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Needham Housing Authority Resident Handbook

Smoke-Free Agency

Written by the NHA Staff & Tenant Organizations
Updated July 2023

Welcome!

This handbook was prepared by the Needham Housing Authority Staff, Resident Associations, and Board of Commissioners. We are committed to having a community where:

- Everyone is treated fairly and with respect.
- Homes and common spaces are safe, attractive, and well-maintained.
- Communication among residents, staff and the Board is open and honest.

This handbook represents part of our commitment to communicating important information to you--a resident in the NHA community. It tells you about services and programs available to you and lets you know your rights and responsibilities under state, federal and local guidelines. This handbook is intended to make sure all residents and staff have the same basic information, so they can communicate effectively with each other. It is NOT a legal document; it does not replace your lease or any other official contracts and agreements between residents and the NHA.

I. Contact and Staff Information

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Friday: 7:30 AM – 1:00 PM

The Office is closed every Saturday, Sunday, and on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Patriot's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day After Thanksgiving
Christmas Day

NOTE: You can still leave a voicemail or emergency work order even when the office is closed.

Needham Housing Authority Phone Numbers, Staff, and Responsibilities

Needham Housing Authority Office (781) 444-3011
To leave a message in the general mailbox, press 210

Police and Fire Departments and medical emergencies 911

Administrative Staff

Cheryl Gosmon, Executive Director Ext. 212

Marie Celestin, Receptionist/Clerk Ext. 210

Nayda Sanchez, Admissions, Management and Lease Housing Ext. 211

Blair Fetzer, Housing Manager – State Public Housing Ext. 213

Curtis Rush, Housing Manager – Federal Public Housing Ext. 216

Salim Pillai, Bookkeeper/ Human Resource Ext. 215

Laurie Blake, Resident Services Coordinator Ext. 219

Elena Choy, Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinator

Resident Opportunity & Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) coordinators:

Cathy Berkley, ROSS Coordinator.

Ann Dermarderosian, ROSS Coordinator

Greg Gillis, Maintenance Foreman

Eric Junkins, Maintenance Technician

William Goffredo, Maintenance Technician

Anthony Silva, Maintenance Technician

Other Important Telephone Numbers

Town of Needham

Town Hall (781) 455-7500

Deaconess Glover Hospital (781) 453-3000

Needham Public Library (781) 455-7559

Needham Council on Aging (781) 455-7555

Springwell (elder services) (617) 926-4100

Needham Board of Health (781) 455-7523

Needham Community Council (781) 444-2415

Needham Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Reginald C. Foster Chair
Eleanor Evans Vice-Chair
Ed Scheideler Treasurer
Penelope Kirk Commissioner
Janice Bennett Commissioner

Tenant Association Contacts

Jessica Reese

No alterations are allowed to the Interior/Exterior of NHA property including but not limited to grounds.

Guest Policy

Tenant and other household members may have guests provided that Tenant shall be responsible for the conduct of any guest while in the leased premises or on NHA property and shall take reasonable steps to supervise the conduct of any guest, including a guest of a household member. No guest may stay overnight (as defined in Section I) for more than a total of twenty-one **(21) nights** in any twelve **(12) month period** without NHA's written approval of a temporary extension of the guest's stay.

Rent Policy

Rents are due in advance on or before the first (1st) day of each month. Rent for any fraction of a month of occupancy at the beginning or end of the term shall be charged on a pro-rate basis.

If resident fails to pay any or all rent due by the seventh (7th) day of the month, the Needham Housing Authority may declare the unpaid rent delinquent and issue a written notice of termination of lease. Prior to issuing such notice, except where the tenant is habitually delinquent in paying rent and has had a prior opportunity for discussion with the prior six months, the Needham Housing Authority shall provide the tenant with an opportunity to discuss the reason for the late payment.

State Public Housing Rent Collection

In the event that the state public housing tenant shall fail to pay all or any part of the rent within thirty (30) days of its due date the Needham Housing Authority will charge a late fee penalty of \$25.00. The Needham Housing Authority will commence proceedings for eviction and money judgment, consistent with the terms of the lease and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development regulations. (Reference-760 CMR 6.04)

Federal Public Housing Rent Collection

In the event that the federal public housing tenant shall fail to pay all or any part of the rent within thirty (30) days of its due date the Needham Housing Authority may in its discretion charge a late fee penalty of 1% per month on the unpaid balance from the date the payment was due. The Needham Housing Authority will commence proceedings for eviction and money judgment, consistent with the terms of the lease and the Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations.

Pet Deposits and Fees

Allowed under 40 pounds with updated medical vaccinations. One pet per household is allowed. A pet deposit of one hundred and fifty (\$150) or one month's rent, whichever is less, shall be required of each pet owner. The deposit may be paid over a period of time with an office agreement, determined by the Executive Director. The deposit will be handled as a security deposit. The deposit will be refunded at the time the tenant vacated or no longer has ownership of the pet, provided that no pet-related damage has been done to the property. Sums necessary to repair such damage will be deducted from the deposit.

A fee of ten dollars (**\$10.00**) shall be charged to any pet owner each time the pet owner fails to clean up after his/her animal.

Parking

Tenants who have a valid registration and license will be given a resident parking sticker. Tenant must provide a valid registration and license at move in and at annual recertification. *Cars that are not legally registered will be towed at the owner's expense.*

Snow removal process

3 inches or more Maintenance staff will begin clearing main roadway to NHA developments.

Day-1- Salting and Clearing roadways and walkways

Day-2- Parking lot clearing-Tenants need to move their vehicle for maintenance to clear parking lots

Day-3- Re-treat any icy areas.

Trash Pick up

Seabeds Way- Monday

Captain Robert Cook—Mondays & Thursdays

Linden & Chambers and High Rock Homes- Thursdays

Note: Holiday weeks trash is delayed to the next day.

Yard Care Policy

Federal Units only (High Rock Estates)

Tenants are responsible for the upkeep of their yards. If the tenant fails to properly maintain their yard in a safe, sanitary and attractive condition they will be responsible for the actual costs associated with the NHA mowing, raking, shoveling, or otherwise cleaning the yard. If a tenant fails to maintain their yard, the NHA staff will provide notice of the problem and then will make arrangements to clean, mow, or shovel/plow. The tenant will then be billed for the actual time and materials used. Mowing and raking long grass has typically caused a tenant to be charged up to but not limited to **\$75.00**.

Payment in full of these charges is required within 30 days or the tenant is in violation of the lease. Tenants who leave trash, debris, broken toys, appliances, interior furniture, or other such items outside will be subject to dump fees and labor costs associated with cleaning the yard and properly disposing of the items. Tenants who cause an unsafe or unsanitary condition in their yards may have items removed without any prior notice from the NHA.

The NHA maintenance staff will provide short-term yard maintenance for tenants who have properly requested a reasonable accommodation for a disability and who have proper medical documentation regarding the disability and the need for assistance and where no other reasonable alternative is available. A fee will be charged for this maintenance service except where extreme financial hardship can be demonstrated.

1) RENT DETERMINATION

- Must report all income changes within 7 days.
- Failure to report increased income could result in fraud.
- Failure to report decreased income delays lower rent.
- Must submit ALL recertification documents in timely manner.

2) INSPECTIONS & REPAIRS

- Inspections conducted at least once a year.
- Exterminations are conducted per need to site or per request by resident.
- Check for housekeeping and resident damage issues.
- NHA will enter unit if resident is not home.
- All repair requests must be made to NHA Maintenance Department
- Damage to unit by residents, will be charged immediately by NHA.

3) TENANT OBLIGATIONS

- Tenant should take time to read this section carefully.
- Behavior of household & guests: Tenant is held responsible.
- Peaceful enjoyment of neighbors: No disturbances or loud noise
- Locks: Do not install private locks or alter in any form. Extra fee for lockouts, lock changes, & extra keys
- Alterations: No alterations to unit.
- Appliances: Request must be made to NHA to add extra appliances like stove, refrigerator, etc.
- Other additions: No ceiling fans, **satellite dishes**, antennas, swimming pools, basketball hoops, bouncy houses, swing sets, etc.

4) TRANSFERS

- NHA does not approve "luxury" transfers, i.e., bigger apt, extra rooms, nicer neighborhood, etc.

- All transfers are in accordance with the NHA Transfer Policy
- Tenant MUST move when transfer is administrative.

5) UTILITIES

- All utilities are included unless otherwise noted.
- Tenant is responsible for payment of utilities, if applicable

6) PARKING

- Tenant must present registration with NHA address to obtain Resident Sticker.
- Tenant expected to adhere to NHA Parking Rules
- Towing expense is the responsibility of the tenant and not refundable by NHA.
- No mechanical repairs on vehicles on NHA property

7) VACATING

- Tenant must give written 30-day notice to office, even if you receive a Section 8 voucher.
- NHA will charge tenant 30 days after knowledge of intent to vacate or date of vacate.
- NHA will conduct move out inspection prior to vacate.
- Tenant is expected to pay in full and rent arrears and/or damages to the unit prior to vacate.
- All keys must be returned to NHA upon vacating.

Non-Rental Charge List

Lock out (during operating hours)	\$0.00
Lock out (after hours)	\$50.00
Key Duplicate	\$5.00
Lock Change or replaced	\$50.00
Mailbox Key/Lock	\$5.00
Backed up sink-tub-toilet (If Tenant Abuse)	Time & Material
Sink strainer/basket	Time & Material
Faucet-Kitchen/Bathroom (If Tenant Abuse)	as Billed
Stove / Range replacement (If Tenant Abuse)	as Billed
Range Drip Pans	\$6.00
Range hood	\$50.00
Range hood filter	\$10.00
Range knobs (If Tenant Abuse)	\$7.00
Refrigerator crisper	\$40.00
Refrigerator crisper cover	\$30.00
Refrigerator replacement (If Tenant Abuse)	\$30.00
Toilet Seat	\$15.00
Toilet replacement (Tenant Abuse)	Time& Material
Cabinet drawer/door	As Billed
Window Shade/ Mini Blind	\$10.00
Window Screen	\$15.00
Window Glass	Time & Material
Door Screen	as Billed
Door (Tenant Abuse)	as Billed
Storm Door	as Billed
Holes in walls	Time & Material
Paint (Free-if tenant has resided for 3+ years)	\$20.00 a gallon
Smoke detector (Tenant Abuse /Removed)	\$100.00
Disposal Fee	\$50.00
Returned checks	\$25.00
Legal Fees	as Billed

Resident Care Notice Charges- Used during Manager Site Walks

48 Hour notice is given to the resident to remove items stated on the care notice.

1st Offense-Warning

2nd Offense-Lease Violation

3rd Offense-Informal Tenancy Hearing