Rent Smart 2017

Background

Rent Smart 2017 focuses on the knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. It challenges participants to know and understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, as well as know and understand the rights and responsibilities of their landlord. Emphasis is on forming a strong partnership between the tenant and landlord. Establishing a positive rental history is much like having a positive credit report and Rent Smart starts participants on the path for success*.*

Participant Goals

Successful *Rent Smart* participants will:

- Learn new skills to build positive relationships with landlords and neighbors.
- Gain confidence in their ability to find and maintain affordable housing.
- Understand the application and screening processes used by landlords.
- Learn the responsibilities and rights of tenants and landlords.

Target Audience

Rent Smart is designed to help those individuals who have little to no rental experience and those who have had difficulty obtaining rental housing. Participants may be first time renters, as they graduate from school, or homeowners, transitioning to renting, individuals with poor rental or credit history, or individual who have other issues that may cause potential landlords to perceive them as high-risk tenants.

Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Rent Smart Curriculum

The curriculum provides a detailed outline of topics, activities, and teaching resources. In addition to the curriculum, a successful tenant education program requires a local partnership. Involvement of local rental housing providers, local housing authorities, and other tenant service providers in design and delivery of the local program is essential.

Rent Smart Topics:

How Much Will It Cost? And Can I Afford It?
This module provides guidance to participants on how to determine the total cost of a rental unit and compare unit costs. It also introduces participants to the process of calculating their monthly income and expenses.

Checking Out the Rental Property and the Landlord
This module introduces a tool that participants can use to determine what is most important to them in a place to live and a similar tool that can be used to compare apartments.

Application Process
This module includes a basic introduction to credit reports and how landlords use the information to screen applicants. This module also covers fair housing regulations.

Who's Responsible for Maintenance, Repairs and Care?
This module stresses the rental team concept, tenant and landlord working together, looking at who is responsible for maintenance, repairs and care.

Communications
This module focuses on the value of communication and offers suggestions of how to create strong and helpful messages.

Rental Agreements-Moving In, Moving On
This module focuses on the legal aspects of renting and common problem areas: rental agreements, security deposits, notices and evictions

More Information: http://fyi.uwex.edu/rentsmart