



Tenant Handbook

Harborview Apartments

Mayflower/Choate Apartments

Rose Morin Apartments

Salt Sea Apartments

Tataket Apartments

Scattered Sites (Chapter 705 Units)

Revision Approved December 2022 by Board of Commissioners



*The Falmouth Housing Authority was established on August 16, 1948 under Article 98 of Chapter 121B of the General Laws governing the State of Massachusetts. We are committed to ensuring safe, decent and affordable housing by working cooperatively with community, state, federal and local officials. We always endeavor to make the best use of all available resources so our residents and participants can live in an atmosphere of dignity and respect, free from discrimination. **No smoking is allowed in, on, or around housing authority properties. Designated areas will be identified.***



Thank you for making the Falmouth Housing Authority's property your home. Throughout your tenancy, we will make every effort to make your experience with us a comfortable and enjoyable as possible.



Please look through this handbook to find essential information you may need as a Falmouth Housing Authority resident.



Business hours:
Mondays – Fridays*
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

*Wednesdays
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

www.falmouthhousing.org

115 Scranton Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02540
(508) 548-1977
Fax (508) 457-7573

This handbook is an attachment to your lease agreement.

Equal Opportunity Housing

Falmouth Housing Authority - Board Members and Staff

Board Members:

boc@falmouthhousing.org

Patricia Favulli
Michael Galasso
Kathleen Haynes
Robert Mascali
Stephen Patton

Board Meetings are generally held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month
virtually or at one of the following locations:

Harborview Apartments – 115 Scranton Avenue, Falmouth
Tatakot Apartments – 138 Teaticket Highway, Falmouth

The monthly agenda is posted at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at
Town Hall – 59 Town Hall Square, Falmouth
and on the Authority's website (www.falmouthhousing.org)

Administrative Staff

Bobbi Richards, Executive Director	Extension 211
Leslie Pearce, Assistant Director	Extension 214
Chuck Starr, Fiscal Officer	Extension 225
Receptionist	Extension 223
Patricia Herlihy, Resident Services Coordinator	Extension 212
Tenant Selector	Extension 213
Sheila Barrows-Gibbs, Programs Administrative Assistant	Extension 216
Jeanne Monaghan, Federal Housing Occupancy Manager	Extension 217
Erica James, Federal Housing Occupancy Specialist	Extension 227
Melissa Santos, State Certification Clerk	Extension 220
Michael Coffey, Maintenance Superintendent	Extension 233

Maintenance Staff: Jason Norton, Jared Silvia, Andreo Fernandez, Chris Gargan,
John Damiano, Prince Wright

How to Reach Us:	Telephone:	(508) 548-1977
	Fax:	(508) 457-7573
	E-mail:	info@falmouthhousing.org
	Website:	www.falmouthhousing.org

Emergency Telephone Numbers	Maintenance	(508) 548-1977; follow prompts
	Emergencies:	
	Fire/Police/Medical:	9-1-1
	Fire (Non-Emergency)	(508) 548-2325
	Police (Non-Emergency)	(774) 255-4527

Town By-laws, Ordinances & Agenda Notification Center from the Town of Falmouth

In addition to complying with the terms and conditions of the lease agreement (and its' attachments and addendums), all tenants are required to comply with the by-laws and ordinances of the Town of Falmouth (59 Town Hall Square, Falmouth). The main phone number is (508) 548-7611 and the main website can be found online at: www.falmouthmass.us . The Town of Falmouth offers "Notify Me," which is a cellular phone text notification service. This service can keep you informed of emergency communications, town committee meetings and housing authority monthly meetings.

Welcome

The Falmouth Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and staff would like to welcome you to your new home. This handbook is also an attachment to your Lease Agreement, so please take a moment to review this document and ask the Falmouth Housing Authority (also referred to as the Authority throughout this handbook) if you have any questions regarding the intent of each section. The Authority has numerous and significant responsibilities in the administration of its housing programs and must comply with the regulations of both the State of Massachusetts and the federal government.

Our goal is to provide each tenant with stellar customer service. The Authority's staff are not permitted to accept personal gifts, tips or money from our tenants, their families and their friends. We believe that our tenants appreciate that work that we do and no expressed form of appreciation is expected or required from our tenants.

A successful Authority of our size is only possible through a reliable partnership between the staff and residents of the developments, so we look forward to your cooperation and consideration in helping us to maintain safe and affordable communities.

This handbook is applicable to the following properties, which all feature one-bedroom units:

Harborview Apartments		Mayflower/Choate Apartments
115 Scranton Avenue		238 Lakeview Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02540-3560		Falmouth, MA 02540
Built in 1981		Built in 1957
80 units		24 units
Rose Morin Apartments		Salt Sea Apartments
58 Rose Morin Lane		211 Scranton Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02540-		Falmouth, MA 02540
Built in 1971		Built in 1960
59 units		30 units
James L. Tatakert Apartments		Scattered Sites
138 Teaticket Highway		115 Scranton Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02540-3560		Falmouth, MA 02540-3560
Built in 1984		Built dates vary
83 units		25 single-family homes

Each unit comes equipped with appliances (refrigerator and stove). While it is responsibility of the tenant to clean these items regularly, it is the responsibility of the Authority to maintain these appliances in working order.

Reasonable Accommodation

Availability of reasonable accommodations for tenants in such matters as reasonable modifications to physical spaces, tenant transfers, parking, the disposal of trash and others can be requested and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director. The Authority shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual

orientation, religion, familial status, gender identity, marital status, receipt of public assistance, military status or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities.

No Smoking

All properties within the Falmouth Housing Authority are non-smoking (see Attachment A – No Smoking Lease Addendum). This includes all forms of smoking, including but not limited to cigarettes, vaping and marijuana. **Note: It is against federal law to consume, in any form, marijuana on a federal public housing property. State housing tenants must follow state laws as they apply to the consumption of marijuana.**

Smoking is not permitted inside of your leased unit or **anywhere** on the Authority property, including but not limited to the grounds, parking lot (inside of cars parked on the lot, etc.). **This means that in order to smoke, you must leave the property.** This policy extends to your guests and visitors. If you would like information regarding cessation classes, please contact the Authority and a referral will be provided to you. ****Note: The Board of Commissioners has voted to approve smoking in designated areas at each site; tenants will be notified and the designated areas will be clearly identified.***

Move Ins and Move Outs

Lease

Your lease is a legally binding agreement, also known as a “contract,” between you (tenant) and the Falmouth Housing Authority (landlord). The lease contains important information such as the names of the occupants of the unit, the conditions under which you occupy the unit, and the conditions under which the lease may be terminated by either you or the housing authority. It identifies how much rent and separate fees, such as cable, that you are to pay each month. It also contains information regarding your rights to appeal if you are terminated for non-payment of rent or for any other reason (also known as “cause”). Your initial lease term is for one (1) year. The lease will automatically renew each year unless you are notified that your lease will not be renewed by the housing authority. If you would like to terminate your lease agreement, you must issue a 30-day notice to quit to the housing authority.

Attachments to your lease include, but are not limited, to the following:

No Smoking Lease Addendum

Air Conditioner Installation Policy

Key (Kitchen and Masters) – Harborview and Tatakot Communities Only

Non-Smoking Lease Addendum

Parking Policy

Pets Policy

Service Animal Agreement

Weapons Policy

705s-Outdoor Pool and Equipment Policy

You are provided with a copy of your lease and its attachments at the time of move-in. If, at any other time during your tenancy, you would like a copy of any form in your tenant file, please provide a written request to the housing office and copies will be made available to you.

Renters Insurance

The Authority recommends (but does not require) that each tenant obtain renter's insurance as the Authority is not liable for damages to tenant property, such as but not limited to fire, water damage or theft. Contact your insurance agent regarding renter's insurance policies that cover the personal contents in your apartment. Oftentimes renter's insurance can be combined with your auto or other types of insurance policies.

Keys

We provide you with a key to your home and a mailbox key when you sign your lease agreement. We may also provide a laundry room key, remotes and other access devices based upon the amenities and security set up at your specific property. Extra keys or replacements may be provided to you at an additional cost, based upon the circumstances.

For safety reasons, the housing authority will change the locks to units when the keys have been lost. Depending on the circumstances, you may be charged a lock change fee. You are not allowed to change your locks or install a security system without our written permission.

All keys and other access devices must be returned to the office when you vacate your apartment. Please notify the office immediately if any key or access device is lost, damaged or stolen. If you happen to be locked out of your unit, please contact the office for assistance at (508) 548-1977 and follow the prompts to contact Maintenance for after-hours help. Charges will apply for after-hours lock out services.

Community room keys (entry doors, kitchens and any locked tenant cabinets) are provided to the President of the Tenant Association for safe keeping and assignment. For properties that do not have a Tenant Association, the housing authority (Resident Service Coordinator) will issue a key upon request and assign a time frame for its reasonable return. Some properties do not lock their community room facilities and, therefore, a key is not needed.

Moving Day(s)

When moving in and out of the property, please be considerate of your neighbors and try to schedule your move between the hours of 8am and 7pm (when possible). Be conscious to not damage areas such as (but not limited to) common and unit hallways, doors, and light fixtures. For security reasons, do not (or allow your guests) prop open doors when unattended.

Temporary Vacancy

There are times when you are out of your unit but you are not planning to move. If you have an unplanned temporary vacancy, such as hospitalization, or an extended vacation and you require additional time away, permission may be granted under certain conditions. The Authority will review its administrative plan(s), your Lease Agreement and its attachments, as well as any state or federal regulations regarding extended absences in order to provide you with information regarding any restrictions on your extended time away from your apartment.

Moving Out

Please provide a thirty-day notice, in writing, when you plan to move out. When you move out of your unit, please take care to return it in a reasonable move out condition. This means you must clear the unit of all belongings and perform a basic cleaning of the unit, including appliances, fixtures, cabinets and shelves. While the housing authority will automatically conduct a move-out inspection, you have the opportunity to request a pre-inspection after you

submit your move-out notice. This allows you and the housing authority to walk through your unit and identify any areas of concern weeks before the actual move out. It also allows you time to make any required repairs before you return possession of the unit to the housing authority. The housing authority will prepare a final statement of charges beyond normal wear and tear, if any, and process your security deposit and any earned interest (if applicable). Please return your keys to the housing authority; do not leave them in the unit. You have returned possession of the unit to the Authority when you return the keys. Without receipt of the keys, the Authority may continue to charge you rent for the unit. Please provide the housing authority with a forwarding address; you may wish to also update your address with the local post office.

Personal Property and Estate Planning

Please remove all of your belongings from your unit by the move-out date. This avoids a charge for removal and/or storage. By law, the housing authority must store your items if there is no clear direction regarding their proper disposal. In the event of death, your estate will resolve issues regarding the disposition of your personal property (not the housing authority). In the event of death and/or transfer to a higher level of care, the unit should be cleared within 14 days of the date of death or transfer. The housing authority may transfer your items to a storage center and charge the estate the costs associated with such transfer.

Future Tenancy

The housing authority appreciates your decision to lease with us. Your opportunity to be housed again through the Authority is dependent upon your record as a past tenant.

Rent Payment

Rent is due on the first day of each month. Late fees will be added to any rents remaining due after the late rent date and the Authority may declare the unpaid rent delinquent and issue a written notice of termination of the lease agreement. Please refer to your lease to verify late rent dates.

You may pay your rent by certified check, personal check, automatic clearing house debit (ACH) or money order. Please write your name, address and apartment number on your rent payment.

Rent payments may be delivered by mail or in person to:

The Falmouth Housing Authority
115 Scranton Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02540

You may pay your rent in person during our regular office hours or you may choose to place your rent payment in the lock box, located outside of the office main entry door.

ACH

Tenants may also apply for automatic clearing housing debits, also known as ACH. The housing authority will conduct a bank draft of your current monthly amount due (may include rent and cable fees per the lease agreement) on the fourth business day of each month (not including weekends or banking holidays). Tenants that are approved for ACH services will not incur a late fee for successful drafts. Tenants may request to have additional ACH drafts of

other fees due such as damages and/or repayment agreements). Unsuccessful drafts may incur an insufficient funds fee and a late rent payment fee.

Recertification

The amount you pay for rent is based on your income and other information (such as assets and eligible expense deductions) that you report to the housing authority. Your rent calculation may change at the annual recertification (a scheduled time each year when you report to the housing authority) and also during interim recertifications (various times during the year when you experience an increase or decrease in your income or eligible expense deductions). The housing authority will process rent increases so that you are given at least 30 days' notice of the increase in rent. The housing authority will process rent decreases so that the decrease in rent is effective on the first (1st) day of the next month.

Annual Recertifications

Your annual recertification happens each year at a time specified by the housing authority. During this period of time you will meet with Falmouth Housing Authority staff to review your current income, assets and any eligible deductions you may have (*see Exhibit 5-3 at the end of the handbook*).

Interim Recertifications

You may request an interim recertification when you experience a decrease in income. You are also required to report increases in income which will result in an interim recertification. Depending on the situation, your rent will either go up or down. After reporting this information, you will receive a Notice of Rent Change – the notice will tell you how much your new rent is, and when the rent change is effective.

Community

Barbeques, Grills, Fire Pits

The Authority has/will establish community grill areas on each property at a distance established through the fire code. This is the only area where grills will be established – no personal grills are allowed to be used or stored in the units or on the porches/balconies/decks. The fire department will review the grill area(s) at least annually to ensure that the grill and storage of charcoal and/or propane meets regulatory requirements. Please notify the Authority when you wish to use the grills – a handout regarding grill safety is included in this handbook for your reference. Tenant storage of propane in or near the apartment building is strictly prohibited.

Community grills must be cleaned so as to not attract rodents or other animals through the accumulation of food and grease.

The use of fire pits is strictly prohibited.

Bicycles

The Authority has established a bike rack at the properties. Annually, at the time of recertification, you will be asked to register your current bicycle with the Resident Services Coordinator. In order to store your bike on the provided bike racks, the bike must be registered with the Authority. Please provide a description of the bicycle; a photograph may be taken by Authority. Please provide your own locking mechanism for the storage of the bike. Bikes that are inoperable (i.e. broken chains, flat tires, etc.) may not be stored on the bike rack.

Communications

The Authority issues a newsletter and posts a copy at each public housing property. Please review this newsletter as it is a primary form of communication designed to keep you abreast of the activities of the Authority as well as inform you regarding upcoming events in the Town of Falmouth, Cape Wide and even throughout the Authority's portfolio. You are welcome to stop by the Authority to ask questions. We welcome walk-ins, however based on the flow of the day, we prefer appointments to be made whenever possible. There are also two (2) bulletin boards posted at each community. The Authority encourages the tenants to use the Community Bulletin Board to share events and information of interest to each property. Please remember to remove the flyer after the event has passed. The Authority uses the additional bulletin board(s) to community planned activities that require notification to the development. This board should not contain information that was not posted by the Authority.

Community Room

The Community Rooms at each property are open for use by all tenants, housing authority staff and invited guests of the housing authority. Pets are not allowed in the Community Room (with the exception of service animals). Alcoholic beverages are prohibited from being consumed in the community rooms (and all common areas). The rooms may be reserved for special events with permission from the Executive Director. If you would like to reserve the Community Room, please obtain, complete and submit a room reservation form to the Authority. Keys will either be assigned through the property's Tenant Association or through the Authority – please refer to **Keys (page 5)**. The rooms must be returned in the same condition as it was when you rented it. You must also remove all trash generated during your event and dispose of it in the trash dumpster.

Decorating your Apartment

Your apartment is your home and generally, you may decorate the interior as you wish. The following restrictions, however, apply:

1. Obtain permission from the Authority before painting your unit or putting up wall paper/borders (only removable boarders will be approved).
2. You may not permanent affix anything to the walls, ceiling, floors, cabinets, shelves, etc without written permission. This does not include pictures – you may hang pictures.
3. Do not remove any shelving or other fixtures that were in the apartment at the time you took possession of the unit; ask the Authority if you need to have an item removed.
4. Do not change or install additional locks
5. For balcony units, do not hang items over railings to prevent safety issues.

Flyer Distribution/Solicitation

Except in areas designated as community boards, you are not allowed to post or distribute flyers, notices or any type of advertising on/under doors, in common areas, on cars or anywhere else in the building or throughout the community. Any such display must comply with local laws. Door-to-door solicitation is strictly prohibited.

Laundry Facilities

The Authority provides a laundry room at each housing community for tenant use and convenience. The laundry room is not to be used to wash the items of visitors and other guests. The laundry room is open 24 hours per day. The laundry rooms are designed for use by the

current occupants of the communities where the laundry room is located; outside laundry from tenants from other buildings and/or family and friends are not welcome to use the laundry rooms. These machines are to be used on a first-come, first-served basis. The machines are coin-operated and require U.S. quarters for its operation – please do not insert other types of currency as it affects the machines ability to operate effectively.

In buildings where there is more than one washer and more than one dryer, please use only one washer and dryer at a time. This courtesy allows other tenants the opportunity to wash and dry their laundry. Please remember to:

1. Clean out the washing machine and dryer lint traps after use
2. Do not wash oversized items such as comforters, rugs or animal bedding
3. Follow posted instructions regarding the amount of laundry solutions to use, such as bleach, detergent and fabric softeners
4. It is recommended that you stay with your clothing; theft can and has occurred at all sites.

The Authority has/will post rules for the laundry rooms. Tenants may not post rules for the laundry room. Please ensure that your guests and caretakers review and follow the rules for each laundry room.

Peace and Quiet

Your housing community reflects its occupants – you and your neighbors have the right to privacy and enjoyment free from annoyances. If you are able to communicate with your neighbor regarding concerns, please do so. If you would like the assistance of the Authority, please contact us at (508) 548-1977 so that we may establish mediation. You may also elect to file a formal written complaint, which must detail the time/date and your concerns. Reasonable quiet hours are between **9 p.m. and 9 a.m.** During this time please refrain from using any loud appliances (i.e. blenders, vacuums) and reduce the volume on televisions, radios, computers, other devices, and your own voices. If you have a complaint that requires immediate resolution, please contact the Falmouth Police Department at (774) 255-4527 and then notify the Authority as soon as you are able to do so.

Gardening

The Authority takes pride in their grounds and ask for your assistance in maintaining the appearance and protection of them. The Authority will not approve plantings that are designed cover the ground or touch the buildings, such as climbing ivy. Additionally:

1. Do not water the shrubbery; this adds to ground water levels and washes away top soil.
2. Do not place items on the lawn, such as stakes, fences, barriers, rocks, etc. that may interfere with lawn moving;
3. Obtain permission from the Executive Director for any plantings that you wish to perform.
4. Do not plant food items as these attract rodents.
5. Keep any planted flowers free from weeds
6. Dispose of weeding in the trash cans so that they do not reseed.
7. Scattered sites – container gardening is permitted; a garden plan is requested as rules 1-6 still apply.

For properties that have or wish to start a community garden, please contact the Authority as some of the rules above may not apply.

Guests

Your lease agreement describes the occupants for your unit. You cannot allow anyone else to occupy your unit and you must report over-night guests to the Authority in writing. You are responsible for the actions of your guests at all times. Please provide their name, length of stay and vehicle registration information (if applicable). Guests are not authorized to occupy your apartment in your absence. Guests length of stay is restricted to 14 days per calendar year, per guest.

Housekeeping and Care of the Premises

It is your responsibility to maintain your unit in a clean, safe and sanitary condition. Rubbish, garbage and other waste from the apartment unit, and maintain or utilize belongings must be disposed of in the designated trash areas for each building. Housekeeping practices which attract rodents, vermin, insects, cause mold growth or emit offensive odors are prohibited. Failure to maintain 42" minimum pathways throughout the unit, or blocking egress to windows, doors, or access to kitchen or bath facilities is a health and safety violation and is not permitted. Boxed or stacked items may not be stacked over 4 feet in height. All doors and closet doors within the apartment must open fully without blockage. Utilizing bathroom, tub/shower or kitchen as storage is prohibited.

You will properly and safely operate and utilize all appliances, electrical devices and plumbing fixtures. You agree to not to damage or remove any component, including window treatments, from the unit or add any device/appliance such as an additional refrigerator, stove, freezer, portable washing machine/dryer, water filter or bidet. Burning candles or incense is prohibited. Storing gasoline, chemicals, explosives or combustible materials in the apartment, storage areas, or on the patio/balcony is prohibited.

You agree to keep the apartment entry door shut at all times, as in accordance with the local fire code. You shall not remove, cover, or disconnect any fire, smoke or carbon monoxide detectors, or remove batteries from such devices, or remove, tamper with, cover or disable any fire sprinklers or the ventilation/exhaust/fan system. You must immediately if any devices fail to work or emit danger signals.

Theft, damage, or destruction of equipment, furnishings, appliances, walls, doors, is not permitted under any circumstances. You agree to pay for any damage caused to the apartment by the you, your family, guests or agents. Reasonable wear and tear of the apartment will not incur charges.

Animals

The Authority welcomes registered pets, emotional support and service animals. In addition to completing the applicable policy, please remember to allow your pets to relieve themselves in the designated area(s) for the property. Signage is/will be installed to designate pet areas at each property. Please clean the area after your animal relieves itself. In consideration of the grounds and your neighbors, please treat the area where your animal relieved itself with water. This will help to reduce the deterioration of the ground covering(s).

Speed Limit

The Authority has established a speed rate of **10 mph** for all traffic traveling on Authority property. Signage has been posted at each property to remind travelers of the limit.

No Parking Zones

The Authority has established emergency loading/unloading zones for its properties. These areas are restricted to emergency access vehicles only. Chapter 89 Section 7a of the Mass General Law allows the Authority to request that the police and/or fire department personnel arrange to tow a vehicle found to be in violation of this Section or is illegally parked or standing in a fire lane, whether or not a fire is in progress. Please ensure that your guests are aware that by parking in this zone, you (as the tenant) are in violation of your lease agreement.

Parking

The Authority has not established assigned parking for any of its properties, with the exception of handicapped spaces assigned through the reasonable accommodation process. Vehicles with handicapped plates or a windshield placard may park in unassigned handicap spaces. Vehicles of tenants and their guests must park in areas designated for parking, such as marked parking spaces and visitor lots (if designated). Vehicles may not be parked in areas not designated, such as grass and unmarked/created spaces.

All vehicles must be legally registered and insured. No unregistered vehicles may be parked on Authority properties. The storage of unregistered or disabled cars are not permitted and such vehicles will be towed, at the discretion of the housing authority, at the owner's expense. No one other than the tenant(s) may store vehicles on the Authority properties. **The Authority is not responsible for vandalism, theft or damage of any vehicle parked on its properties.**

Tenants must maintain their vehicles in good working condition. No vehicle maintenance is allowed to be performed on Authority property. No Authority utilizes may be used to wash, electric charge or vacuum any vehicle (with the exception of a motorized wheel chair as a reasonable accommodation).

Other Storage

The parking lot and grounds have restricted uses. No boats, trailers, campers, tents, off road motor bikes or scooters may be stored on the Authority's property. Storage of personal items in the common areas is prohibited.

Maintenance Services

We are here to help! The Falmouth Housing Authority take pride in providing you with professional and efficient maintenance services. Our maintenance team are professionally trained and we have both a certified Electrician and Plumber on staff.

Maintenance requests, also known as **work orders**, may be made in person or over the phone by calling the housing authority at (508) 548-1977. When placing a work order request, please be specific about the problem. All work orders are logged and prioritized. Your request should include your name, phone number, address, and indicate whether or not FHA has your permission to enter your unit to resolve the work order request if you are not home. You may choose to designate someone else to be in your unit during the repair. All work orders must be signed by the head of household. Your signature indicates that you are aware that FHA responded to your request; it does not indicate that further repairs may be needed or scheduled. If this is the case, an additional work order will be created. If you are not home during the

repair, please schedule time to come to the Administrative Office and sign off on your work order within three (3) business days.

If you have an emergency outside of business hours, **please call our 24-hour Answering Service at (508) 548-1977** and press “2” for maintenance emergencies. The operator will communicate your emergency to FHA’s on-call maintenance staff. A maintenance emergency may be, but is not limited to:

1. No heat (gas heat) or the smell of gas
2. Water that you cannot shut off, is coming out of the walls, or you have no water
3. No electricity
4. Any buzzing or beeping coming from carbon monoxide or smoke detectors/alarms
5. Sewer backups/clogs of any kind

Air Conditioners

The Authority does not provide air conditioners. If you choose to purchase one, the Authority will install and remove it. A work order is required for this service. Air conditioners are installed once per year and removed once per year. There is no charge for this service.

Electric Panels, Emergency Alarms and Personal Safety Plans

Do not paint or otherwise cover the electrical panel box that is located inside of your unit. This is an inspection violation. It must be easily visible in the event of an emergency. For units that have pull cords - do not remove, tape up or tie the pull cords that are located in your bedroom and bathroom. These cords should not be obstructed by furniture either. When pulled, these cords set off an alarm, unlock your front door, and increase the chance(s) that someone will respond to you in an emergency. **Depending on your location, this alarm alerts the Authority or sounds the building so that your neighbors are aware of your distress. It does not alert emergency services personnel.**

The Authority recommends that all tenants consider obtaining a second form of emergency alarm, such as a personnel alarm system that can be worn on the body (i.e. necklace, watch) and notifies emergency personnel directly in the event of an emergency.

It is important, however, that each tenant meet with someone of your choice to develop a personal safety plan that you can activate in the event of an emergency. This plan should include, but may not be limited to:

1. **File of Life**
2. **Emergency Contacts – who to contact and for what**
3. **In-home emergency response systems, and**
4. **What to do in the case of a fire, flood, storm, power outage, or natural disaster**

Evacuate

The Authority will do its best to evacuate buildings under the direction of the local authorities. Annually, the Authority recommends that all tenants participate in an emergency drill. For scattered sites, the Authority recommends the household to stage a drill to ensure that all household members can escape the unit in the event of an emergency.

Elevators

The Harborview and Tatakot buildings have elevators. In the event of a power outage, fire or other emergency, do not use the elevator. If you must evacuate the building because of an emergency, refer to the evacuation plan posted in the common areas and use the appropriate emergency exits. Please refrain from holding open elevator doors for prolonged periods as this may damage the elevator.

Fire Alarm and Fire Prevention

Please note the location of fire extinguishers around your community. Every apartment and common hallway are equipped with a smoke detector. Make sure to turn on the fan above your stove when cooking. It is a good idea to purchase and use a timer when cooking should you decide to walk away from the stove. Only the hallway detectors are connected to the fire department, so if there is a fire in your unit get out immediately and call the fire department.

Disconnecting fire protection devices is a criminal offense under MGL Chapter 148, § 27A. Neither you or anyone else (with the exception of Authority Maintenance and its contractors) may remove, tamper with or disable any smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors in your unit. The Fire Department must respond each time a smoke detector is activated. When the fire alarm goes off in your building, it means that something is wrong. Do not assume that it is “burnt toast.” Evacuate the building and ask questions later.

Do not hang any items from pipes or sprinkler heads located in your unit or the common areas. This can damage the fire sprinkler system and cause flooding.

The Authority urges you to make a regular inspection of your unit for potential fire hazards such as frayed wires and cords, overloading of outlets. Minimize the use of extension cords; use power surge cords instead. Switch from candles that burn to candles that mimic flickering.

Generators

The Kohler Electric Plant system (Harborview Apartments) and the Generac system (Tatakot Apartments) are designed to run using natural gas power. The generators provide limited power to select areas within the apartment community, such as certain areas of the common floor. While designed to run continuously, the generators require a fluid check by the Maintenance Department every 8-12 hours. The systems will stop running when they sense that another source of power has come online. The systems are reviewed annually and after emergency use by our third-party vendors.

Inspections

The Authority is required to ensure that all leased units are maintained in decent, sanitary and safe conditions. The Authority performs, at minimum, an annual inspection of your unit. During this inspection the following areas are reviewed for compliance with state, federal, the Board of Health and/or lease requirements:

1. Appliances (provided with the unit), smoke detectors, fans, emergency pull cords, electrical and plumbing are operational
2. Lighting bulbs are functional
3. Egresses are clear (meaning the areas where you can enter and exit from your unit)
4. Housekeeping and sanitation

Tenants are notified in advance for any planned inspections.

Snow Removal

The Authority is responsible for snow removal after 3” of snow has fallen. This includes the walkways, exterior egresses, walkways, drive way and parking lots on the Harborview, Mayflower/Choate, Rose Morin, Salt Sea and Tatakot properties. Salt and/or sand will be applied to the parking lot and walkways after snow has been periodically removed. Snow removal and salt/sanding will be performed by Authority staff or its contractors as soon as they are safely able to get to the properties. Tenants are responsible for clearing snow from/on/immediately surrounding their vehicles. The Authority assumes no responsibility when tenants attempt to walk or drive during inclement weather. We encourage tenants to use reasonable judgement and exercise safety when traveling during inclement weather. The Authority encourages tenants to not go out during or after a storm unless it is absolutely necessary.

Energy Conservation Tips

The Authority pays the utilities for the 222 units in its portfolio plus the community rooms, laundry rooms, community restrooms, outside lighting and administrative office. The more money the Authority spends on utilities, the less it is able to budget on other items for the properties. The Authority encourages each tenant to be proactive in energy conservation. For more energy-saving solutions, visit www.energy.gov/energysaver . The recommendations below are helpful to review when thinking about energy conservation:

Clogs and Leaks

Please do not attempt to clear any drain in your apartment by using acids like Drano, etc. These products do work well, but they can damage pipes and create a hazardous condition for the plumber who comes in to clear the clog later. **Please call in a work order. Please do not put grease, coffee grounds, or garbage into your sinks or toilets.** Do not dispose of any sanitary products, including items labeled as “flushable” in the toilet as many of these marketed items clog the drains. This includes tissues, paper towels, diapers and/or other personal hygiene products.

Please report any other drips or water leaks you notice in your apartment or on the property to the housing authority. This also includes water spots that may appear on your ceilings.

Drafts

If you notice any drafts from your windows or doors, request a work order for weather-stripping or caulking, as needed.

Faucets and sinks

Avoid running water excessively for washing dishes, taking long showers, etc. Let dishes collect so a full load can be done. Request a work order if your faucet leaks so we can replace any necessary parts.

Laundry

Wash only full loads of clothing in order to conserve water and be sure to select the appropriate water setting for your load. Whenever possible, use cold water to cut the cost incurred by using hot water. Before starting the dryer, clean the lint filter for better air circulation.

Lights

Turn off lights that you are not using. Replace your light bulbs with energy-saving fluorescent lighting. Request permission to install motion sensors throughout your unit in order to use lights only when necessary.

Thermostat

Adjust the thermostat in apartment to reduce usage late at night or while you are away from your apartment. The recommended settings while you are at home are 68°F - 70°F in the summer and 78°F in the winter. Do not turn off the thermostat or leave your windows open during an extended vacation and never set the thermostat below 60°F, your pipes may freeze and burst! You will be held responsible for any damages that occur

Window Shades

Take advantage of solar energy. Open blinds during the day to let the sunshine into your apartment to warm your home. During colder weather and at night, close the blinds to keep the heat inside the apartment. If you are trying to keep your apartment cool, keep blinds and curtains closed to avoid direct sunlight.

Acknowledgment

This is to certify that I have been given an opportunity to review the Resident handbook and to ask questions. I understand that the handbook is an attachment to my lease agreement with the Falmouth Housing Authority. My signature below indicates that I agree to abide by the terms and conditions contained in this handbook.

Tenant Name

Tenant Signature and Date

Housing Authority Staff Name

Housing Authority Staff Signature and Date