

Introduction

Municipal housing where you will soon move into, was built with government subsidy based on the Act on Public Housing for the purpose of contributing to stability of citizens' lives and to improvement of social welfare. These housings were built to provide affordable housings for low-income households.

Therefore, residing in a municipal housing comes with various rules and obligations that must be observed. However, we hope that the residents understand the purpose of municipal housings and cooperate with each other so that all residents can have a healthy, happy, and enjoyable living.

This guide explains about living in municipal housings. Please read carefully and keep it at hand.

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1 . For a happy lifestyle

All Tsukuba City municipal housings are apartment complex where there are other people living next to each other. Therefore, please try helping, supporting, and cooperating with each other so that everyone in the apartment complex can live comfortably and happily in a healthy and cultural environment.

Because fees for picking up garbage and cleaning in and around the housing complex, maintaining plants and lawn, and fixing blocked drains are not included in the rent, residents are expected to cooperate and work on these things together. Persons who do not respect voluntary coordinated efforts will not be considered as qualified to live in an apartment complex.

Please keep common areas of the apartment complex, such as the entrance, staircases, and surrounding environments clean so that other people will not feel inconvenient or uncomfortable.

2. When moving in

(1) **Notification of residence permission (入居決定通知書)**

Notification of residence permission will be issued to persons who are permitted to live in a municipal housing.

Before moving in, please get in touch with the head of the Residents Association or the apartment caretaker.

(2) **Designated date for moving in**

“Designated date for moving in” is a day when a tenant is allowed to move in. The tenant has to move in within 10 days from the date.

(3) **Keys**

Please do not lose keys, because they are important in protecting the property and safety of residents. In the case of losing a key to the front door, both the lock and a set of keys will need to be replaced at the resident’s cost.

(4) **Nameplate**

There is a nameplate next to the front door. All residents should write their name in the nameplate. If the apartment has a mailbox area, please put residents’ names on the mail box, too.

(5) **Head of Residents Association and apartment caretaker**

Each municipal housing has a Residents Association (自治会). The head of Residents Association and an apartment caretaker have certain roles such as distributing letters and documents to members of the Residents Association. They are not landlords of private apartments or condominiums, so they will not directly deal with residents’ requests or complaints, nor do they repair any parts of the housing. Please do not ask for help in dealing with personal matters or troubles among residents.

(6) **Parking**

Each residential unit of municipal housings with parking spaces (refer to appendix 2, “List of Municipal Housings”) comes with a parking space for one car. Please ask the Residents Association which space can be used for parking. To get approval for using the parking space, please submit “Application for Approval to Use Parking Space (駐車場使用承認申請書)”.

For persons who have 2 cars or more or persons who live in a housing without any parking space, please make sure to secure a parking space.

Please never park a car on the street or passage of the apartment complex, as it may inconvenience other residents.

3 . Vacating property due to illegal acts

Residents must vacate the rented properties in any of the following cases:

- (1) Having fraudulently moved into a municipal housing and later being found out.
- (2) Not paying rent and other fees for 3 months or more.
- (3) Having intentionally damaged the rented property or common facility.
- (4) Not using the rented property for 15 days or more without reasonable grounds.
- (5) Having converted or redecorated the rented property, or built addition to the property without approval.
- (6) Having caused serious inconvenience to other residents.
- (7) Being found out to be a member of an anti-social organization.
- (8) Having violated the Municipal Housing Ordinance and/or enforcement regulations for the Ordinance.

Residents who received requests to vacate the property for the above-mentioned reasons, must vacate the property immediately. Until vacating the property, the resident must pay an amount equivalent to twice the maximum rent of the municipal housing based on the Act on Public Housing and the Municipal Housing Ordinance.

Also, residents who received requests to vacate the property or persons who were denied residence permit may not demand compensation for loss and damage caused as a result against the Mayor.

4. Housing rent

- (1) Housing rent will be calculated from the designated date for moving in.
- (2) In principle, rent must be paid by direct debit from the designated account of a bank in Tsukuba City. The payment date is the last day of a month (if it falls on Saturdays, Sundays, or public holidays, then the following business day). It is also possible to pay rent at financial institutions in Tsukuba City, using payment slips which can be issued upon request and will be issued 4 times a year (April-June, July-September, October-December, and January-March).

To pay rent by payment slips, please contact Housing Policy Division.

- (3) If payment is delayed, a collection letter will be issued and the issuance fee as well as delinquency charge will be added to the rent.
- (4) Residents will have to vacate the property if they do not pay rent for 3 months or more.
- (5) The rent is determined annually according to the income of all household members, as well as the location, size, age, etc. of a building.

Therefore, the price of rent for the same apartment complex, building, or the layout can vary depending on the total income of household members. The price of rent may also be subject to change annually, reflecting an increase or decrease in the income and/or the number of household members.

For this reason, residents are required to report the total income of their household every year.

Tsukuba City will send an income declaration form via post, which residents must fill out and submit by the designated date along with documents that can prove the amount of income (such as tax certificates). Regardless of having income or not, residents must report the income of all household members.

Based on the declaration, the City will carry out examination as necessary and will inform the amount of rent for the following year in a “Notice of Income Confirmation and Rent Determination (収入認定兼家賃決定通知書)”.

Please note that the maximum rent of the public housing will be charged without the income declaration.

5. Persons with excess income and high-income

(1) Persons with excess income

Municipal housings were built in order to offer an affordable housing for people with low-income who have difficulties in finding a place to live.

Therefore, residents who have lived in a municipal housing over 3 years and whose income, according to their annual income declaration, exceeds a certain amount, will be considered as persons with excess income.

(2) Residents with excess income are obliged to make effort to vacate the property.

Residents whose income exceeds the income criteria for a municipal housing are no longer considered as household with low-income. If these residents continue to live in municipal housings, persons with low-income will not be able to move in.

In order to avoid such situations, residents with excess income are obliged to make every reasonable effort to vacate the property.

(3) Rent for persons with excess income

For residents recognized with excess income, an extra charge will be added to their rent according to the excess amount and the number of years of having been determined to have excess income. After a certain period of time, their rent will be raised to the maximum rent of the housing where they reside.

(4) Persons with high-income

Residents who live in the property for consecutive 5 years or more and whose income exceeds certain criteria for the recent 2 years, will be recognized as high-income earner.

(5) Requesting high-income earners to vacate the property

Tsukuba City has the right to request municipal housing residents with high-income to vacate the property within a certain period of time, in which they must promptly move out.

If they refuse the request or fail to move out within the designated period, they will face residential eviction by court.

However, if they cannot move out because of special circumstances, such as being ill, etc., this period can be extended, so please consult Housing Policy Division.

(6) Rent for high-income earner

Housing rent for high-income earners is the highest rent of the housing where they reside.

6 . Security deposit

(1) The security deposit will be refunded after the residents move out of the property and the following inspection is carried out.

Unpaid rent or compensation for damages, if any, will be deducted from the security deposit, and then the rest will be refunded.

(2) The security deposit does not bear any interest.

(3) Please keep the receipt of the security deposit safely until moving out.

7 . Residents' duty to keep property in good condition

Please take care of the property and common facilities in the municipal housing.

(1) If residents intentionally or carelessly inflict damage to their rented property or common facility, etc., they must restore damage or pay compensation for the damage.

(2) If any damage is caused due to a natural disaster or other adverse event, please notify the Housing Policy Division of the damage as soon as possible.

8 . Residents' expenses

For repair expenses which Tsukuba City is not responsible for, the residents are expected to cover and repair. Please maintain and take good care of the property so that all residents can live comfortably.

For details, please refer to the separate sheet, "Reference Chart of Repair Expenses Residents Will Have to Pay".

9 . Prohibited items/behavior

- (1) Do not keep any pets (including dogs, cats, birds, etc.), as it may inconvenience other residents.**
- (2) Do not bring in objects that are unhygienic or unsanitary.**
- (3) Please adjust the volume of TV, stereo, etc., out of consideration for other residents. Please also keep the volume down when playing musical instruments.**
- (4) Persons with residence permit of a municipal housing cannot sub-let the property or transfer the residence permit to a third party, or illegally house somebody. Transferring the residence permit to a third party when moving out is not allowed, either.**
- (5) Never park cars other than the designated parking space (including the streets in front of the housing and passages in the housing complex), because it can lead to an accident or hinder vehicles in the event of an emergency.**

1 0 . Expenses other than rent (common expenses, etc.)

In addition to the monthly rent, residents will have to pay the following expenses, which vary slightly depending on the apartments. Residents will also have to pay certain repair expenses. Please refer to “Reference Chart of Repair Expenses Residents Will Have to Pay”.

- (1) Electricity bill for water supply facilities
- (2) Electricity bill for outdoor lighting and staircases lighting
- (3) Fees for changing outdoor lighting, staircase lights, light bulbs, and fluorescent bulbs.
- (4) Maintenance expenses for septic tanks which treat sewage and dirty water.
- (5) Residents Association fees
- (6) Other fees

11. Notifications, applications, and approvals

In the following cases, residents are required to submit notifications, etc. (Each form is available at the Housing Policy Division.)

(1) When there is a change in the household

If there is an increase or decrease in the number of family members living together due to moving out, death, birth, etc. after moving in, please submit “Notification of Changes in Household (世帯員変更届)”.

(2) When there is an increase in the number of residents

It is not allowed to house somebody in a municipal housing other than family members with residence permit. However, this is allowed if there is a compelling reason and if the person is given a residence permit.

To get approval to house somebody other than family members, please submit “Application for Cohabitation Approval in a Municipal Housing (市営住宅同居承認申請書)”.

(3) When there is a change in tenant’s name

If a registered tenant dies or he/she has gone away, leaving his/her family behind, the spouse, elderly persons and/or disabled persons living with him/her in need of housing stability, will be given approval to continuously live in the property, if necessary.

To get the approval, please submit “Application for Approval of Succeeding the Residence Permission (市営住宅入居承継承認申請書)” with a written pledge (誓約書) attached (co-signer required).

(4) When redecorating or installing devices to the property (refer to page 16)

Residents are not allowed to redecorate or install devices (e.g. installing air conditioners, handrails, etc.) in municipal housings without a permit. However, with a permit from the Mayor, and provided that it is easy to remove and restore to its original condition, it will be approved, so please submit “Application for Approval of Redecorating Municipal Housing (市営住宅模様替等許可申請書)”

Residents must remove the devices that they installed at their own expense and restore to its original condition, when it is necessary for maintaining the housing or when they are moving out.

The same permit will be required to switch the phone line to broadband. When moving out of the property, residents must restore to its original condition at their own expense.

(5) When using the property for purposes other than dwelling

It is not allowed to use the property in a municipal housing for purposes other than dwelling, but it is possible to use some parts of the property for practicing acupuncture, massage, etc. with approval. To get approval, please submit “Application for Using the Property for Purposes Other Than Dwelling (市営住宅用途併用承認申請書)”.

(6) When the co-signer has changed

If the co-signer loses capability to guarantee, because of death, unemployment, or whereabouts unknown, etc., please notify by submitting “Notification of Changing Co-signer, etc. (連帯保証人等変更届)”.

(7) When going away temporarily

When all residents of a property are going away for consecutive 15 days or more, please submit “Absence Notification (市営住宅不使用届)”.

(8) When relocating to another property

Normally, it is not permitted to relocate to another public housing (prefectural housing, municipal housing, etc.).

However, when there is an increase or decrease in the number of residents, when it becomes difficult to commute due to job transfer, or when the resident is elderly, ill, disabled, etc., relocation to another public housing will be approved, provided that all requirements are met which are described in the Municipal Housing Ordinance and its enforcement regulations, as well as the Outline for Relocating to Another Municipal Housing. To get approval, please submit “Application for Relocating to Another Housing (住宅変更申請書)”.

Please note that persons with excess income (including high-income earner) are not permitted to relocate.

Any other notifications, applications, approvals shall be subject to Tsukuba City Ordinance.

1 2 . Matters that require attention

(1) Fire prevention

Fire presents one of the most significant dangers. To prevent fire, please take extra care and try to have a small household fire extinguisher in place in case of emergency.

Please also note that the following situations are particularly prone to fire.

- A) When sleeping, when intoxicated, or smoking just before going out
- B) When filling up a kerosene stove
- C) Gas leak
- D) When cooking deep-fried-food such as Tempura
- E) Failing to turn off a *kotatsu* (small table with an electric heater underneath and covered by a quilt), iron, and/or hair drier.
- F) Heating an empty bathtub
- G) Children playing with fire
- H) Overloading electrical sockets

(2) Gas

To prevent accidents related to gas, please take extra care on a daily basis and observe the following precautions.

- A) It takes 4 to 5 times as much air for gas to completely burn. Please provide sufficient ventilation in rooms and let fresh air in.
- B) Always turn off the burner, as well as closing the gas tap when not in use (such as when going to bed and going out in particular).
- C) Ask experts to install and adjust gas apparatuses to ensure safety.
- D) If there is a smell or sound of gas leak, tell your neighbors, contact the Gas Company or supplier and also, Housing Policy Division.
- E) If an accident does occur, please contact the Gas Company or supplier and also, Housing Policy Division as soon as possible.

(3) Entrance

- A) A front door is made out of steel and plays an important role in preventing fire. It is large and heavy and its hinge will become loose if used roughly. So please turn the handle gently when opening and closing the door. (In case of damage, residents must pay for the repair.)
- B) Do not fling a front door open which opens outward, because there may be a person in front. Please also tell children to be careful.
- C) There is a peep hole on the door for crime prevention. Always look through this before opening the door.
- D) Please do not pour water into the entrance area. Because it is not waterproof, the water will leak to the lower floor and cause trouble for the residents. Please wipe the floor with a rag after wringing out the water.

(4) Living Room

- A) Unlike wood-framed apartments, apartments made of concrete are more solid and do not have good natural ventilation. Please leave ventilation windows open as much as possible and in particular, make sure to ventilate when turning on a heater in winter. Please also wipe off water drops on windows frequently. Make sure to leave a little space behind furniture, too.
- B) It would feel humid in a newly-built apartment, because it takes several years for water included in concrete to dry out. Please open windows, sliding doors, etc. from time to time to improve ventilation.

(5) Kitchen

- A) The stainless steel sink will become rusty without maintenance. Please wash the sink with washing liquid.
- B) Some residents seem to take a drain strainer out from the sink so that it will drain well, but it can clog the drain, so please leave the drain strainer in the sink and get rid of scraps caught in the strainer every so often. Please be careful of tea leaves, rice grains, etc., because they can go through the strainer.
- C) Each floor of an apartment complex uses the same drainpipe. If someone blocks the pipe with food waste and scraps, the rest of the residents on the floor cannot use it, so please take extra care.

(6) Bathroom

- A) The bathroom floor is covered with a waterproof layer, which could be damaged by slamming down something heavy. Once this layer is damaged, the water can leak to the lower floor and cause inconvenience for the residents.
- B) Please get rid of dirt such as hairs accumulated in the trap from time to time so that the drain will not get clogged.
- C) Please open the ventilation opening on the ceiling of the bathroom by pulling its handle. Some residents seem to cover it with a board or other things, but never cover the opening, as this is very dangerous.

NOTE: If joints of the bathroom wall and floor deteriorate, it can cause water to leak. Please check them when replacing a bathtub, etc. and repair them if necessary.

(7) Flush-toilet

- A) Toilet drainage pipes in an apartment are connected with one pipe. If one of the pipes gets clogged, it can affect all the other pipes, so please take extra care.
- B) A flush valve is a device that runs a certain amount of water. When holding down a flush lever for about 2 seconds, it will flush about 8 to 10 seconds.
- C) Never throw away dirty water in the toilet such as water that has been used to wipe floors and wash clothes, as well as medicine, chemical, cotton (napkins and tampons), sanitary items, strip of cloth, newspapers, etc.
- D) To clean the toilet floor, please wipe with a cloth and do not pour the water, because it can cause water leak.

(8) Balcony

- A) The balcony is the only outdoor place where a resident can enjoy some fresh air, because there is no garden in the apartment. Please place flower plants and make the most use of it.
- B) In the event of a fire, residents need to break through the partition wall of the balcony and take refuge to the next door's balcony, so never put anything in front of the wall.
- C) The height of the railing and the intervals of railing bars are designed to prevent children from falling, so do not put objects such as boxes in front of the railing. Please take extra care to prevent such accidents.

(9) Keys

Please take extra care not to lose keys which are very important in protecting residents' lives and property. In case of losing a key, residents will have to replace a set of keys at their own expense.

(10) Common areas

A) Staircases

Staircase landings of a housing complex can often get damaged by putting bicycles and motorbikes. So please do not put bicycles and other things on and around the staircase landings. It can also be an obstacle for evacuation in case of an emergency.

B) Multipurpose room

A multipurpose room is a shared facility for all residents, so please use it with care. Residents are required to pay repair costs if the room is damaged while they are using it.

C) Square and playground

• Please clean up the square and playground in the housing complex on a regular basis and create a pleasant and beautiful environment with other residents. Please also take extra care and supervise children when they are playing in these areas.

• Each resident and Residents Association are required to clean gutters, staircase landings, and other common areas in the housing complex.

(11) Safety of the building (medium-scale fireproof housing complex)

A) Please be prepared for natural disasters including earthquakes and take necessary measures to mitigate the damage.

B) Although buildings should not catch fire from outside, the interior parts of buildings are made out of wood, so please be very careful of using fire at home.

(12) On-site-inspection of a municipal housing

For administrative purposes, there are cases where a municipal housing administrator or Tsukuba City employee designated by the Mayor visits your property. Please cooperate if a person in charge visits the property.

1 3 . Moving out of a municipal housing

(1) Procedures for moving out

When a residents is planning to move out of the property, he/she is required to submit “Notification of Moving Out from Municipal Housing (市営住宅返還届)” (available at Housing Policy Division) no later than 15 days before the date of moving out. After moving out, the property will be checked thoroughly, so please complete repairs as necessary before that.

(2) Repairs when moving out

Regardless of the length of stay, residents must change the surface of tatami mats (it is not allowed to just turn them over and use reverse sides), replace papers of fusuma and Shoji sliding doors (replacement of *fusuma* papers must be done professionally), and replace broken glass with new glass.

Residents are required to repair other damages (such as a pillar and wall), too.

Please also make sure to remove any other items that are installed by residents (such as a bathtub, lean-to roof, prefabricated hut or storage, and air conditioner).

(3) Moving-out date

Moving-out date is a day when a resident returns his/her key to Housing Policy Division after completing repairs.

The residents will have to pay the rent until the moving-out date.

(4) Refund of security deposit

Security deposit will be refunded to the designated resident’s account one month after completing a moving-out inspection. (If there is unpaid rent and/or compensation for damage, it will be deducted from the security deposit and the remaining amount will be refunded.)

(5) Cleaning of the property when moving out

When moving out, please remove all household goods and clean thoroughly in and out of the property, paying attention to the kitchen, toilet, bathroom, and inside the closet in particular. Please do this so that the resident who is moving in afterward can start living in the property comfortably.

(6) Locking the property

When moving out, please make sure to lock the door and windows.

Please be sure to close the gas and water taps.

(7) Notification of terminating the use of water, electricity, gas, and telephone when moving out

Residents must inform each provider of water, electricity, gas, and telephone of the expected moving-out day in advance, so that they can take necessary procedures on the day of moving out.

Please also notify the head of the Residents Association or the apartment caretaker of the moving-out.

(8) If the property does not have a sewage system, the toilet vault needs to be pumped.

Installation of items and redecoration that require permission

- Installation of an air conditioner (including necessary electrical wiring)
- Installation of an instant water heater (including necessary plumbing of gas and water)
- Installation of electrical bidet to the toilet (including necessary electrical wiring and pipe arrangement)
- Installation of lead-in Internet lines and interior wiring
- Installation of a parabolic antenna (BS and CS) (including necessary electric wiring)
- Installation or replacement of a bathtub and bath water heater (including necessary plumbing of gas and water)
- Installation of handrail (in the toilet, bathroom, etc.)
- Installation of prefabricated hut and storage
- Changing of wallpapers

When moving out, residents must remove the above-mentioned items or restore to the original condition at their own cost.