10 Tips for PARENTS

Assist in the Planning Process
Use our Get Started page for an overview of the process and read advice from students that have moved off campus. There are many decisions to make including a budget, neighborhoods, and roommates. Ask your student about their priorities in an apartment. Share your priorities, concerns, and budget guidelines. Help your student avoid pitfalls by staying involved in the process.

See It Before You Sign It!
All students on a lease should see the apartment in person before signing the lease contract. Parents and co-signers should be able to view the apartment via Skype, face-time, or have your student take pictures. Make sure all roommates and parents involved have a chance to see the apartment and have their questions answered. Use our Apartment Hunting Checklist as a guide. Can’t see it in person? Hire Squeakly to visit for you!

Safety First!
We want students to choose apartments that are safe and secure. It is important to check for basic safety features when visiting an apartment and after move-in. This includes working smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, two exits from each room, working windows and door locks, exterior lighting, addressing crime concerns, and more.

Know the “No More Than 4” Ordinance
Boston has an undergraduate zoning ordinance that limits the number of undergraduates that can live together to limit overcrowding. No more than 4 undergraduates may live in an apartment. All students residing in the unit must be on the lease to be protected by Boston tenant law. Anyone not on the lease is not protected and could be evicted.

Review Their Lease
Students should read the lease contract before signing it. Any promises made by the realtor or landlord must be in writing to be valid. After your student reads the lease, encourage them to ask questions about what clauses mean or if something is unclear. Parents and co-signers should do the same. Our program Lease Genius helps you walk through your lease, allowing students and parents to understand the agreement.

Get Familiar with Off Campus Student Services Resources
Explore our website resources including information on landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities, subletting guidelines, and Boston resources. You can share resources with your student including how to use the Northeastern Housing Database (parents can login as a guest), what to look for during apartment showings, understanding a lease, and what to consider when choosing roommates.

Plan for Fall Move-in
Most leases start on September 1st and Boston has many college students moving in at the same time. Plan moving and storage needs early as moving resources will become limited as September 1st approaches.

Stay Informed
Receive our newsletter for timely off campus updates from our student Community Ambassadors. Follow Off Campus Student Services on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for updates.

Prepare to Co-sign
Students are often required to have a co-signer to show proof of income and/or have a credit check. As a co-signer you are responsible for paying rent if tenants are unable to pay.

Be a Hero without Hovering
Notice issues with the apartment on move-in day! It’s best to address concerns right away. All apartments must meet minimum State Sanitary Code. Any immediate concerns should be addressed to the landlord directly before being reported to the City of Boston’s Inspectional Services by calling 3-1-1.