



# HOUSING BOOKLET



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# 01: CONTEXT



## *Housing as a Larger Concept*

### PURPOSE OF BOOKLET

The purpose of this manual is to be transparent, providing you all with intentional information as it relates to UC San Diego Off-Campus Housing. We will breakdown housing as a larger concept: strategizing the housing search, navigating the application process, leasing information, and community resources available to YOU!

### SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Before you dive into the actual housing search process, it's crucial to understand housing as a larger concept, for there are systemic issues at play that create both visible *and* invisible barriers to accessing housing.

The challenges that come with housing instability are further perpetuated by larger systemic issues such as, houselessness, higher eviction rates for people of color, and gentrification.

Housing in the United States is often used as a fear tactic to continue the status quo, although housing IS a basic human right, we have been conditioned to believe that it must be earned through continuous labor.

This harmful ideology can best be understood when looking at the houselessness rates in the U.S. In January 2020, there were over 580,000 people experiencing houselessness in the U.S., an increase of around 13,000 people from 2019.

## **COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The pandemic placed a great financial strain on people all over the world through the continued COVID-19 economic recession. This can be seen through hyperinflation, high unemployment rates, increasing rent prices, and other challenges. As a result, folks' Basic Needs aren't met and their physical, mental, and social well-being is put at risk.

## **CALIFORNIA HOUSING CRISIS**

Additionally, it's no secret that rental and homeowner prices throughout the state have skyrocketed over the past year. The California Housing Crisis was, particularly, felt within the San Diego area in August of 2021 when rent increased by approximately 14% from last year.

Half of San Diego's submarkets have a vacancy rate below 2%, and landlords across the country are reporting 100% occupancy levels. This shift has been especially felt by our students when universities across the county returned to in-person learning.

## **REMAINING HOPEFUL**

Although all these compounded influential factors make the housing search difficult, it doesn't make it impossible. We wish to uproot these systemic barriers in order to uplift the resilient solutions that our communities navigate through.

# 02: STRATEGIZING



## *Building a Housing Search Plan*

### **BUILD YOUR LIST**

First, you're going to want to envision the listing that is going to best support your time at UCSD. Then, you want to separate that list of your wants and needs into your non-negotiables and things you would not mind budgeting on.

### **REMINDERS**

Be aware of housing scams, particularly on websites like Craigslist & Facebook! Below is a list of common scams and best practices when looking for housing.

#### **Common Scams:**

- Price of the property seems too good to be true
- Online housing images don't look right or seem fake
- Agent claims the property manager is "too busy" to manage the rental
- Getting charged to view the property
- Directed to a free credit check website, a possible identity theft tactic
- High pressure sales tactics to urge you to sign a lease
- Being told to sign the lease before you see the property
- Lease has hidden fees or states a higher monthly rent
- Being asked to wire money for a security deposit or payment, wire transfers can't be reversed or refunded

#### **Best Practices:**

- Verify the address by using Google Maps
- Verify housing images by using Google's reverse image search tool
- Never make a payment, disclose credit check information on a written application, or sign a lease without visiting the property and getting a sense of the agent or property manager
- If you're not able to visit the property, have a friend or family member check it out for you or request a virtual tour
- Try to find roommate situations with other students
- When using Facebook Groups, check the profiles of the people posting and avoid newer Facebook accounts
- Join a UCSD Facebook Group in order to connect with existing UCSD students or alum
- Consult with UCSD's Student Legal Services if you have concerns about a property would like to rent or if you have questions about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant

## **AFFORDABILITY STRATEGIES**

The market in San Diego is expensive, especially on a college student budget. Not only that, the cost of living is much more expensive in La Jolla. However, you can be strategic in your renting choices in order to offset costs!

Firstly, always try to stay within your budget, knowing that rent is **ONLY** housing. You will want to account for transportation, parking, extra spending for leisurely activities, and of course your basic needs.

Secondly, be realistic with your budget. If it's not too stable, look for short-term leases. For example, a month to month lease lessens financial pressures of saving for several months worth of rent.

Another tip is to consider if you will be having any roommates. Roommates are a great choice for your social needs while navigating college. If you'll be living alone, keep in mind that the minimum asking prices for places outside of La Jolla is around \$1,400. When it comes to housing applications, having roommates can increase one's chances of getting approved. For instance, it's easier to reach the minimum income requirement between four people versus when living alone.

When considering places outside of La Jolla, we recommend envisioning what type of local community would best support you! If you do decide to live elsewhere and do not have access to a car, consider using public transportation and try to find housing near different transit options such as the Blue Line Trolley Extension or MTS bus routes. As a UCSD student, you have access to quarterly PRONTO Passes which allow you to use these services for free.

All this to say, when starting your housing search...take a deep breath. Give yourself time to develop a game plan that is going to best align with your needs.

# O3: SEARCH



## *Housing Search Process*

### **WHEN TO START**

First, you're going to want to get a sense of your timeline in order to center the trends in the housing market. If you'd like to sign a lease that starts during June or July, start your housing search during April or May! Or, if you don't need housing until August or September, then please start looking no later than June!

Especially, naming that UC San Diego is one of the last institutions to begin Fall instruction, we encourage students to consider a holding fee. Since San Diego has a large college student community, ask if properties are willing to hold a listing with a "holding fee" until you're ready to move in.

### **NAVIGATING RESOURCES**

Now that we've explained how to build your preferences in a listing in the previous chapter, be sure to utilize that list when navigating the filters on a property listing website. You will see the filter tool on platforms such as the Off-Campus Housing Website, Padmapper, Zillow, Roomchazer, and Apartments.com. The Off-Campus Housing website is solely for UCSD affiliates. You can login with your PID if you are a UCSD student, faculty, or staff. This log-in requirement assists in creating a safer platform.

Now although Facebook and Craigslist are less vetted listing options, they are still an effective way to find affordable housing. UC San Diego has plenty of unofficial Facebook groups that connect students and alumni seeking housing.

## ROOMMATE SELECTION

With that in mind, if you're going to live with roommates, then consider who that might be. Do you have current roommates that would possibly be interested? What about friends from a class or an organization you're a part of?

Of course, before moving in with anyone, it is crucial to have in-depth conversations with your potential roommates.

One should discuss things such as the rent, payment dates, lease terms and length, relevant culture and identity considerations, household preferences, COVID-19 safety, and lease-breaking scenarios. Make sure to check out the Sample Roommate Agreement on the Student Legal Services website for other examples.

### *[Sample]* **Roommate Agreement**

*On     [month/day]    ,     [year]    , we, the tenants named below, signed a lease agreement for the residential property at the address listed below. By entering into this roommate agreement, we hope to ensure that rental responsibilities will be understood and shared by all roommates as described in this agreement.*

This Roommate Agreement (the "Agreement") is made by and between     [tenant name]    ,     [tenant name]    , and     [tenant name]    , for the residential property at:     [address]    . We are entering into this Agreement in order to identify the rights and responsibilities of each tenant during the course of the lease agreement.

This Agreement runs concurrently with the lease agreement for the residential property, which is effective from     [month/day]    ,     [year]    , to     [month/day]    ,     [year]    .

Be honest in your preferences, as it is easier to change your mind on living together before it happens, than when you are bound together by a lease. Please remember, roommates are "jointly and severally liable" under a lease, as are cosigners.



# O4: APPLICATION



## *Application Process*

### **TOURS**

Once you've narrowed it down to a couple of housing options, don't delay any next steps! Contact the leasing agents and schedule a tour or attend an open house as soon as you feel ready. If you're not able to visit the property, have a friend or family member check it out for you or request a virtual tour.

### **QUESTIONS FOR PROPERTY MANAGERS**

While scoping out the layout of a potential listing, do not forget to ask as many questions as you need so you have everything to make an informed decision. Refer back to your list of needs, and curate your questions from there. Some questions may be "Does this property require renters insurance?" "Are there pets allowed?" "Is the lease negotiable?" etc. etc....

Although there is high demand and low supply in the San Diego area, reclaim the renters power that you DO have by getting all your questions or concerns answered before moving forward with a property.

### **JOIN WAITLISTS**

A quick note...In order to combat the craziness of the housing market, ensure that you add yourself to waitlists as soon as possible! This way you have different options.

## REQUEST AN APPLICATION

Now, before you go on to request an application, take a moment to collect your thoughts. Honor all the emotional, financial, and practical factors.

You must be clear on the application fees because you do NOT get this money back even if you get denied. Properties often require 2.5 times the monthly income in comparison to the rent amount, making it difficult to be approved.

However, if you or your potential roommates receive financial aid, it's worth a shot to include your awards in your total income by downloading one's financial aid package from TritonLink. Given that financial aid is meant to cover portions of housing, some property managers accept this as a form of income for students. However, if you do not receive financial aid, cosigning is also an option but of course, is a big legal liability that the cosigner will be taking on.

Having mentioned the fees that come with applications, it's financially safer to only pay application fees for a place or two that you are really set on and have done research on. At the same time, if you know a property seems right for you then make sure to apply sooner rather than later!

To make your application process smoother, collect all necessary documents. Below is a list of common items you'll be submitting and an example of a rental application.

# Rental Application: Items You'll Need

- Identification
- References
- Credit Check
- Rental History
- Employment History + Pay Stubs
- Checking/Savings Account + Bank Statements
- Social Security Number
- If you're bringing a car
  - ◆ Vehicle Registration
- If you're bringing a pet
  - ◆ Pet Information

**THE IRVINE COMPANY  
APARTMENT COMMUNITIES****APPLICATION TO RENT  
(AND RECEIPT FOR APPLICATION SCREENING FEE)**

Please complete this form entirely in ink, noting "N/A" or "none" where applicable. Do not use white out. The information you provide will be verified prior to TICAC's approval to rent an apartment to you in an apartment community owned by either The Irvine Company, Irvine Apartment Communities, L.P. or Irvine Commercial Property Company (collectively, "Owner").

**1. Applicant History**

Community:		Address:		
Print Applicant's full name (Last, First, Middle Initial) Jr./Sr.		Date of Birth	Social Security Number	Driver's License #

**Name of Co-Applicants (A separate Application is required for each Co-Applicant)**

(Last, First, Middle Initial)	(Last, First, Middle Initial)	(Last, First, Middle Initial)
(Last, First, Middle Initial)	(Last, First, Middle Initial)	(Last, First, Middle Initial)

Applicant's Present Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Own  <input type="checkbox"/> Rent	Phone #	Dates:
		E-Mail *	From
City	State & Zip		To

Detached family home: <input type="checkbox"/>	Attached family home: <input type="checkbox"/>	Apartment: <input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly Payment \$		To whom do you make payments?

Present Landlord's Name & Address:	Phone #
------------------------------------	---------

Immediate Prior Address (if less than 1 yr. at above)	<input type="checkbox"/> Own  <input type="checkbox"/> Rent	Monthly Payment:	Dates:
		\$	From
			To

Immediate Prior Landlord's Name & Address:	Phone #
--------------------------------------------	---------

Do you own a Pet? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Number of Pets: _____	Type: _____
Breed: _____	Adult Pet Weight: _____	

**2. Occupants**

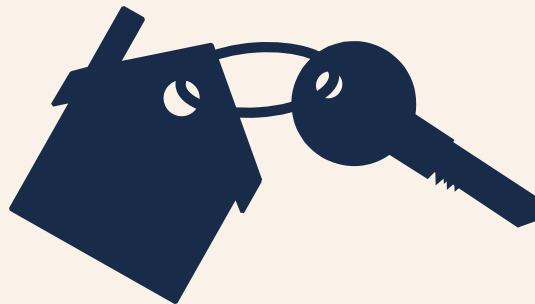
Proposed Occupants (Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth	(Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth
(Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth	(Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth
(Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth	(Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth

**3. Employment**

Employer (if self-employed, name of business), Business Address (including Zip Code)

Phone #	Type of Business	Position	Dates: From To	Supervisor	Phone #	Income  Mo.
Other Income	Source	Applicant must provide 1 pay stub or current W2 form.		Contact		
Immediate Prior Employer Name & Address:				Phone #	Dates: From To	Income  Mo.

# 05: LEASES



## *Signing a Lease + Moving In*

### WHAT IS A LEASE

A lease is a legally binding document or contract between a landlord and one or more tenants who are renting the property. The terms of a lease should include how much rent you must pay, when to pay, to whom, and for how long. There are additional terms and conditions that go beyond the rent of the property, such as pet policies, maintenance expectations, landlord access to the property, and more. Below is an example of a California lease agreement.

<b>PARTIES: LANDLORD</b>	_____
<b>TENANT(S)</b>	_____ _____ _____
<b>PROPERTY ADDRESS:</b>	_____ _____

**1. RENTAL AMOUNT:** Beginning \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ TENANT agrees to pay LANDLORD the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month in advance on the \_\_\_\_ day of each calendar month. Said rental payment shall be delivered by TENANT to LANDLORD or his designated agent to the following location: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Rent must be actually received by LANDLORD, or designated agent, in order to be considered in compliance with the terms of this agreement.

**2. TERM:** The premises are leased on the following lease term: (please check one item only) \_\_\_\_ month-to-month (or) \_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

**3. SECURITY DEPOSITS:** TENANT shall deposit with landlord the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a security deposit to secure TENANT'S faithful performance of the terms of this lease. The security deposit shall not exceed two times the monthly rent. After all the TENANTS have left, leaving the premises vacant, the LANDLORD may use the security deposit for the cleaning of the premises, any unusual wear and tear to the premises or common areas, and any rent or other amounts owed pursuant to the lease agreement or pursuant to Civil Code Section 1950.5. TENANT may not use said deposit for rent owed during the term of the lease. Within 21 days of the TENANT vacating the premises, LANDLORD shall furnish TENANT a written statement indicating any amounts deducted from the security deposit and returning the balance to the TENANT. If TENANT fails to furnish a forwarding address to LANDLORD, then LANDLORD shall send said statement and any security deposit refund to the leased premises.

**4. INITIAL PAYMENT:** TENANT shall pay the first month rent of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and the security deposit in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Said payment shall be made in the form of cash or cashier's check and is all due prior to occupancy.

**5. OCCUPANTS:** The premises shall not be occupied by any person other than those designated above as TENANT with the exception of the following named persons: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **BEFORE SIGNING**

As mentioned in chapter three, please ensure you've used the Sample Roommate Agreement on the Student Legal Services website before signing your lease. This works as a safety net for working out any major problems before you are all legally tied to a lease.

And above all, make sure you have taken the time to read and understand the lease in its entirety by yourself as well as with your roommates! For example, triple check to see everyone is on the lease, including potential cosigners.

Also, be clear on the security deposit, as landlords can deduct from this total to pay for any possible property damage and unpaid rent or debts. However, all or some of the security deposit can be returned if these situations don't occur.

If needed, negotiate lease terms with your landlord to match everyone's comfortability. Below is a list of questions to ask your landlord to better understand their lease policies. If you still have doubts, please schedule a consultation to review your lease with a staff member from Student Legal Services!

- 1.The policy on subletting and/or assigning the rental property
- 2.The policy on "breaking the lease," or leaving early
- 3.The policy on the landlord entering the property for repairs
- 4.How many people may sign the lease
- 5.When the rent is due and to whom
- 6.To whom notices should be given

## AFTER SIGNING

One factor to consider after signing the lease is renters insurance. Some properties may require this, while others may not. Renters insurance protects your personal belongings in your property from unexpected circumstances such as theft, a fire or sewer backup damage – and will pay you for lost or damaged possessions. It can also help protect you from liability if someone is injured on your property.

Renters insurance may also cover when you are forced to temporarily move out of your home in the event of damage and other instances depending on the type of coverage you choose. If you choose to get renters insurance ensure it is the best plan you can afford.

Additionally, after signing the lease you want to make sure that the landlord maintains the responsibility and conditions stated within the lease since it is a binding document between both parties.

## MOVING IN

After solidifying all of the details of your lease, you are ready to move-in yay! It is highly recommended to do a walkthrough of the property when you first arrive and even document the ins and outs of the property to protect yourself from any liability and protect your security deposit.

There is a lot of time and effort that goes into moving-in so be sure to ask for assistance from friends and family - if possible - in order to have a smooth move-in process. Then sit back, relax, and turn it into a place you can call home!



# O6: SERVICES



## *Campus + Community Resources*

### **RESOURCES AT UC SAN DIEGO**

There is an abundance of on-campus service centers available to students that support housing-related needs in their respective areas. The following graphic showcases a few that are helpful to students.

### **Campus Resources**

- The Hub Basic Needs Center
- Student Legal Services
- International Students & Programs Office
- Office of Students with Disabilities
- Undocumented Student Services
- Financial Aid Office
- Transportation Services

These services offer both generalized support and case-specific support as it relates to navigating housing. We recognize that students come from different backgrounds, experiences, and cultures so be sure to use the services on campus that best fit your needs!



## TEMPORARY/EMERGENCY HOUSING & TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Transparently, you can be overly prepared to embark on your housing journey and still experience barriers to accessing housing. Thus, the Basic Needs Off-Campus Housing Office offers transitional, temporary, and emergency housing programs for students experiencing the spectrum that is housing instability.

For temporary and emergency support we have our Temporary Housing Protocol (THP), which upon assessment through Basic Needs, Case Management, and the Deans of your college, HDH can offer up to 30 days of on-campus housing. This program is to aid in the process to secure a stable housing plan. If you are in need of emergency housing, please visit our Basic Needs website at [basicneeds.ucsd.edu](https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu) and complete a Basic Needs Assistance Form.

### Basic Needs Assistance Form

#### Basic Needs Assistance Form

If you are a UC San Diego student who is facing challenges with your access to adequate food, stable housing, or general resources, you're encouraged to complete this form. This form will be assessed to provide individual resource suggestions and options to meet with supportive staff for a Basic Needs Consultation. Your personalized consultation appointment with staff will provide an opportunity for you to discuss resources and receive advisement as to what may be available to you on and/or off campus.

If you have any questions regarding financial aid, please feel free to contact the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office via email at [finaid@ucsd.edu](mailto:finaid@ucsd.edu), during their Virtual Counseling / Walk-in Advising hours Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. via Zoom ([UCSD.ZOOM.US/MY/FASZOOM1](https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/9876543210)), by phone on Mondays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 858-534-4480, or in-person Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. .

Name \*

First

Last

PID \*

For transitional housing support we encourage students to review opportunities through AirBnB, VRBO, and Hostels. These services can support students who may need a few days to a couple weeks before moving into their next place.

## IDENTITY AFFIRMING RESOURCES IN SAN DIEGO

Now, housing in itself is difficult to navigate, but how does one go about finding supportive services that affirm their identities and experiences? This type of assistance offers safe spaces through cultivating a culture of care intentionally made for specific communities. The following graphic showcases a few that are helpful to students.

### Community Resources

- The Center
  - ◆ Sustains the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, nonbinary, immigrant, and HIV communities
- San Diego Youth Services
  - ◆ Provides prevention, intervention, drop-in centers, foster care, and temporary housing to youth (ages 24 and under)
- HUGS
  - ◆ Serves international students looking for off-campus housing through payment security, listing and transaction verification, and a HUGS score equivalent to a U.S. credit score

For more of a comprehensive understanding of resources in your local area and for any specific questions, call 2-1-1 or visit [211sandiego.org](http://211sandiego.org).

## CONCLUSION

You can find out more about all the services discussed here today on our Basic Needs website at [basicneeds.ucsd.edu](https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu) under the Housing Resources tab!

Gentle reminder that there are bigger systems at play when it comes to equitable access to housing. The best way to be prepared is to start early, have a deep understanding of your needs, be strategic, and be patient with yourself! A community issues requires a community response, so lean on your support systems and do not hesitate to contact our office.

On behalf of everyone on our team here at the Basic Needs Off Campus Housing Office, thank you for following our first ever Educational Campaign. Good luck on your housing search!





# OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING OFFICE

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Room E-100

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