



OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING SERVICES

Overview Approximately 28,000 students reside in privately-owned rental housing in Ann Arbor. The Housing Information Office serves these students through a comprehensive off-campus housing program, a major component of which is the provision of information about local housing and tenant rights to students seeking housing. In addition, the mediation component of the program advises and intervenes in situation in which student-tenants experience housing-related conflict with their landlords and/or co-tenants.

Services *To Students*

On-line and written materials (booklets and map) that describe the local market and instruct prospective tenants on how to secure housing; Supplemental materials related to tenant needs (bus schedules, renter's insurance information, Safety Tips Brochure, How to Find Off-Campus Housing, Guidelines for Subletting, Roommate Agreement etc.); On-line listings of units available to rent. Individual advising by phone, email and in person; Information about specific landlords; lease review. On-line sublease listings, Subleases, and Inventory Checklists; Referral to other University, community and City resources; Special programs (residence hall and subject specific presentations; Housing Fair, an annual information fair in which landlords and other agencies of interest to tenants display information in one location for students who are seeking housing.); Mediation/Conciliation

To Landlords

Advertising of available rental units; Copies of leases; Inventory Checklists; Advising and referral; Annual Vacancy and Rental Rate Survey data; Mediation/Conciliation

Landlord Registration All landlords or property managers in the area are invited to register with the Off-Campus Housing Program. In order to be registered, landlords must use the University of Michigan Lease Agreement or submit their own private lease and/or attachments; agree to conform to a non-discrimination policy in their treatment of tenants and applicants for tenancy; agree to follow local and state laws; agree to rent only housing that has been inspected and certified by the City of Ann Arbor if required (or other local authority, if not Ann Arbor and required to do so.); and agree that they will participate in the Off-Campus Housing mediation program in the event that they have a conflict with a UM student-tenant. Landlords also agree to make a good faith effort to resolve landlord/tenant disputes. In return, landlords receive the benefits identified above. Landlords pay a small fee for the services or documents provided to them.

Mediation Mediation Services involves a neutral facilitation of landlord-tenant and/or co-tenant conflict resolution. The goal is to assist the parties in reaching a voluntary and mutually acceptable resolution to their conflict as an alternative to pursuing lengthy, antagonistic, and/or expensive legal action. Any party to a lease between a registered landlord and a UM student-tenant may contact the Off-Campus Housing Office for assistance. Response to these contacts varies according to the specific situation and the wishes of the initiating party, but can include advising, referral, contacting the other party, and setting up a mediation session in which the Off Campus Housing Advisor attempt to facilitate a resolution. The mediators are not advocates for either party, nor do they decide the outcome of the case.

Surveys The Rental Rate Survey, gives average and median rates for all sizes of rental units and is derived from information landlords place on the site. It is a real time snapshot of data supplied by registered landlords. The Vacancy Rate Survey gives vacancy/occupancy rates for all types of units drawn from information provided by registered landlords. It is published every Fall.

Other Agency Relationships The Off-Campus Housing staff maintains informal working relationships with the staff of Student Legal Services (attorneys for student-tenants), City of Ann Arbor, the Housing Bureau for Seniors and other community resources. Mediation staff also work with OSCAR, The Ombuds Office, and the Dean of Students Office in regard to conflicts that are referred to and/or from those jurisdictions.



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