to see the property?

• **The owners are showing responsibility** toward the maintenance of the property, the condition, and their investment. It is also their right to see the property, but they respect that it is your residence. It is also nothing to fear. This is why we contacted you first to set a date and time.

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Giving your notice

Eventually, you will move, and we want you to be prepared when this is necessary. our tenants are required to give **60 days**' notice prior to moving. Please contact the office to get the proper forms to be used when you anticipate moving. Before giving notice:

• Check your rental agreement/lease to see if you are eligible to give notice. It will specifically state when you can give notice. A lease is a binding agreement for a set period and you may still be bound to the lease.

• If you need to move and you are still committed to a lease period, contact our office to discuss your options.

• Notices must be in writing. The day we receive the notice is the date the notice begins. For example, do not fill out a notice with the current date and mail it five days later, thinking the date you mailed is the notice date.

• We do not provide rental history to other landlords/property management companies unless tenants submit a written Notice to Vacate and the tenant gives the authority to us to give out rental references.

• After you submit your Notice to Vacate, we will send you our move out packet. This will instruct you on what to do during the notice period, and how to set up your move out appointment.

• It is the responsibility of the resident to deliver all keys and openers to us.

• Failure to deliver keys and openers could incur additional charges.

• Remember to supply a forwarding address and telephone number for your security deposit refund.

• Use the Move- out Checklist so you remember important details.

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Preparing the Property for Move Out

When you are ready to move, if you have questions on how to prepare your residence, please call our office, and discuss your concerns with us. We want your move to be a pleasant and successful one. The following are the steps to take for your move.

Cleaning

o Have the property cleaned throughout the interior and the exterior.

o This includes vinyl or tile floors, windows inside and out, window sills and door casings, mini-blinds, wiping out drawers and shelves, all appliances, sinks, toilets, bath tubs, showers, vanities, light fixtures, fireplaces, removal of cobwebs inside and out, etc.

o Tenant caused dirt is not normal "wear and tear."

o Pick up debris and animal feces on the exterior of the property and place them in the proper trash receptacles.

Carpet Cleaning

o There is no charge for normal wear and tear. However, there is a charge for carpet cleaning, damage and stains.

o Do NOT rent carpet-cleaning machines, use home cleaning machines Using a rental or home machine will damage the carpet and void the carpet warranty. If this happens you could be charged to replace the damaged carpet.

o Call us for a recommendation on a carpet cleaner who will give you reasonable rates on carpet cleaning.

o Tenants, please note: We will not reimburse for any carpet cleaning contracted by tenants.

Draperies/window coverings/windows

o Do NOT wash draperies.

o You are not expected to dry clean draperies unless:

▪ You have caused excessive soil or allowed water damage from open windows. Draperies with water stains could require replacement. Discuss this with your management team.

▪ You have not been using the draperies provided and/or have not kept them in good condition

o Wipe all mini blinds – do not use harsh chemicals on the blinds.

o Clean all windows inside and out.

Replacements

o The following must be in working order to avoid charges when moving out:

• Burned out light bulbs

• Non-working smoke detector batteries

• Missing doorstops

• Furnace filters - change the filter just before you vacate the property, and make sure you use the correct size.

Pest control

o If you have a pet, you must hire a pest control company to perform flea/tick extermination.

o If you do not have a pet, you do not need to hire a pest control company unless you have not been exercising minimum insect control. If a property is found loaded with ants, spiders, cobwebs, etc., you can incur pest control charges.

o Call us for a recommendation on a pest control company who will give you reasonable rates on their services.

Landscape clean up

o The outside area is to be neatly mowed, trimmed, pruned, fertilized, and watered for outside areas that apply in your rental contract.

o Remove all trash and debris, placing in the proper receptacles.

o Remove grease or oil drips; dispose of motor oil properly – it does not belong in the garbage receptacles.

o Pick up any animal feces whether you have an animal or not.

Trash

o If you have trash that exceeds the normal pickup, you are to arrange to have it hauled away at your expense.

o Place all other trash within the appropriate trash receptacles for normal trash removal.

o Do not overflow trash receptacles.

Painting

o We request that you do not spackle, putty, or touch up paint unless sure the paint will match.

o Charges can occur if unnecessary painting is required due to tenant painting.

o Charges for painting depend on whether it exceeds normal wear and tear, and the length of time in the property.

Your security deposit refund

When you follow the move out procedures and leave the property in good condition, it simplifies the task of refunding your security deposit. We remit security deposit transmittals within **30 days** in accordance with the state landlord/tenant law. Remember, we want your move out to be a pleasant and successful process.

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Normal Wear and Tear vs. Damage

While you live in your rental unit it will sustain a certain amount of wear and tear during the term of your lease. Most will be normal but some may actually be considered damage. There is a fine line between normal wear and tear and actual damage to a dwelling. You will need to be able to discern between these two to protect your security deposit and avoid losing your money due to damages to the property.

Normal wear and tear - Even the most conscientious tenant will cause some minor damage over the course of a rental agreement. This minimal damage is typically referred to as "normal wear and tear." This can include small scratches on the walls or paint, worn or slightly stained carpeting, broken hinges, or other insignificant damage.

Damage - Actual damage to a property goes beyond normal wear and tear. For example, instead of small scuffs on the walls or a few nail holes, large holes in the wall would definitely be considered damage.

If the carpet is completely stained, ripped, or otherwise ruined, this can be construed as damage. Pet stains can also be referred to as an actual damage, particularly if you do not allow pets on your rental property. In this case, since you have not received a pet deposit to cover this damage, the security deposit can be used to repair the damage and restore the property to its original condition.

Excessive amounts of garbage, furniture, or personal items that a tenant has left behind may also be considered damage. In this case, since you will need to spend time cleaning the property or paying to have the furniture removed, you will be able to use the security deposit to cover these costs.

Examples of "Tenant Damage" versus "Normal Wear And Tear"

Normal Wear and Tear

Costs of turning over a dwelling after a tenant vacates will be included on a Notice to Impose Claim of Security Deposit for tenant damages. The tenant is expected to leave the unit in as good or better condition that they received it. The costs an owner incurs for the basic cleaning and repairing of such items necessary to make a unit ready for occupancy by the next tenant will be charged to the previous tenant. The following is a list of items typically attributable to routine use or "normal wear and tear".

Interior walls, floors and ceiling

- Fading, peeling, or cracked paint.
- Slightly torn or faded wallpaper.

- Small chips in plaster.
- Nail holes, pin holes, or cracks in wall.
- Scuffs or small marks in paint.
- Door sticking from humidity.
- Cracked window pane from faulty foundation or building settling.
- Floors needing coat of varnish.
- Carpet faded or worn thin from walking.
- Loose or cracked grouting and bathroom tiles.

Plumbing, Kitchen & Bath

- Loose or cracked grouting and bathroom tiles.

Garbage disposal that stops working because motor dies.

- Laminate top separated from countertop base.
- Worn or scratched enamel in old bathtubs, sinks, or toilets.
- Rusty shower rod.
- Partially clogged sinks caused by aging pipes.

Exterior

- Dead spots in lawn due to pests.
- Trees need trimming.
- Exterior requires pressure wash to remove stains, wasp nests and other debris.

Tenant Damage

Tenant damages usually require more work or extensive repair, and at greater cost than "normal wear and tear", and are often the result of a tenant's abuse or negligence that is above and beyond normal wear and tear.

Interior walls, floors and ceiling

- Gaping holes in walls or plaster.
- Drawings, crayon markings, or painting that owner did not approve.
- Holes in walls caused by doorknobs.
- Seriously damaged or ruined wallpaper.
- Chipped or gouged wood floors.
- Doors kicked in or ripped off hinges.
- Broken windows.
- Broken or Missing fixtures.
- Holes in ceiling from removed fixtures.
- Odor and/or stains from pet urine or feces.
- Holes, stained, burns or removed carpet or linoleum.
- Large items left behind requiring specialized removal.

Plumbing, Kitchen & Bath

- Garbage disposal broken due to foreign (nails, screws, coins and utensils) objects.
- Toilet won't flush properly because it's stopped up with a diaper.
- Broken or missing faucets and drain stoppers.
- Missing or smashed bathroom tiles.
- Grime-coated bathtub and toilet.
- Missing blinds or shades.
- Missing window screens.

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Exterior

- Lawn not mowed or edge (depending on language in lease agreement).
- Trash pile in yard, outdoor furniture left on patio.
- Excessive oil, grease or fuel stains on driveway or sidewalks.
- Dead lawn, trees or shrubs due to lack of care or watering.
- Personal, hobby or items requiring removal from sheds or storage buildings.
- Large items left behind requiring specialized removal.

Conclusion

We hope that you have found the *Trustart Tenant Handbook* useful and informative. It is our goal to prepare you for a successful tenancy and a pleasant move out when this occurs. If you have any questions on the enclosed information, please contact our office team.

Have a successful residency!

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