Important Tips to Remember

- Use our apartment search database at northeastern.edu/offcampus/apartment to find property listings from local realtors, or students looking for roommates. View helpful videos at northeastern.edu/offcampus/getstarted/cost.html

- Do not sign a lease without seeing the apartment first! Read these tips to avoid scams: craigslist.org/about/scams

- Get everything in writing! Make sure any amendments or additions to the lease are made before signing. Get receipts for any money paid to your landlord and realtor.

- Upfront Fees: Be prepared to pay first and last month of rent and a security deposit (equal to one month’s rent).

- Apartments may or may not include utilities in the rent (electricity, gas, heat). If utilities are not included, you must pay for these monthly, in addition to your rent.

- Some landlords may ask for a Social Security Number. SSNs are only required for employment purposes. If a landlord requests your SSN for a credit check, present your I-20 form.

- Temporary Accommodations: If you need a place to stay while you look for an apartment or before your lease starts, see this list northeastern.edu/offcampus/temporaryhousing

- Need to store or ship your things? See our list of storage and moving companies. northeastern.edu/offcampus/moveinguidelines/storage.html

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Apartment Vocabulary

Amenities: Items included in the unit (laundry room, storage room, refrigerator, dishwasher).

Co-signer (Guarantor): Person who can co-sign your lease for credit purposes.

Hostels: Temporary housing for students.

ISD: Inspectional Services Department. City agency that inspects your unit in case of any problems. 617-343-5300

Landlord: The owner of the apartment.

Lease: A legal contract between you and your landlord; usually 12 months.

Realtor: A person who represents the landlord and shows the apartment. Charges a realtor fee.

Rental Housing Center: City agency that provides advice on tenant issues. 617-343-4200

Security Deposit: A fee equal to one month’s rent held by the landlord. Refunded at the end of the lease if there are no damages.

Studio: A one room apartment with a combined bedroom & living space, plus kitchen and bathroom.

Sublet: Renting a room within the apartment to cover the rent when one tenant is away (on co-op for example)

Tenancy-at-Will: A month-by-month rental.

Tenant: Person(s) renting the apartment.

Utilities: Electricity, heat, gas, trash disposal.

BR/BA: Number of bedrooms and bathrooms. Ex: 3BR/1BA

HT/HW: Heat and hot water

W/D: Washer and Dryer

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Rental Housing Center
226 Curry Student Center
617-373-8480
offcampus@neu.edu
facebook.com/neuoffcampus
@nuoffcampus
1 Moving to Boston?

Consider these points BEFORE searching for an apartment!

What type of apartment are you looking for? There are studios and 1 bedroom or multi-bedroom apartments. Most apartments are unfurnished. There are also Guest Houses and Home Stays that cater to international students and are often furnished.

How long do you want to stay? Most leases in Boston are for 12 months. You cannot leave the apartment without paying the full rent or finding someone else to sublet your space.

Roommates? Many new students find that living with others makes the transition to Boston and a new culture much easier.

Where in Boston do you want to live? Visit northeastern.edu/offcampus/getstarted to learn more about Boston’s neighborhoods. Is your apartment close to the T? Find bus and subway routes at mbta.com

2 Before You Sign!

- Before you sign anything, READ AND UNDERSTAND YOUR LEASE!
- Your lease defines exactly what you can and cannot do while living in your apartment. Violating the terms can lead to serious consequences.
- NEVER PAY IN CASH! Pay your rent by check or money order and keep receipts of all payments.
- Make a copy of your lease after it’s signed.
- Working with a realtor requires an extra fee usually equivalent to one month’s rent. This is referred to as the realtor or broker fee.

3 Ask Your Landlord

The landlord is the owner of the property and person who signs the lease. Questions you should ask him or her:

- Who should I contact if there is a problem?
- Where should I send my rent check?
- Are there special rules or additional charges? Get them in writing.
- Is there anything I cannot bring/have in the apartment?
- If I need to sublet, will that be allowed?

What you need to sign a lease:

- Copy of Passport
- I-20 (Student Visa Form)
- Proof of Good Credit and Guarantor to co-sign lease

* All bolded words are defined on back.