



**UNITY**  
HOUSING COMPANY

# Guidelines for Living

in Unity Boarding House Accommodation

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## 1 Introduction

Unity Housing Company Ltd (Unity) aims to provide all tenants with a safe and peaceful environment. Tenants are expected to assist with this aim.

All tenants and staff are entitled to mutual respect.

The Terrace Boarding House is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Tenants at any of our boarding houses may obtain after-hours emergency assistance (for example, locked out of your room, obtaining medical assistance) by phoning the Terrace on 8232 5459.

The following Guidelines are based on the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 and associated Regulations and are designed for the purpose of providing safe, peaceful and harmonious accommodation for all tenants and a safe working place for all staff.

**Agreeing to abide by these Guidelines (“House Rules”) is a condition of your Tenancy**

## 2 Rent and Bond

Tenants are required to pay one week’s rent in advance prior to moving into a boarding house and maintain their rent one week in advance at all times.

**Unity has a no cash policy.** Our preferred payment method is Centrepay, but we will also accept payments made by EFTPOS, directly into our bank account or Housing SA cheque. Tenants wanting to pay in cash will be provided with a deposit book and payments can be made at any Commonwealth Bank branch or agent.

A bond equivalent to the sum of two weeks rent is also required to be paid prior to moving into a boarding house. Unity accepts Housing SA bond guarantees and bond cheques. At end of tenancy, the bond will be assessed for release or claim, once all tenancy charges have been finalised. Rooms should be left in good order, keys/swipe cards returned, rent paid up to date and any other tenant charge debt paid in full.

Rent increases occur every six months.

If rent is not paid, tenants will be issued a notice of arrears. If rent becomes two weeks overdue tenants will be issued with a termination notice.

In line with Unity’s Temporary Accommodation Restrictions Procedure, any tenant who owes Unity money when they leave for rent or tenant invoices, will be restricted from accessing Unity accommodation until either the debt is paid up to date or 50% of the debt is paid and there is a written payment plan in place to settle the remainder of the debt.

## 3 Conduct

### 3.1 Behaviour

Unity encourages all tenants to behave in a manner which facilitates the quiet enjoyment of the boarding house environment and enables all tenants to live in peace, comfort and privacy.

Disruptive, destructive, offensive, bullying, abusive, threatening, violent or intimidating behaviour towards other tenants, staff and or property will not be tolerated. Tenants behaving in this manner are at risk of being issued a caution or termination notice and even immediate eviction in extreme circumstances.

Staff will call police if tenants fail to comply with instructions to stop unacceptable behaviour.

### 3.2 Language

Unity encourages tenants to use language which shows mutual respect, tolerance and understanding of others. Tenants are reminded that the use of offensive language or swearing may offend other tenants, staff and neighbours. Please refrain from using offensive language in common areas in the vicinity and within hearing distance of others.

### 3.3 Weapons

Any type of weapon, including knives, firearms and imitation firearms are prohibited within the boarding house.

### 3.4 Noise

You will be living in close proximity to other people and need to be mindful of the volume of televisions, radios and general noise. Tenants are also responsible for the noise level of their authorised visitors to the site.

Unreasonable noise, by way of volume, circumstances, time of day or authorised visitors may be subject to staff intervention and tenants may be issued with a termination notice if there are ongoing concerns about noise within their control.

Tenants are asked to avoid gathering in noisy groups in public areas of the boarding houses and at the front of buildings **at any time** unless a fire evacuation is underway.

### 3.5 Drugs and Alcohol

The Boarding House Program provides housing for vulnerable people, some of whom are overcoming issues of substance abuse. Unity aims to provide a secure and supportive environment for this.

#### 3.5.1 Illegal substances

Illegal substances are **strictly prohibited** on the premises. The use and distribution of such drugs is prohibited.

Tenants found in possession of illegal substances and tenants who supply such drugs to any other tenant on the premises will be reported to the police and may be issued with a termination notice.

Any visitors suspected to be in possession of or distributing drugs on the premises may be banned from Unity Boarding House sites indefinitely.

#### 3.5.2 Prescribed drugs

Any tenant who supplies a prescribed drug to any other tenant may be issued with a termination notice.

#### 3.5.3 Alcohol

The possession or consumption of alcohol on boarding house premises is strictly prohibited and may result in the issue of a termination notice.

### 3.6 Illegal Activities

Tenants are expected to act within the law and not engage in any illegal activities whilst on the boarding house premises. Suspected illegal activity, at or near the boarding house, will be reported to police and may result in the issue of a termination notice.

### 3.7 Borrowing and Lending of Money or Cigarettes

It is strongly recommended that tenants do not borrow or lend money or cigarettes among themselves. Such activity often causes disharmony when a debt is not honoured. Staff will not intervene in the financial dealings of tenants.

## 4 Fire Safety and Fire Alarms

For your safety, smoke detectors are installed in all rooms.

The storage of flammable or volatile items in rooms is **strictly prohibited**. Naked flames of any kind, including burning of candles and incense are **not permitted** inside the premises.

The Terrace is fitted with an automatic notification and evacuation system. This system notifies fire services when an alarm is activated and they will then attend on site.

All unstaffed Boarding House sites are fitted with fire safety systems. If there is a fire at an unstaffed site, tenants will need to contact the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) by calling 000.

**Tenants must evacuate the building and comply with directions from staff and/or fire services when a fire alarm has been activated.**

Where appropriate, tenants must follow the written instructions provided for responding to a false alarm.

Tenants who cause the activation of a smoke alarm and attendance of the fire service will be required to pay for the cost of fire service attendance and depending on the severity of the incident, may be evicted. Actions that may cause the activation of a smoke alarm include:

- Smoking in the room (refer to section 5: Smoking Policy);
- Smoking on balconies with the sliding door open (refer to section 5: Smoking Policy);
- Starting any fire;
- Engaging in any conduct that is likely to cause a fire (i.e. naked flames of any kind, including burning of candles and incense);
- Not monitoring cooking (e.g. walking away from cooking and allowing it to burn/smoke);
- Aerosol sprays (e.g. deodorant, fly spray, air freshener);
- Allowing shower steam to enter the room;
- Humidifiers and any other steam producing items, including kettles.

Tampering with a smoke detector, alarm or any firefighting equipment such as sprinkler systems, extinguishers and hoses is a criminal offence and is **strictly prohibited**. Any tenant interfering with smoke detectors or other fire safety equipment will be required to pay for the cost of fire service attendance and/or damage to equipment and may be immediately evicted.

**Please note: The cost of a fire service attendance is in excess of \$800**

## 5 Smoking Policy

Smoking includes all smoking implements including but not limited to:

- cigarettes
- electronic cigarettes/vapes
- shisha/hookah
- pipes/cigars, etc.

These items will also set off the fire alarm, resulting in a tenant charge of over \$800.

### 5.1 Non Designated Smoking Areas (Non-Smoking Areas)

- Smoking is **strictly forbidden** inside any Unity building.
- Smoking is only permitted in outdoor areas that are signed as Designated Smoking Areas.
- Unity's non-smoking policy includes all houses, boarding houses, offices, hallways, porches, walkways and breezeways.

- Smokers must remain well clear of any doors, windows or ventilation points, including outdoor air-conditioning units.
- The Terrace courtyard adjacent to the laundry is strictly non-smoking at all times.

## 5.2 Designated Smoking Areas

- Tenants may smoke on their balcony but must keep the sliding door closed.
- Any smoke entering a room may trigger the smoke alarm and costs for Fire Service callouts will be invoiced to the tenant (MFS callout fee is more than \$800). Please note that this will include any alarm that may be caused by your visitor/s.
- Cigarette butts must be disposed of in a non-flammable ashtray and be fully extinguished.
- Please avoid any discomfort to your neighbours caused by smoking.

## 6 Visitors

Visitors are restricted and must be authorised by staff. All visitors must sign in and out of the Visitor's Book on site including staff and support workers. Authorised visitors are permitted between the hours of 9am and 9pm and must leave the premises at night – no visitors are permitted to sleep over. Tenants who allow an unauthorised person into the premises are placing their tenancy at risk.

Tenants are responsible for their visitors' behaviour. Visitors who behave in an inappropriate manner will be banned from the site, possibly indefinitely, and SAPOL will be called if needed.

Staff are not available to check if tenants are home when visitors arrive. It is a tenant's responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with their visitors as to how they will be contacted. Any visitors who abuse staff will be banned from the site and SAPOL will be called.

Visitors under 18 years of age are not permitted. Unauthorised female visitors on male only sites and male visitors on female only sites are strictly prohibited. Breaches of this rule may result in the tenant being issued with a caution notice and potential eviction.

Gender requirements at each site are as follows:

Citi Hall	– male only site
Gilles Lodge	– female only site
Hurtle Square	– female only site
The Terrace	– male and female site

## 7 Room Standards

### 7.1 Cleaning

It is a tenant's responsibility to maintain rooms in a clean, safe and hygienic condition. Vacuums, mops and buckets are available from staff upon request.

A bed bug protector and a mattress protector are provided and must be used to maintain bed hygiene.

Bed linen must be laundered by the tenant on a regular basis. Tenants may be charged for the cost of replacing linen. Washing machines and dryers are located at each site for tenant use.

### 7.2 Room Audits

All rooms are the subject of regular audits for fire safety, maintenance, hygiene, appropriate use and work health and safety purposes. Rooms are audited on a monthly

basis which may be extended to bi-monthly or quarterly if required standards are consistently met.

Tenants are encouraged to be present during room audits but this is not necessary. Feedback from room audits will be provided to all tenants.

Where the standard of room is unsatisfactory, follow-up audits will be conducted within a timeframe decided by the Team Leader or delegate. If the room is not returned to an acceptable standard, the tenant may be issued with a caution notice.

If a tenant consistently fails to return the room to an acceptable standard, a termination notice may be issued.

### **7.3 Maintenance Issues**

Any maintenance issues are to be reported to staff verbally, in writing or via the Unity website as soon as possible. All maintenance must be approved and is managed by Housing SA which may cause delays, however, staff will endeavour to have the matter rectified promptly.

Wherever possible, tenants will be given advance notice of maintenance works and are asked to cooperate with staff by providing access to their room. Advance notice is often not possible, so reasonable access to tenant rooms for maintenance purposes is required.

In the situation of a bed bug outbreak, it will be necessary to quarantine the room and the tenant will need to be relocated, subject to availability.

## **8 Personal Hygiene**

Tenants are expected to maintain an appropriate standard of personal hygiene and dress when in public or shared areas.

For hygiene reasons, appropriate footwear must be worn in food preparation areas and shared internal areas as well as all outdoor areas to prevent injury.

## **9 Cooking and Use of Kitchens**

Cooking is only permitted in rooms fitted with kitchens.

Communal kitchens are provided for tenants who do not have kitchens. Tenants using the communal kitchens must remain with their cooking at all times and are required to keep the kitchens clean and hygienic. Cooking appliances must be turned off when not in use. Dishes must be washed, dried and put away immediately after use. Dishes left unwashed in communal kitchen areas will be removed and disposed of.

Cooking on balconies is strictly not permitted.

## **10 Furniture and Equipment**

All furniture, electrical appliances and items in rooms and common areas are for the enjoyment of tenants and are the property of Unity. Replacement costs for items that are removed or damaged will be passed onto the tenant and loss or malicious damage may be reported to the police.

Tenants must report to staff any fitting or equipment which is unsafe or unserviceable, such as frayed electrical cords or power boards continuously tripping.

## 11 Electrical Appliances

For the safety of all tenants the use of unauthorised electrical appliances is not permitted.

If you wish to bring an electrical appliance of your own into the boarding house it must be sighted and logged by staff at the office prior to use. Any electrical items found to be unsafe must be disposed of.

Electrical tagging and testing will occur on an annual basis. Tenants will be given at least one weeks' notice of tagging and testing and must allow access to their room and appliances. Any items that are unavailable for testing will need to be tested at the tenant's own cost or removed from the site.

## 12 Personal Belongings

Tenants are responsible for the security of their personal belongings and are requested to lock their door on every occasion they leave their room. Unity does not accept responsibility for the tenants' own possessions.

Unity's insurance does not cover tenants' belongings and tenants should consider obtaining their own insurance to protect their belongings.

Gophers/Mobility Scooters: If you believe your physical condition requires you to utilise a gopher/mobility scooter, please discuss this with the Team Leader prior to purchase. Written approval from Unity must be obtained or you will be required to remove the vehicle from the premises. Failure to remove the vehicle from the premises may result in a termination notice being issued.

## 13 Pets

Pets are **not** permitted on boarding house premises.

Some sites have bird aviaries. Please enjoy the birds but refrain from feeding or disturbing them.

Do not feed birds or other animals that may wander onto the premises including the car park area as their presence on site and the scattered food attracts vermin and cockroaches and creates health concerns due to disease and animal droppings.

## 14 Storage of Abandoned Property

Personal belongings left behind by a tenant will be stored for a period of fourteen (14) days. Any items that remain unclaimed after that time will be disposed of.

Packing up goods and the cleaning of an abandoned room will incur a fee payable by the tenant.

## 15 Facilities

### 15.1 Laundry

A laundry with a washing machine and dryer is available for the use of tenants seven days a week.

At The Terrace, tenants have access to use the laundry at any time, however external doors to the laundry and communal kitchens will be closed at 9.30pm daily.

### 15.2 Internet Kiosk

An Internet Kiosk is located at The Terrace for tenant use at any time. Noise must be kept at a reasonable level. Headphones are available at reception for tenants using The Terrace computers. Unity retains the right to restrict access at its discretion.

The viewing of inappropriate or offensive content such as pornography, graphic violence or terrorist related activity is prohibited in common areas and inappropriate content is monitored electronically. Viewing such material may result in persons being temporarily restricted or permanently banned from using the internet kiosk computers.

### 15.3 Telephone

Tenants may request to use the telephone at reception at The Terrace for reasonable purposes including calling support workers, doctors, Centrelink and for other urgent matters. The phone is not available for social calls.

Calls must be kept brief and the telephone returned to reception as soon as the call is finished or at the reasonable request of staff.

Please be advised that charges for phone calls may apply.

## 16 Complaints, Disputes and Feedback

Unity welcomes feedback from tenants and offers the following opportunities for tenants to provide feedback:

### Staff:

Tenants may approach Tenant Services Officers on duty at The Terrace to provide feedback.

### Suggestion Box:

A Suggestion Box is provided at each boarding house for tenants to lodge feedback forms or other written suggestions.

### Feedback and Complaints Forms:

Forms can be found on or near suggestion boxes at each site or obtained directly from Tenant Services Officers. Forms can be given to Tenant Services Officers at The Terrace or placed in the Suggestion Box.

### Website:

The Unity website ([www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au)) has an online form which you can complete.

### Email:

Tenants may send written feedback by email to [feedback@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:feedback@unityhousing.org.au)

## 17 Security of Premises

Tenants share responsibility for the safety and security of the boarding house. Any matters compromising safety and security should be reported to staff immediately. All entrance doors are to be kept locked at all times.

Most common areas at The Terrace are monitored with **closed circuit television cameras (CCTV)** 24 hours a day for security purposes. Private areas, such as bedrooms or bathrooms, are not monitored.

Tenants and their visitors must not gather either inside or outside the front of the building under any circumstances.

Tenants are expected to cooperate with all reasonable staff directions relating to security. Any tenants found to interfere with or compromise security measures will be asked to leave immediately.

## 18 Work Health and Safety

Unity is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all tenants, staff and visitors within the Boarding House environment and views this as a collective and individual responsibility.

Tenants must comply with all reasonable instructions given to them by Unity staff with regards to health and safety issues.

***I have been given a copy of the Guidelines for Living (House Rules) and a copy of the Guide For Rooming House Residents.***

***These have both been explained to me and it is my responsibility to read the documents in full to ensure I understand my rights and responsibilities as a tenant.***

Tenant name:

Tenant signature:

Date:

**Signed on behalf of the Landlord**

Staff name:

Staff signature:

Date: