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## KNOW WHAT'S IN A LEASE BEFORE/DURING SIGNING

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Before signing a lease, be sure you understand ALL the rights you are entitled to and limitations you accept. A landlord/tenant guide will be provided by the Housing Office. In particular, get the answer to these important questions:

- Does the lease spell out the exact amount due each month, when it is due and whether or not there is a grace period (usually 3 – 5 days) in which to pay before a penalty is charged? Are there additional fees for rent, cable, water, electricity? Is there a clause allowing your landlord to increase the rent before the lease expires?
- Does the landlord require a deposit as security or for a pet? Will you get all or a portion back when you move?
- Can you sublease the unit you are renting? If you are considering a roommate, can a person whose name is not on the lease share with you?
- Are promises and agreements made to you verbally also spelled out in the lease? (Additions to, as well as deletions from, the text should be initialed and dated by both you and your landlord.) Get it in Writing with an endorsement by both.
- Is the landlord given a lien on your personal property that lets him/her hold your furnishings and belongings until you pay any money you owe him/her?
- What are the conditions under which you landlord has the right to enter your apartment?
- Request for return of security deposit. Is any part of the deposit non-refundable?
- Advise the landlord of your housing status, i.e., awaiting government housing, TDY, or PCS, and the approximate length of time you expect to stay in the area. Does your lease have a military clause addressing if you PCS, separate or retire from the military or are directed to reside on base? If housing on Fort Gordon is anticipated, make sure a statement is included in writing in your lease.
- How much advance notice of your vacating the premise is required? Be sure to leave a forwarding address.
- What is the minimum length of time that the landlord will rent – weekly, monthly, etc?
- If you are renting for a short period of time, how will the rent be prorated?
- Ask for a copy of the landlord's "House Rules." Discuss them with the landlord and abide by them.
- Will your landlord permit you to perform maintenance on your vehicle on the premises?
- Know how "In-House" pest control is accomplished. Does the landlord provide this or is it your responsibility?
- Know the name and telephone number of the person to contact for repairs or are repairs to facility and furnishings your responsibility? If the landlord promises to make repairs/improvements, ask for it in writing. Unwritten or implied promises may not be kept.
- Know who maintains the yard, cuts the grass, etc. If it is your responsibility, determine your assigned area. Does the landlord provide the equipment for you to do this?
- If you give a landlord a deposit to hold an apartment or house and then change your mind, is your deposit refundable?
- If you do not completely understand every clause, do not sign a lease until you have checked it out with the Legal Office.
- ALWAYS give notice in WRITING in accordance with your lease when vacating

