



A Community Partner,
Helping People to Help Themselves

The Scoop

Serving Families in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties

September 2006

Walla Walla Housing Authority

501 Cayuse Street
Walla Walla WA 99362
509-527-4542 * Fax 509-527-4574
Hearing-impaired, use relay service
wwha@wallawallaha.org
www.wallawallaha.org

A CALL TO DUTY

What every landlord should know about military tenants

For the military officers continuing to be called to duty, the inevitable emotional strain of deployment can be coupled by extreme financial burden. Key laws offer aid to those reservists and members of the National Guard on active duty. However, what the law grants to military personnel often can leave landlords in a bind.

Usually when a member of the military becomes a new renter, his or her lease will contain military clauses concerning a possible call for service. However, even if such a clause has not been stipulated, a soldier is still not liable.

Most substantial to the concerns of property managers and apartment owners are the components of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) of 1940, established after World War I, including provisions allowing military personnel to terminate leases and securing them from eviction, under certain conditions, when on active duty.

A tenant or their spouse who is entering active U.S. or state military service may terminate leases of premises occupied for dwelling, professional, or similar purposes.

To protect landlords, the lease must be terminated by a written notice mailed to the landlord or the landlord's agent after the call has been received. Oral notice is not acceptable. SSCRA does not require the illustration of "material effect", meaning that service members who are called to active duty and meet all the other requirements do not have to demonstrate financial hardship in order to

break the lease.

SSCRA, as well as most lease military clauses, require that a copy of the military orders or an official letter from the tenant's commanding officer accompany the notice. The orders must specify when the move is to happen, such as "report no later than 15 October" and if possible, how long the period will last. Typically, termination of a lease will not be effective until 30 days from the next date the rent is due. For example, if you are given notice on September 2nd, the lease should not be terminated until October 31st.



If it is required that any rent paid in advance must be returned, landlords may not withhold a service member's security deposit refund. As customary, a landlord may repress the return of the security for damages, repairs, and other lawful provisions of the lease/rental agreement.

Washington State Senate Bill 5044, passed in April 2004, amends landlord-tenant law by excusing called-up military personnel from giving the required 20-day notice to their landlords. The lawmakers sponsoring the bill cited some National Guard and reserve members receive orders as little as 24 to 72 hours before shipping out. Then Governor Gary Locke, the bill's signer, stated, "The more we can do to help them arrange their affairs back home, is the least we can do."

To learn more about the Soldiers' and Sailors' Relief Act, visit the U.S. Department of Defense website at: www.defenselink.mil/specials/Relief_Act_Revision.

**AUTOMATIC
Housing Assistance
Payment Deposits
are deposited by the 5th
of each month**

Rental Assistance Division

Jason Hahn

Rental Assistance Manager
527-4606

Families participating in
Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

Nina Hill

Rental Specialist
Participant last names A-K
527-4607

David Mitchell

Rental Specialist
Participant last names L-Z
522-7813

David Story

Housing Inspector
526-6277

Denese Carron

Eligibility Coordinator
527-4608

Information Coordinator
527-4542 extension 100

Up-coming Office Closures

September 4th

Labor Day





Drive Safely

SCHOOLS
ARE OPEN



Speed Zones
20 MPH
Watch for Children

Address Identification

Properly posted addresses allow emergency responders and service representatives to quickly and easily locate a specific location. All buildings in the City of Walla Walla must have clearly posted addresses, visible and legible from the street fronting the property. The numbers are required to be three (3) inches in height and in a contrasting color from the background. Be sure your rental properties have clearly visible address signs so that emergency personnel can find their way.



Walla Walla Housing Authority

Board of Commissioners

Jill Zagelow
Chair

Brian Jones
Vice Chair

Jude Noland
Commissioner

Kathryn Farrell Guizar
Commissioner

Mark Kajita
Commissioner

Cathie Antle
Resident Commissioner

Dominick Elia
Ex-Officio

Renée Rooker
Executive Director

Housing Quality Standards Inspections

The Walla Walla Housing Authority conducts three types of inspections to ensure that assisted units are in compliance with the HUD established Housing Quality Standards.

• INITIAL INSPECTION

The initial inspection is conducted prior to the unit being approved for participation in a rental assistance program (Housing Choice Voucher or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance). If the unit passes the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection on or before the first of the month, assistance will be effective the first of that month.

• ANNUAL INSPECTION

An annual inspection is conducted at least every 12 months. The HQS inspection must pass annually for the housing assistance payment to continue.

• SPECIAL INSPECTION

A section inspection is conducted in response to reasonable request by either the landlord or the tenant. WWHA may also initiate scheduling a special inspection of the assisted unit.

"A Good Place to Live" booklet is an excellent reference to see a room-by-room view of the minimum requirements. This booklet is available **FREE** from our office. It can also be viewed or downloaded from the HUD Clips website at http://www.belmontshelter.org/pdfs/a_good_place.pdf.



Advertise
FREE!



Advertise your available rentals with WWHA for **FREE!**

Contact us at 527-4542 extension 100 to provide your available rental property information...*type of unit, number of bedrooms, address of rental, monthly rent, security deposit, amenities, and contact information.*

WWHA's Available Rental listing is up-dated weekly and is available to the general public.

Advertise today and get results!

Visit Us On-Line: www.wallawallaha.org

The Scoop is written, edited, and published by the Walla Walla Housing Authority Staff

