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The Ultimate Guide to Stress-Free Renting



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The Ultimate Guide to Stress-Free Renting

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We're always there for you...

Renting a property should not be a nightmare. Instead, your investment should generate financial rewards and be trouble-free. To achieve this, all parties must be aware of, and understand their duties and responsibilities.

Communication is vital.

In many instances landlords make use of experienced rental agents like **Grahamstown Properties** to manage their properties. Our job as an agent of the landlord is to fulfill your responsibilities on your behalf. An experienced property management team, with the right processes in place, will help maximize the return on your investment.

“As your property management specialist, we'll help you find the right tenant to rent your property. Then we'll stick by your side, each step of the way - always there for you!”

We've 'been around the block', so you can expect:

- ★ Honesty, integrity, and fairness
- ★ Knowledge of the local market
- ★ A professional and responsive team
- ★ The market leader in property rentals
- ★ Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA)
- ★ Over 23 years' property management experience

We see to it that you have all the **information and resources** you need to ensure your renting experience is a good one.

Our services include:

- ★ Initial property assessment
- ★ Marketing property for rent
- ★ Tenant screening and selection
- ★ Move-ins/Move-outs
- ★ Rent collection and payment
- ★ Inspections and condition reports
- ★ Maintenance and repair co-ordination



We encourage you to read this handbook carefully to make sure you understand the roles, responsibilities and rights that apply to you as a landlord.

If you do that and follow our recommendations, we are confident that you will have a positive and satisfying renting experience.

The Responsibilities of Landlords and their Agents

PROPERTY ACCESS AND LEASE AGREEMENT

- If your property is access controlled, you will have to provide your tenants with a **remote control to gain access** to the complex. For first-time tenants the remotes will be provided at your cost. The remote control is returnable at the end of the lease.
- You must provide your tenant with a **copy of the lease agreement** and a copy of any **rules** relating to residing in that complex.

MOVE-IN AND MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS

- Your agent must **inspect** the property **before** the tenant moves in and make a note of all deficiencies in the property. These deficiencies need to be declared by the Landlord in a **formal declaration document** and a copy must be given to the tenant. The tenant usually has 7 to 10 days in which to report any other deficiencies and to request the landlord to have these deficiencies repaired. Photographic evidence of these deficiencies is essential.
- If the leased premises are furnished, it is your responsibility to provide the tenant with an **inventory** of the furniture in the leased premises. A photographic record of the furniture is essential as well as a signed copy of the inventory.
- If the lease agreement includes the **usage** of various **domestic appliances**, you must demonstrate that they are in **good working order** and make it clear to the tenant that they are responsible for those appliances.



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- At the **end of the lease** the property must be inspected by you and the tenant, and any **damages** caused by the tenant must be **recorded**. You must obtain quotations for repairing these damages. These quotations must be shown to the tenant. The **cost of these repairs** will **come out of the deposit** and the remainder of the deposit needs to be paid back to the tenant within 15 days of completion of the repairs.

HANDLING FUNDS FOR OWNER AND TENANT

- You must ensure that the tenants deposit is **only** used to **cover any damages** that may have occurred, and which are the tenants' fault. It may not be used to cover any outstanding rent, municipal, or service accounts unless the lease specifically allows it.
- The tenant's deposit must be invested in an **interest-bearing account** for the duration of the lease. At the end of the lease, the deposit must be **returned** to the tenant with the interest it has earned over the period of the lease.
- Whenever a payment is received from your tenant you must ensure that a **receipt** is issued. This is to ensure that there is a paper trail of every transaction with the tenant.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE CHARGES, PROPERTY RATES AND TAXES

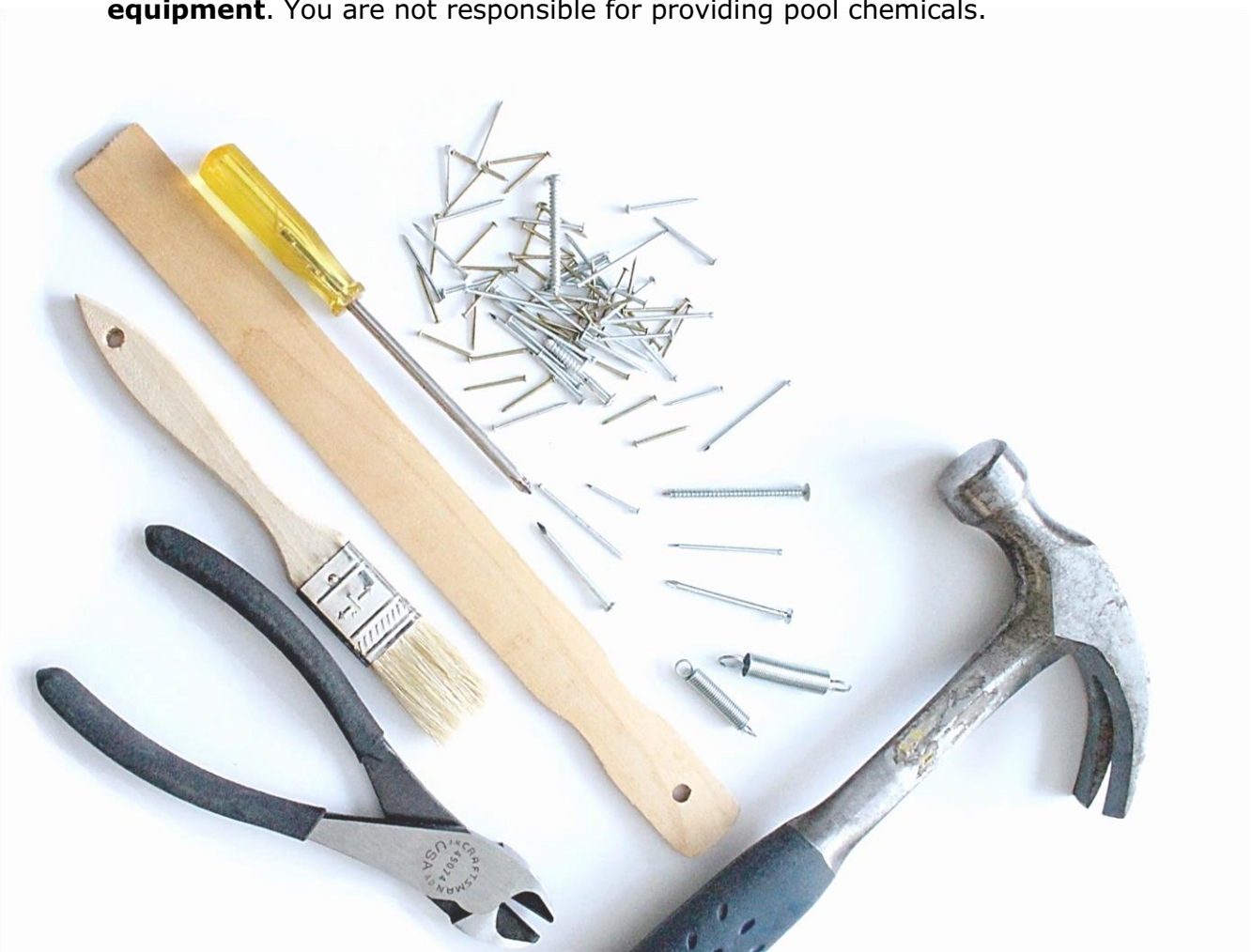
- You must ensure that all **municipal charges, levies** and **supply of services** and relevant accounts relating thereto are paid in full, prior to the tenant moving into the property. All **rates, taxes, and levies** in respect of the property must be paid timeously by you.



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Maintenance and Repairs Commitments

- Your tenant is entitled to privacy and to enjoy the use of the leased premises undisturbed. If you wish **to visit the premises**, you will need to **make an appointment** with the tenant for a date and time acceptable to the tenant.
- You are responsible for maintaining the **structure** of the property, internet access and any lifts.
- You are responsible for **repairs caused by fair wear and tear** but not because of damages caused by the tenant. This includes any damage which happens as a result of natural causes or **ordinary use over time** and includes such issues as minor marks on walls, faded carpets and peeling paint.
- You have a maintenance responsibility for **all external walls, roof, plumbing** (including any applicable flushing mechanism of all toilets on the property), **electrical fixtures** and other structural parts of the property. These must always be in good working order.
- If the leased premises include a **swimming pool**, it is your responsibility to maintain **the pump** and to provide the tenant with suitable pool **cleaning equipment**. You are not responsible for providing pool chemicals.

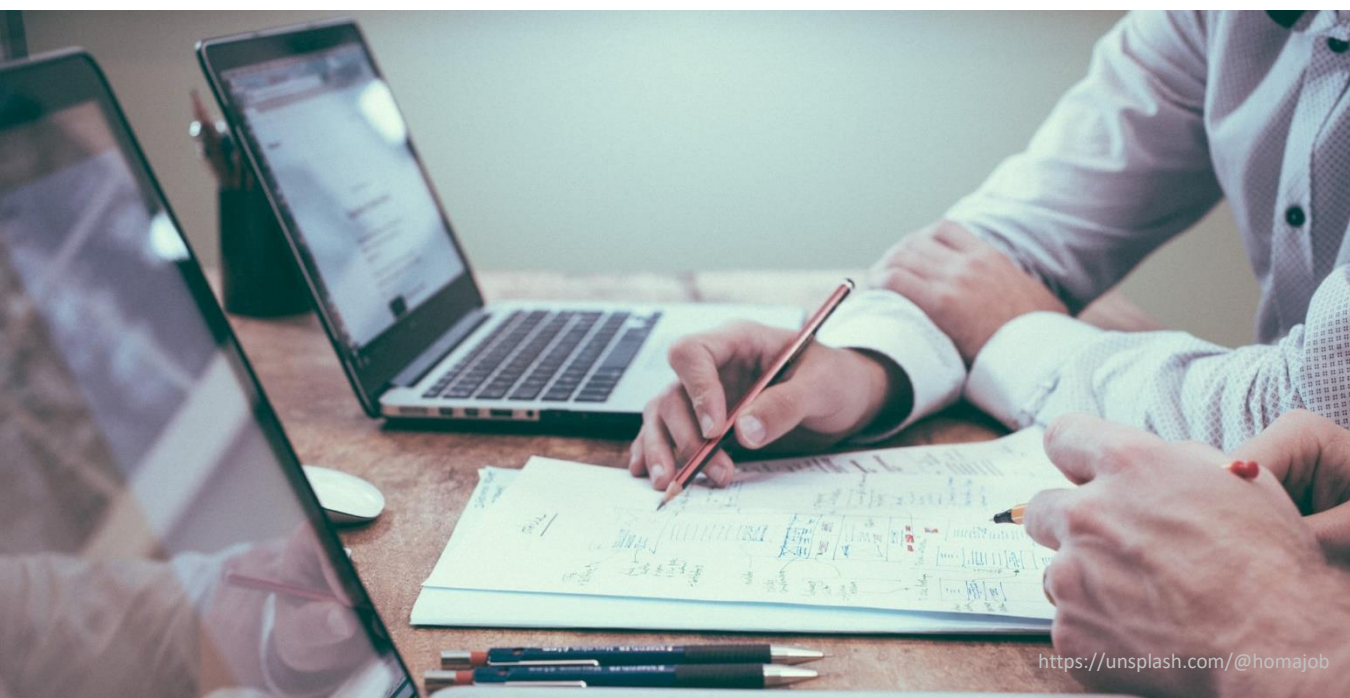


Additional Responsibilities of the Property Managers

Many of the duties of a mandated property manager have already been listed above. Those landlords who appoint **Grahamstown Properties** as their managing agent can expect **the following duties to be performed in addition** to the previously listed responsibilities:

RENT COLLECTION AND SERVICE PAYMENTS

- The ongoing **collection of payments** from the tenant, according to the agreement of lease. This would include the monthly rental and any payment for monthly services from the tenant.



- We will **make payments to third parties** on behalf of the landlord. These will include such items as bond payments or municipal rates.
- At the beginning of each month the rent will be raised, the **agency commission** will be **deducted from the gross rent along with any other payments being made** on behalf of the landlord. The net amount will be in the landlords account and will be paid **on a specified date each month**. As required by law, statements will be sent to the landlord on request.

ARREARS

- Should the tenant fall into arrears with the rent, **Grahamstown Properties will work with the landlord** and any appointed debt collectors **to recover** the outstanding debt. This may involve an acknowledgment of debt or handing over to a lawyer for collection or court appearances.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

- A **mid-lease inspection** of the property will occur, and an **inspection report** will be sent to both landlord and tenant. Any **damages noted** at this point will be brought to the attention of the tenant for repair. Progress with the repairs will be arranged and monitored by us.

EMERGENCIES AND AFTER-HOURS REQUESTS

- In the event of **after-hours emergencies**, the staff of **Grahamstown Properties** will be **available to assist** in whatever way possible at the time the incident is reported.

REPAIR WORK CO-ORDINATION

We will ensure that any repairs or maintenance required at the property will be carried out in an orderly fashion and in such a way so as not to inconvenience the tenant. We will always endeavor to obtain two quotations for any maintenance or repairs.



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Your relationship with your rental agent

Hiring a property management company is easy, but selecting a good one requires careful consideration...

After all, the best relationships – both professional and personal - are built on mutual **respect**, crystal clear **communication**, and **trust**.

The team at **Grahamstown Properties** understands the delicate balance between tenant needs and landlord ambitions. Our reputation in the local market is rooted in a culture of hard work, cooperation, and consistent service.



LET'S TALK

As the main representative for your property, and the direct point of contact for your tenants, it's important to have **complete trust in your property management team abilities**, and the **processes**. At the same time, you can help your property manager do the best job they can by **communicating** as much information as possible about your **needs and expectations** right from the start.

Once the groundwork has been laid, an experienced, pro-active property management company allows the landlord to confidently take a **step back**, knowing their investment is in good hands. A successful landlord will embrace this **freedom**, allowing the manager to do their job with little to no involvement.

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS...

Whether it's your first rental property or one of many in your portfolio, always **be willing to accept advice and guidance** on navigating the rental process. After all, hiring a specialist means partnering with someone who genuinely appreciates the fine points of

- ★ setting the best rental rate possible in your target tenant group,
- ★ tenancy agreements, collecting rent and preventative maintenance,
- ★ how to handle disputes successfully and discreetly.

Keep in mind - just as a bad property manager can spell disaster for tenants and the renting process, a difficult landlord can cause undue stress on a competent property management team, putting unnecessary strain on the relationship.

The reality is that property owners generally do not have time, knowledge, and skills to attend to the day-to-day functions of managing the rental process. A **good property management company** – that's **always there for you** - takes care of these details, with skill and efficiency - ensuring a stress-free rental experience and maximum returns on your investment.

Summary of Tenant - Landlord Expectations

A TENANT CAN EXPECT:	IN RETURN YOU CAN EXPECT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Privacy and undisturbed occupancy, keep the property and premises acceptably clean and tidy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Reasonable access to the property for inspection or repairs, with at least 24 hours' notice - unless it's an emergency.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Live in a property that is safe, and in good repair.✓ Notify the landlord/managing agent of any repairs required, as soon as possible upon discovering any faults, issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Attend to any repairs and maintenance in an orderly fashion, scheduling mid-lease inspections for maintenance. <i>* This includes external walls, roof, plumbing, electrical fixtures, and swimming pool pump - if a swimming pool is present on the property.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Receive a fixed-term lease agreement – along with rules and responsibilities, clearly outlined.✓ Receive with a written inventory, (and photographs) if leasing furnished home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Agree the terms of the tenancy and lease agreement.✓ Provide details of any responsibilities related to usage of any domestic appliances if present.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Pay rent as agreed in the lease and provide the equivalent of one month's rent as deposit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Receive rent on time and hold the deposit in an interest-bearing account.



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