

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY REGISTRATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: WHO IS REQUIRED TO REGISTER?

A: Any Owner who leases or rents a Residential Rental Unit located within the City of Charleston is required to register their unit(s).

Q: WHAT IS CONSIDERED A RENTAL UNIT?

A: A Rental Unit means a room or group of rooms within any structure, building, house, mobile home, or any portion thereof, arranged or designated to be occupied for residential sleeping, living, cooking, and sanitation purposes by one or more persons, which is leased or rented from the owner of such unit.

Q: ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS FROM REGISTRATION?

A: Yes, the following are exempt from rental property registration:

- (1) Transient occupancy in a hotel, motel, inn, bed and breakfast, or other similar facility;
- (2) Group homes, community living arrangements, or foster homes;
- (3) Hospitals, nursing homes, congregate care facilities, assisted living facilities, extended medical care facilities, or other similar facilities;
- (4) Homeless shelters;
- (5) Public housing owned by a governmental agency, and any housing owned or controlled by the Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority;
- (6) On-campus residential facilities owned, operated, or managed by the University of Charleston or other accredited college or university;
- (7) Single-family dwellings that a relative of the owner occupies and no net income is earned by the owner.
- (8) Residential facilities owned, operated, or managed by or for the benefit of a hospital, or by or for the benefit of any affiliate or supporting organization of a hospital, providing housing exclusively for students, trainees, interns or residents in medical, nursing, medical technologist or allied health care fields.

Q: HOW DO I REGISTER?

A: You may register your Rental Unit(s) in one of three ways:

- (1) On-line via the City of Charleston's website at <http://www.cityofcharleston.org>
- (2) Complete an "Application for Residential Rental License(s)" and return to the Charleston City Collector's Office at 915 Quarrier St., Suite 4, Charleston, WV 25301.
- (3) In person at the Charleston City Collector's Office located at 915 Quarrier St., Suite 4, Charleston, WV 25301. A kiosk will be available and a Collector's Office employee will be available to assist you in registering your Rental Unit(s).

Q: WHAT IS THE SIMPLEST AND MOST CONVENIENT METHOD TO REGISTER?

A: On-line registration is simplest and most convenient method to register your Rental Unit(s). This method allows you to register anytime from the convenience of your home or business. To access the on-line registration system, please access the City of Charleston's website at <http://www.cityofcharleston.org>

Q: WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED?

A: Before you begin the process of registering your Rental Unit(s), please have the following information readily available:

- 1) Your Business & Occupation Tax account number;
- 2) Your Kanawha County Property Tax account number(s);
- 3) Your Fire/Refuse Fee account number(s)

Q: IS THERE A FEE TO REGISTER?

A: No, there is no fee or cost to register your Rental Unit(s).

Q: I OWN AN APARTMENT BUILDING THAT CONTAINS SIX UNITS. DO I HAVE TO REGISTER EACH UNIT?

A: Yes, if you own multiple Rental Units within the same building or structure, you are required to register each unit.

Q: I OWN A HOUSE THAT I RENT. DO I HAVE TO REGISTER?

A: Yes, if you rent a house, you are required to register.

Q: I ALREADY HAVE A BUSINESS & OCCUPATION TAX ACCOUNT WITH THE CITY OF CHARLESTON. DO I STILL HAVE TO REGISTER?

A: Yes, the Residential Rental Property Registration is a separate and distinct process.

Q: CAN MY APPLICATION FOR A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL LICENSE BE DENIED?

A: Yes, an application for a Residential Rental License may be denied if the Owner has:

- (1) Delinquent Business & Occupation Taxes related to income derived by the Owner from rental units located within the City of Charleston; or
- 2) Delinquent Fire or Refuse Fees related to the Residential Rental Unit for which the owner is applying for a Residential Rental License; or
- (3) Fines due and owing the City of Charleston arising from building, planning or zoning violations related to the Rental Unit for which the owner is applying for a License.

Additionally, an application for a Residential Rental License may be denied if the City has reason to believe following a reasonable and appropriate inquiry, that one or more of the Rental Units is unfit for human occupancy or is located in an unsafe structure.

Q: WHAT IS THE RESIDENTIAL RENTAL LICENSE TERM?

A: The effective date for a Residential Rental License shall be from July 1 through June 30 of each year. The Owner shall apply for renewal each year prior to the expiration of his current license(s).

Q: WHAT IF I PURCHASE OR SELL A RENTAL UNIT DURING THE YEAR?

A: Within 30 days of any change of ownership of a Rental Unit, the new Owner is required to apply for a Residential Rental License for that Rental Unit.

Q: CAN MY RESIDENTIAL RENTAL LICENSE BE REVOKED?

A: Yes, after adequate inquiry and verification of the reasons therefor, the City Collector, upon reasonable written notice to the licensee, may revoke a Residential Rental License previously issued for any reason which would have been grounds for denial of such license when first issued, for violation of any term or condition of such license, or for violation of any applicable provision of State law, City Code or other ordinance related to building, fire health, safety or zoning.

Q: WHAT IS THE PENALTY FOR FAILING TO REGISTER MY RENTAL UNIT(S)?

A: Any Owner who leases or rents a Rental Unit within the City without possession of a valid Residential Rental License for that Rental Unit, or who otherwise fails to comply with the requirements of Chapter 18, Article XXVIII. Residential Rental Properties, of the Code of the City of Charleston, shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$500.00 per Rental Unit. Each month the violation exists shall constitute a separate violation.

Q: WHAT IS A RESPONSIBLE LOCAL AGENT?

A: A Responsible Local Agent is the Owner, or a natural person designated by the Owner as the agent responsible for operating a Rental Unit in compliance with the ordinances adopted by the City. In many instances, the Responsible Local Agent may be the Owner if no other responsible party exists.

Q: WHAT IS A RENT COLLECTIONS AGENT?

A: A Rent Collections Agent is the individual authorized by the Owner or Responsible Local Agent to collect rent on the Rental Unit. In many instances, the Rent Collections Agent may be the Owner or Responsible Agent, if no other reasonable party exists.

Q: WHAT IS AN AUTHORIZED MAINTENANCE AGENT?

A: An Authorized Maintenance Agent is the individual authorized by the Owner or Responsible Local Agent to make or order repairs or services for the Rental Unit.

Q: WHAT IS A SERVICE OF PROCESS AGENT?

A: A Service of Process Agent is the individual authorized by the Owner or Responsible Local Agent to accept any legal notices or services of process with respect to the Rental Unit.

Q: WHAT IS MY KANAWHA COUNTY REAL ESTATE TAX ACCOUNT NUMBER?

A: Your Kanawha County Real Estate Tax Account Number is the account number in which Kanawha County Property Taxes for the Rental Unit is paid. If you are uncertain of your account number, please refer to your Kanawha County Property Tax Ticket.

Q: WHAT IS MY FIRE/REFUSE FEE ACCOUNT NUMBER?

A: Your Fire/Refuse Fee Account Number is the account number in which municipal fire and refuse service fees for the Rental Unit are paid. If you are uncertain of your account number, please refer to your monthly municipal fees bill.