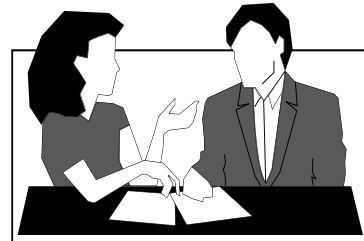


Chapter 7

ACTIVE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

TAKING A COMPLAINT

An apartment community needs active management to deal with the daily problems that can arise among residents and guests. A manager should always be fair and impartial when hearing about resident complaints. It is good management to hear both sides of the story whenever possible. Calling both residents into the office may be one way of resolving small problems between residents.



In cases where there is a potential for violence, it may be necessary to call the police, or at the very least try to keep the residents apart. If the complaint amounts to a breach of the rental agreement or the Crime Free Lease Addendum, and one resident is willing to write a complaint and testify in court, you may want to serve the notice even though you were not an eyewitness to the event. Let the judge decide.

When property managers show a genuine interest in the residents concerns, it encourages the residents to take ownership of the community. If residents feel their concerns will fall on deaf ears, they will stop bringing issues to management. This is not a good thing, as small problems will progress to larger ones, and those problems can lead to catastrophes.

ROUTINE PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

Management access to a rented apartment may be necessary to effect repairs or to inspect conditions (if you choose to employ such proactive management practices). Such entries should be specifically noted in the lease, lease addendum, or community rules. They should be clearly explained and understood by all residents as to the type of entry and the type of notice issued by management prior to such entry. Provide a specific time frame for notice prior to an inspection. Do not leave it vague or open to interpretation.

In some larger properties it may not be possible to inspect every unit on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, but for smaller rental properties it could be a valuable use of time. Routine property inspections should be conducted for all residents equally and fairly.

Routine inspections may be conducted for the purpose of replacing air conditioning filters or inspecting a property for damage, when reasonable grounds exist that a problem has occurred (such as roach infestation or water damage).

Inspections should never be conducted for the purpose of singling out a particular resident without cause. It should never be done for personal reasons or for retaliation on the part of the management.

If residents refuse to allow the manager or an agent to inspect the unit or any part of the unit, the manager may serve a ten-day notice for non-compliance. Residents can not install interior deadbolts or refuse you to inspect a part of the unit.

In an emergency situation, such as fire or water damage, a manager may enter the unit without serving notice to protect the property from excessive damage. If the manager has reason to believe a resident may be injured or ill, they may enter the unit to check the welfare of the resident if other attempts do not work.

PROPERTY MANAGERS DO HAVE A LEGAL RIGHT TO INSPECT THE UNITS, AND CANNOT BE DENIED ACCESS WHEN THE RESIDENT HAS BEEN APPROPRIATELY SERVED NOTICE.



GOOD PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Building Maintenance - The building should have a bright colored paint to reflect ambient light. Keep it looking cared for.

Stairs/Balconies - Stairs & balconies should not have a cluttered appearance. They should appear clean and safe.

Courtyards - Keep trees and bushes trimmed. Maintain good lighting and litter control.

Common Areas - Laundry and recreational areas should be clean, well lit and promote a sense of safety.

Parking Lots - Maintain lighting, asphalt and signage. Paint speed bumps and fire lanes as necessary.

Perimeter Fencing - Inspect for damage to structures and repair immediately. Paint over graffiti ASAP (after making a report with the Schaumburg Police per village ord.).

Litter Control - All members of the management team should pick up litter or debris whenever they see it. Encourage residents to help keep their community clean.