



# TENANT HANDBOOK



**MORGAN SMITH REALTY, INC.  
TENANT MANUAL**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>MSRI Welcomes You .....</b>                      | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>MSRI Personnel .....</b>                         | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Tenant Communication .....</b>                   | <b>6</b>  |
| Telephone calls during office hours .....           | 6         |
| Voicemail .....                                     | 6         |
| After hours calls .....                             | 6         |
| Emergency calls .....                               | 6         |
| Maintenance requests .....                          | 6         |
| Change of information .....                         | 6         |
| Email .....   | 6         |
| Website .....                                       | 7         |
| Resident Portal .....                               | 7         |
| <b>General Office Information .....</b>             | <b>7</b>  |
| Address information .....                           | 7         |
| Telephone .....                                     | 7         |
| Internet .....                                      | 7         |
| Office Hours .....                                  | 7         |
| Emergency information .....                         | 7         |
| <b>Protect Your Rental and Credit History .....</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| Rental/lease agreement .....                        | 8         |
| Moving Checklist .....                              | 8         |
| Utility/Cable Companies .....                       | 8         |
| Rental payments .....                               | 8         |
| Fees/charges .....                                  | 8         |
| Maintenance reimbursement .....                     | 9         |
| <b>Care of the Property .....</b>                   | <b>9</b>  |
| Getting to know your residence .....                | 9         |
| <b>Maintenance .....</b>                            | <b>10</b> |
| Tenant Renovations/Alterations .....                | 10        |
| Tenant Maintenance responsibilities .....           | 10        |
| Procedures for requesting maintenance .....         | 11        |
| If there is an emergency .....                      | 11        |
| Non-emergencies: .....                              | 11        |
| Preventative cleaning tips .....                    | 12        |
| Additional cleaning tips .....                      | 13        |
| Energy saving tips .....                            | 14        |
| Renters insurance .....                             | 15        |
| Safety Tips .....                                   | 15        |
| Holiday tips .....                                  | 16        |
| Vacation checklist .....                            | 17        |
| Drug free housing .....                             | 17        |
| Emergency/disasters .....                           | 18        |
| <b>Frequently Asked Questions .....</b>             | <b>19</b> |
| Application Process .....                           | 19        |
| Leasing .....                                       | 20        |
| Move-In Process .....                               | 20        |
| Maintenance .....                                   | 21        |
| Payments .....                                      | 22        |
| Military Deployment .....                           | 23        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Moving Out .....                                  | 23        |
| Buying a home? .....                              | 26        |
| <b>Giving your notice .....</b>                   | <b>27</b> |
| Before giving notice.....                         | 28        |
| Setting up your move out appointment .....        | 28        |
| <b>Preparing the Property .....</b>               | <b>29</b> |
| Replacements .....                                | 29        |
| Cleaning.....                                     | 29        |
| Draperies/window coverings/windows .....          | 30        |
| Carpet Cleaning .....                             | 30        |
| Pest control .....                                | 30        |
| Trash.....  | 30        |
| Landscape clean up .....                          | 31        |
| Painting.....                                     | 31        |
| Your security deposit refund.....                 | 31        |
| Applicable Rent Refunds.....                      | 31        |
| <b>Appendix 1 – Know Before You Rent .....</b>    | <b>32</b> |
| BRETТА Disclosure .....                           | 32        |
| Utilities .....                                   | 32        |
| Application Fees .....                            | 32        |
| Lessees vs. Occupants vs. Guarantors .....        | 32        |
| Military Members.....                             | 33        |
| Pets .....  | 33        |
| <b>Appendix 2 – Forms .....</b>                   | <b>34</b> |
| Emergency/Disaster Checklist .....                | 35        |
| Add Roommate Request.....                         | 36        |
| Add Pet Request.....                              | 37        |
| Satellite or Cable Request.....                   | 38        |
| Automated Clearing House (ACH) Authorization..... | 39        |
| Resident Notice to Vacate .....                   | 40        |
| Resident Move-Out Checklist .....                 | 41        |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>                           | <b>42</b> |



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## **MSRI Welcomes You**

Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. welcomes you as a new resident. MSRI is an abbreviation used in lieu of the full company name, Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. and is used throughout this Handbook.

To achieve a successful tenant/management relationship, we prepared the MSRI Tenant Handbook to assist you with your tenancy. We recommend that you keep it in a convenient location so that you can refer to it easily.

You will find maintenance guidelines, rental payment instructions, general information, safety tips, vacation guidelines, emergency instructions, holiday tips, and more.

We have also included forms for you to use when necessary. MSRI wants you to be prepared throughout your tenancy. Therefore, we want to provide important information and documents that you may need in the future.

The owner of the property has retained Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. (MSRI) as their Property Management Company and representative to manage the property you are renting. Therefore, you need to contact MSRI when you need assistance and we have listed how on pages 5, 6, and 7.

If you have questions or concerns on any of the information contained in this documentation, contact our office at any time. MSRI is here to help you.

**We wish you a successful and enjoyable tenancy in your new residence.**

## MSRI Personnel

We have a complete staff to assist you. Please only contact your sales team while you are looking for a home or scheduling your move-in or the move-out .inspection. Once you have moved into your residence, please contact either Administration or our Office Team for support.

- **Administration:** Administration will assist you with any questions regarding your tenancy including lease questions, lease extensions, lease terminations, payment or billing questions, and any unresolved support issues or sales issues.
  
- **Office Team:** MSRI requests that you contact the Office Team regarding questions concerning support issues including online portal support, work orders, requests for property repairs or modification. MSRI office team is also available to assist you in verifying receipt of rent, any necessary forms, and basic procedural information.
  
- **Sales Team:** MSRI also has a sales team that can assist you with Real Estate Sales, Buying or Leasing. Once you have moved into your residence, please contact either Administration or our Office Team for support

**OUR OFFICE MAIN LINE IS 706.210.2646.**

| Team                  | Position           | Direct Line         | Office Ext. | Email  |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|--|
| <b>Administration</b> | Ann Marie Marshall | 706.760.4225        | <b>101</b>  | <a href="mailto:amarshall@msricorp.com">amarshall@msricorp.com</a>   |
| <b>Office Team</b>    | Jamie Marshall     | 706.760.4279        | <b>103</b>  | <a href="mailto:Jmarshall@msricorp.com">Jmarshall@msricorp.com</a>   |
|                       | Samantha Shaw      | -                   | <b>103</b>  | <a href="mailto:sshaw@msricorp.com">sshaw@msricorp.com</a>           |
|                       | Andy Blackmon      | -                   | <b>103</b>  | <a href="mailto:ablackmon@msricorp.com">ablackmon@msricorp.com</a>   |
| <b>Sales Team</b>     | Dian Smith         | 706.760.4226        | <b>102</b>  | <a href="mailto:dsmith@msricorp.com">dsmith@msricorp.com</a>         |
|                       | Kassie Willis      | 706.760.4285        | <b>105</b>  | <a href="mailto:kwillis@msricorp.com">kwillis@msricorp.com</a>       |
|                       | Alvin Zechariah    | <u>706.760.4281</u> | <b>104</b>  | <a href="mailto:azechariah@msricorp.com">azechariah@msricorp.com</a> |

# Tenant Communication

On the next page, we have provided general office information, and we have just covered the MSRI teams on the previous page. Communication makes a difference in any area of life, and it can only enhance your tenancy by letting MSRI know what you need.

Use the telephone, email, the MSRI portal or website email access, or written correspondence to contact us. What is important is that you DO contact us when you need assistance. Remember MSRI is here to help you

## Telephone calls during office hours

During office hours, listed on page 4, there is normally a live person to answer your call. Please state the reason for your call, so that someone can assist you, or direct your call to the right party. Based on demand, the Office Team may not be available or in the office, so please leave a message and one of the office team members will contact you to help you with your request.

## Voicemail

If, during the day you reach our voice mail system, use the extension number for the party you are trying to reach, and if they are not available, leave a message, complete with your name and the telephone numbers where MSRI can reach you, both during the day and evening. Someone will return your call during normal business hours.

## After hours calls

Of course, the voice mail system will take all messages after hours (please refer to the hours on the next page).

## Emergency calls

If there is a threat to life or health, contact 911 immediately.

During normal office hours, immediately state if you have an emergency. If you reach the MSRI voice mail system during office hours, or after the office is closed, immediately choose the emergency option, # 500 and your call will be transferred to after-hours support. If there is not an answer at the emergency support number, call 706.231.5683 or 706.829.7617.

## Maintenance requests

Please remember that all Work Orders must be in writing, unless it is an emergency. This is in your rental agreement. You can access a work order online at the MSRI website [www.MSRIHOMES.com](http://www.MSRIHOMES.com), at the MSRI office, and in this tenant handbook. Whenever possible, use the Resident Portal to enter any requests or issues. You will be able to monitor the progress of your issue or request through the portal.

## Change of information

It is important that you notify MSRI of any changes in telephone, fax, cell numbers, or email. An information change form is located in this handbook as well, but we request that you use the Resident Portal to update your contact information whenever possible.

## Email

Email is a great way to communicate and we request that you maintain the email you are actively using and checking daily through the Resident Portal or send your email address to [support@msricorp.com](mailto:support@msricorp.com). MSRI will put your email address in our database. This enables our team to contact you quickly and efficiently, and when needed, send you important information.



Please note that although communication by email is encouraged, MSRI does not accept notices to vacate by email. MSRI requires the Notice to Vacate either be in writing on the form included in the back of the *MSRI Tenant Handbook* or from our website [www.MSRIHOMES.com](http://www.MSRIHOMES.com) .

**Website**

The MSRI website, [www.MSRIHOMES.com](http://www.MSRIHOMES.com), contains important information for tenants. Visit it regularly to use the Tenant services. There, you can easily download a work order request and MSRI has posted their tenant newsletter, **Newsletter Name**, on the site. You can also send emails to MSRI directly from the website under the “**contact us**” page.

**Resident Portal**

You may access the Resident Portal at our website. Select Resident Resource from the options, then click on the Resident Portal Link. See Signing on to the Portal for the First time for more information.

**General Office Information**

|                              |   |                           |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Address information</b>   |   |                           |
| Mailing Address              | <b>119 Davis Road, Suite-D</b>                                |                           |
|                              | <b>Augusta, GA 30907</b>                                      |                           |
| Street Address               | <b>119 Davis Road, Suite-D</b>                                |                           |
|                              | <b>Augusta, GA 30907</b>                                      |                           |
| <b>Telephone</b>             |   |                           |
| Business #                   | <b>Business Number</b>  |                           |
| FAX #                        | <b>FAX Number</b>   |                           |
| <b>Internet</b>              |   |                           |
| Email                        | <b>Office Email</b>   |                           |
| Website                      | <b>Www.MSRIHOMES.com</b>                                      |                           |
| <b>Office Hours</b>          |   |                           |
|                              | Monday – Friday   | <b>10:30 AM – 6:30 PM</b> |
|                              | Saturday  | By appointment only       |
|                              | Sunday  | <b>Closed</b>             |
|                              | Holidays  | <b>Closed</b>             |
| <b>Emergency information</b> |   |                           |
|                              | Call <b>706.210.2646</b> choose emergency option, <b>#500</b> |                           |

# Protect Your Rental and Credit History

Some day you will eventually move out of the property. It is important that during your residency, you care for your rental history and credit. Most likely, you will either rent again or purchase a home. In either case, you will need good rental references and a good credit report. Avoid late rent payments, care for the property, and move out properly. Give MSRI the pleasure of being able to provide a good reference for you when you vacate the property.

## Rental/lease agreement

You received a copy of your rental/lease agreement, including maintenance instructions, move in checklist, and any other necessary documentation. We recommend that you keep this paperwork with this Handbook for easy reference. Please always remember a rental/lease agreement is a binding agreement. If you have any questions regarding your lease, please call Administration (ext. 101).

## Moving-Out Checklist

There is a great checklist in this package for when you are moving that will assist you when vacating the home. You will find the Moving-Out Checklist in the back of this handbook.

## Utility/Cable Companies

When you rented the property, MSRI cancels the utilities, in the owner's name, on the 2nd<sup>d</sup> day of your rental agreement. To avoid discontinuation of service, contact the utility companies immediately. The move in checklist contains the telephone numbers of the utility services.

## Rental payments

Rent is due on the first of each month and late on the second and a 10% late fee is charged if not received by the fifth. If you know that you will have a delay or problem paying by the due date, contact administration or our office team immediately. Lack of communication can affect your payment record.

MSRI receives rental payments by:

- US mail
- In the MSRI office
- By using ACH (Automated Clearing House) - this automatically takes your rental payment directly from your bank and deposits it into the MSRI bank, saving you time.

MSRI does NOT accept rental payments in:

- Cash
- Rolled coin
- Credit cards
- Debit cards
- Post-dated checks

## Fees/charges

If you fail to pay rent on time and in full, you could incur the following charges:

- Late fee – the MSRI late fee is 10% of the monthly rental amount if rent is not received by the fifth.
- Service fee – the MSRI service fee is \$ 150.00, if the dispossessory is served because your rent is not received in a timely manner.



- Maintenance charge – MSRI will bill you if you have made an appointment with a vendor but failed to meet them at the scheduled time. If MSRI receives a service call billing, you are responsible for reimbursement.

**Maintenance reimbursement**

Generally, MSRI assigns a vendor to perform work you request in your residence. However, if you have contacted MSRI and requested to perform a minor maintenance item and MSRI has agreed to reimburse you:

- Pay the bill and send the receipt to MSRI. MSRI will reimburse the amount due to you.
- **Do NOT deduct the amount from your rent.**

## Care of the Property

**Getting to know your residence**

When you move into a property, it is helpful to know where important items are located. Take the time to know or locate the:

- Main circuit breaker in the event power goes out
- Gas shut off valve – turn off during emergencies/disasters for safety
- The main water shutoff valve in case of major flooding
- Water shutoff valves below the sinks and behind toilets in case of water leaks
- GFI plug(s) – so you can check them if your plugs or appliances in the bathroom, kitchen, patio or garage fail to work
- Electric and/or gas meters to check your utility bills
- Method of cleaning for the oven so you use the right products (e.g. Glass top use only glass top cleaner and nonabrasive cleaning rag)
- Time bake knobs on the oven—in the event the oven will not work, these may be turned on

If you are uncertain about any of the above items, contact Administration (extension 101) for help.

|                                    | <b>Location</b>   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Main Circuit Breaker               |   |
| Gas Shutoff Valve                  |   |
| Main Water Shutoff Valve           |   |
| Water shutoff below sinks & toilet |   |
| GFI Plug                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input type="checkbox"/> Patio<br><input type="checkbox"/> ½ Bath <input type="checkbox"/> Bath1 <input type="checkbox"/> Bath 2 |
| Water Heater                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas or <input type="checkbox"/> Electric   |
|                                    |   |

## Maintenance

When you rented the property, your lease contained detailed maintenance instructions. Please review them before requesting a work order. MSRI has more tips in this handbook.

### Tenant Renovations/Alterations

It is the MSRI policy that tenants do not do repairs or alterations. You agreed to this in the MSRI rental agreement/lease. If you do want to make a special request for renovation or repair to the property:

- Submit your request in writing or through the Resident Portal before making any changes
- Do not proceed with any work until you are notified by MSRI
- MSRI will consult the owners to see if the request is acceptable to them
- If the request is acceptable to the owner, tenants must do one of the following prior to vacating the property:
  - Leave the alterations if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair
  - Return the property to its original state if this is part of the owner's condition to accept the alteration/repair and pay for any necessary repairs to restore the alteration/repair to its original state
  - Sign an MSRI agreement regarding the alteration/repair

### Tenant Maintenance responsibilities

The property owner has a duty to maintain your residence to uniform codes of safety for landlord/tenant law. Therefore, MSRI has provided you with the Resident Portal or the form in this manual so you may submit a Work Order Requests when there are legitimate repairs. We want you to report maintenance items.

However, there are items that are the tenant's responsibility and we have listed them again (please refer to the 5-page maintenance addendum for more details on the list below):

- Replacing smoke alarm batteries
- Replacing light bulbs with the correct size
- Replacing HVAC filters every month.
- Reporting non-functioning smoke alarms immediately if batteries do not solve the problem
- Reporting all necessary repairs
- Professional steam cleaning and spot cleaning of carpets while residing in the property
- Normal insect control, roaches, fleas etc.
- Landscape cleanup if a service is not provided
- Reporting lack of landscape cleanup if a service IS provided in your rental agreement
- Landscape watering unless there is a HOA who takes care of the watering.
- Reporting malfunctioning irrigation systems or sprinklers, even if there is an HOA
- Disposal of all garbage in the proper receptacles and using the weekly pick up service
- Disposal of animal feces on the property even if you do not have a pet
- If the residence has a fireplace, check to see if damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace. Use caution and care when operating the fireplace and disposing of ashes or coals. Do not dispose of coals in the fireplace until they have cooled outside for a week.
- Disposing of toxic waste properly in accordance with local and county laws

## Procedures for requesting maintenance

### Before calling MSRI

1. Determine if there is a true emergency or a non-emergency.
2. Check to see if you can determine the cause of the problem that you are experiencing, unless you have an emergency. Read examples of various problems in your maintenance addendum.

### **If there is an emergency**

There are few emergencies. An emergency is a life-threatening situation such as a fire, flood and/or uncontrollable water, electrical problem, smell of gas, etc.:

- Emergencies causing immediate danger such as fire, call 911
- Emergencies involving gas call the gas company and if necessary, 911
- Emergencies involving IMMEDIATE electrical danger, call the utility service or 911,
- After contacting one of the above sources, then call the MSRI office and report the problem.
- Emergencies such as backed up plumbing, flooding, call the MSRI, 706.210.2646, extension 500, and if necessary, call 911.
- An emergency is NOT heat, but MSRI recognizes this is important and will make it a priority with vendors to have the heat working as soon as is possible.
- An emergency is not air-conditioning, non-working dishwasher, sprinklers, etc. If it's over 80 degrees outside, feel free to call me so I can put a work order in the front of the line for you with the HVAC companies the next day.

### **Non-emergencies:**

- Fill out a tenant "work order" request form. Fax, mail, or bring the request to the MSRI office.
- Work orders are available in this handbook, on the MSRI website – Resident Portal, and in the MSRI office.
- A MSRI representative will assign a vendor to contact you.
- MSRI does not give vendors keys to the residences.
- Vendors are required to make appointments with tenants.
- Remember, this is a NON-EMERGENCY item and in most cases, the vendor will not be able to make an appointment immediately.
- Failure to show at an appointment can mean a charge to you. Therefore, be certain to call the MSRI office as soon as possible if you are unable to make the appointment.
- If you do not hear from a vendor or repairperson within 2 – 3 business days, call the MSRI office and inform our Office Team that a vendor has not contacted you.
- A MSRI staff member will contact the vendor to find out the cause of the delay, and then inform you when to expect the vendor to call.
- After a repair has taken place, if you have trouble, call MSRI and state you had a recent repair but there is still a problem.
- **Recent repair** means within the last 60 days and pest control work means **within 30 days**.
- If you fail to report an unsolved recent repair, and there is further damage or expense, you may be responsible for the cost, per your rental agreement.

## Preventative cleaning tips

Cleaning tips were included in the maintenance addendum with your rental/lease agreement. Here are more tips:

Cleaning is easier when you use a “preventative approach.”

- Always put away food and wipe up food debris.
- Clean pet bowls regularly to avoid attracting ants and other insects.
- Do not allow grease to build up in kitchens; use a sponge and soapy water regularly on counter tops, stovetops, and hood filters.
- Avoid cooking with very high heat. This will add to more grease build-up and cause damage to appliances. It can also be dangerous.
- Avoid mildew by venting rooms and bathrooms properly, particularly after baths and showers.
- Clean bathroom tile or other surfaces regularly to prevent the buildup of grime.
- Clean toilets regularly to avoid buildup of grime, rings, and mildew.
- Mop tile, wood, and linoleum to avoid “dust bunnies” and the buildup of grime.
- Do not use wax on linoleum or tile.
- Do not use “cleaning products” on tile
- Vacuum all flooring regularly, particularly carpets. This will save in carpet cleaning bills.
- Regularly pick up debris and pet feces in outside areas.

## Additional cleaning tips

It is not always necessary to purchase expensive cleaning products. Vinegar, baking soda, ammonia, and salt are some inexpensive cleaning products with many uses. They also are helpful for people who have allergies to cleaning products. They can be better for the environment than commercial products

- Air freshener:
  - Place a bowl of vinegar in the kitchen or bathroom to absorb odors
- Drains
  - For a great once-a-month drain cleaner, pour 1/2 cup baking soda into the drain, follow with 1/2 cup white vinegar -- it will foam. Cover and let sit 30 minutes and then flush with cool water.
  - For stubborn, slow-running drains, pour 1-cup baking soda and 1-cup salt down the drain. Follow this with 2 quarts boiling water. Let sit 30 minutes, and then flush with cool water.
- Tile countertops:
  - To clean ceramic tile, where mold and mildew accumulate, use a combination of 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup white vinegar, 1-gallon warm water, and 1-cup ammonia.
  - Alternatively, regularly clean kitchen surfaces by using a spray bottle mixed with 1/2-cup vinegar and a quart of water.
- Glass cleaner:
  - When glass-cleaning products leave residue on bathroom mirrors, mix 3 tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a clean plastic spray bottle.
  - Spray glass and wipe with a clean paper towel.
- Dishwasher:
  - Empty the dishwasher, pour in a 1/4 cup of vinegar, and run the dishwasher again.
  - Even if you prefer not to use the dishwasher, run at least once a week to keep seals from becoming hard and cracked.
- Refrigerators
  - Clean regularly and place a cup of baking soda in a bowl on a refrigerator shelf to absorb odors.
  - A cup of dry unused coffee grinds can also absorb odors when placed on a refrigerator shelf.
- Washing machine:
  - A half cup of baking soda can be added to the washing machine with regular detergent to help with mild odors
- Toilets:
  - Remove waterline marks in the toilet bowl by pouring in 2 cups of white vinegar. Let soak overnight, then flush to rinse. If this does not work, rub the waterline mark with a wet pumice stone.
- Carpet stains:
  - Vacuum the carpet if the stain is dry.
  - If the stain is still wet, blot gently to remove excess – blot, do NOT rub.
  - Lightly soak the carpet stain with clean water first to remove the stain – blot, do NOT rub.

- If the stain remains, mix a 3 Tablespoons of vinegar with a quart of water in a spray bottle and spray the stain; blot again; do NOT rub.
- If this fails, consult a professional carpet cleaner immediately; the longer you wait may mean the stain may not come out.
- Carpet odor:
  - Regular vacuuming cures most carpet odors, but if carpet odors persist, lightly sprinkle the carpet with baking soda and vacuum thoroughly, removing all baking soda from carpet. Repeat if necessary.

### **Energy saving tips**

Saving water is important for the environment and can mean a lower utility bill for your residence as well:

- Always report water leaks to MSRI as soon as possible
  - Report water dripping under sinks
  - Running toilets are big water wasters
  - Report malfunctioning sprinklers
  - Report standing pools of water
  - Report malfunctioning water appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines that come with the property
- Run the dishwasher when it is fully loaded.
- Replace your old washing machine with an energy efficient one – you could save the cost of the machine in water and energy bills.
- Check water hoses on washing machines for leaks; change hoses every three years.
- Adjust the water level to match the load, using less water for small loads.
- Avoid using flushing toilets to dispose of ordinary trash.
- Take shorter showers.
- Avoid letting the water continually run while shaving, brushing your teeth, or washing your face
- Be sure your water heater temperature is set properly. Note: do not turn the water heater up to “hi,” this is a dangerous temperature level.
- Counsel all children on how to prevent wasting water.
- Do not “over water” landscaping; it is not healthy for plants and simply wastes water.

### **To lower air-conditioning bills:**

- During warm or hot months, close the windows and doors to your home early in the day to “keep cool air in,” particularly when the air-conditioner is running.
- Close window coverings on the sunny side of the house during different times of the day; this can lower the temperature dramatically.
- Replace the air filter often and with the right size, at a minimum of every three months, monthly if you smoke. A clean filter helps the air-conditioner to run more efficiently.
- When leaving your residence, turn the air-conditioner up a few degrees, a closed house without activity normally stays cooler. This is particularly important when going on vacation.
- There is no reason to keep the residence in a frigid state while you are gone, but do not turn the air off on very hot days – it will only take longer and more energy to cool down.

## To lower heating bills:

- During the cooler months, keep all windows and doors tightly closed.
- Report any major drafts to the MSRI office.
- Use a “reasonable” level of heat in the residence. Sometimes, turning down the heat just a few degrees can reduce an energy bill.
- Turn the heat down during the night and use warm covers and comforters.
- When leaving home, turn down the temperature on the thermostat.
- Do not turn the heat completely off. It will take more heat for a cold house than it will save. In addition, this could cause pipes to freeze, which will cause more problems.
- If there is a fireplace, close the damper if you are not using it, but please be sure to open the fireplace if you do start a fire.
- Replace the furnace filter often, at a minimum of every three months. A clean filter helps the furnace to run more efficiently

## Renters insurance

Per the terms of the lease, you are required to have renter’s insurance to cover your possessions.

Property owners generally carry a standard fire and liability policy, and have additional coverage with “landlord/rental” insurance, but they normally cannot cover the contents or possessions of the resident. The reason that insurance companies do not provide this type of coverage is because they are “non-owner” occupied properties. Therefore, it is very important for you to have adequate insurance coverage for your contents.

If you think it is not important, sit down and write out a list of your possessions in one column. In a second column, list how much it would cost to “replace” them. You will be surprised how the list can really add up.

Contact an insurance agent if you do not have renters insurance. You can find them in the telephone directory, search the Internet, or ask a friend. The Internet can also provide both information and comparison-shopping. **To avoid a loss and contract default, acquire renters insurance now.**

## Safety Tips

The safety of you and your family is important to MSRI and many things can affect it. Here are some tips to follow:

- Unplug all heat-producing appliances like toasters, irons, and coffee makers when they are not in use to prevent fire hazards.
- Never leave a stove or oven unattended; turn off all stove and oven appliances when you leave the house.
- Never leave heating pads and electric blankets on indefinitely and turn them off when you leave the residence to prevent fire hazards.
- Never leave water running unattended in a plugged bathtub or when leaving the residence.
- If you have an upstairs bathroom and you see water in the ceiling below, particularly in a light fixture, report the leak immediately to MSRI.
- Do not operate electrical appliances while standing or sitting in water.

- Avoid using blow dryers, curling irons, radios, TVs, or other appliances while in a bathtub or over a sink filled with water.
- If you have small children, use child protector plugs when you are not using outlets
- Do not overload extension cords with too many appliances.
- Place lamps on level surfaces and use the correct wattage.
- Avoid running extension cords over walkways, under rugs, or any other place that could cause tripping.
- If you suspect an electrical problem, report it to MSRI immediately.
- Do not remove smoke alarms, particularly if they are beeping. Smoke alarms are for safety and removing them can endanger all residents and guests. Change the batteries if needed.
- Do not allow children to leave toys on walkways and sidewalks.
- Replace outside light bulbs so you can utilize lights properly when it is dark.
- Report any exposed tree roots to the MSRI office
- Keep a portable fire extinguisher in the kitchen and the garage; they are available in hardware supply stores.
- If you use a grill or BBQ, use common sense, never leave grills unattended.
- If you have a fireplace, be sure to store hot ashes and coals away from the residence. Do not place ashes in garbage receptacles unless certain they are cold.
- Do not store fireplace wood against the residence.
- Always be certain the damper is open before starting a fire in the fireplace.
- Do not build “roaring” fires in the fireplace; build reasonable fires suited to the size of the fireplace.

### **Holiday tips**

Everyone enjoys the different holidays, but it is important to exercise care during the celebrations and remove decorations when each season is over.

- Hang lights and decorations properly and carefully.
- Before hanging, check for bad plugs and loose wires. If you find defects, dispose of the lights.
- Only use lights and decorations during holiday seasons; remove them immediately when the season ends.
- Dispose of holiday trees properly; never burn them in a fireplace.
- If you use extension cords, do not overload, do not staple them to the residence, and if outside, use only cords approved for outside use.
- Never leave holiday lights on when leaving your residence to avoid fire danger.
- For fireworks celebrations:
  - Do not use illegal, dangerous, or explosive devices.
  - Only buy legal fireworks and check where you can use them.
  - Use common sense safety rules with fireworks.
  - Do not use fireworks in or around your residence.
  - Keep all fireworks away from any dry grass, trees, or roofs.
  - Attend a fireworks celebration instead of buying them and enjoy the fun without the responsibility.



## Vacation checklist

When going on vacation, here are items to check before leaving:

- If going out of town for an extended period, please notify MSRI how long you will be gone, and supply an emergency telephone number. Then should any problems arise concerning your residence, there is someone to contact.
- Check your rent payment to ensure it will not become delinquent. It would be a sad thing to come home to a late notice and charges.
- Notify all necessary parties such as your next-door neighbors, the paper delivery person, the post office, or any related service people. By doing so, you will avoid any panic that something is wrong.
- Select someone to pick up items on your doorstep to avoid giving signals to dishonest people.
- If leaving a vehicle in the driveway, remove any valuables and garage door openers that can be stolen, giving access to your home.
- Put garbage cans away or arrange for someone to take care of it.
- Place valuables and jewelry in a safe deposit box.
- Avoid leaving a message on your answering device telling people you are out of town and for how long.
- Set timers on interior lights, to deter burglars.
- Be sure to check all windows, window locks, and doors before leaving.
- If you have an alarm, be sure to set it.
- Turn off the water valve to your washing machine.
- Turn off all appliances, large and small, such as stove burners, coffee pots, irons, curling irons, etc.
- Unplug TVs and computers in the event of lightning or power surges.
- Turn your water heater to low or “vacation” setting, but do not turn the water heater off.
- Anything else living in your house besides you, such as plants or pets? Then be sure to water plants and have someone take care of your animals. Do not leave pets in the residence unless a reliable person is going to care for them daily

## Drug free housing

MSRI has a drug-free policy for tenants and it is a requirement of your tenancy as outlined in your rental agreement. However, people can encounter drug problems from other residents from the lowest income neighborhood to the highest. We want you to be aware of signs of potential drug problems in any neighborhood.

- Do not approach a house or building if you smell a strong chemical odor. Report it to the authorities. Drug houses may contain volatile chemicals and can easily explode.
- Do not pick up abandoned purses, suitcases, filled bottles, or packages. People place “meth labs” in objects of many shapes and sizes. They are highly explosive and dangerous; report any unusual or abandoned object to the authorities. Do not attempt to examine it yourself.
- If you see constant pedestrian or vehicle traffic in your neighborhood at all times of the day and particularly at night, it could be a drug house, particularly if you observe high security precautions surrounding the property.
- First, report unusual and disturbing activities in your neighborhood to the authorities, and then notify MSRI of your suspicions as soon as possible.
- Educate and train children of all ages for the signs of drug activities or a drug house.

- Be aware and be alert – a drug house or drug activities are a danger anywhere and to everyone.

### **Emergency/disasters**

Unfortunately, emergencies and disasters happen all around the world. The best solution is to be prepared. In the back of this Handbook, you will find a convenient Emergency/Disaster Checklist that has items to do before and during an emergency/disaster.

We are also providing you with our “**Resident Emergency/Disaster Handbook**.” There you will find information on how to handle a true emergency or disaster.

There are different emergencies

- Maintenance emergencies:
  - MSRI outlined in the 5-page maintenance addendum that you signed during your move in what to do for emergencies such as flooding, electrical, gas, etc.
  - We have also reviewed them on page 9 of this handbook.
  - Please follow the maintenance instructions and call MSRI when appropriate.
  - MSRI requests that you treat the MSRI staff courteously while under stress of the situation – we will do everything we can to help you as soon as possible.
- Area emergencies or disasters:
  - Be prepared and use the MSRI Emergency/Disaster checklist enclosed with this information.
  - When major emergencies or disasters such as a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or some other force of nature occur, everyone experiences great inconvenience and difficulty. Remember this and be considerate of others and the degrees of different problems.
  - MSRI requests that you call emergency services first in a disaster.
  - Then notify the MSRI office as soon as possible what has happened.
  - MSRI will assign priorities to work and during an area emergency/disaster, will work to assist you as much as possible
  - When calling the MSRI office, we ask you to be patient and calmly state what problems you are experiencing. We will handle the problems as quickly as possible.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Application Process

### Q1: Does all adults over age 18 have to fill out an application?

Yes, however, if an adult is either a child or dependent of the Lessee(s), then only the criminal background check will be completed and they will be added as occupants to the lease.

If you are married, both spouses have to submit an application and be a Lessee on the Lease.

If you are roommates, all roommates must submit an application and be added as a Lessee. Additionally, a Roommate Agreement will have to be completed as an addendum to the lease agreement.

### Q2: What will prevent the application from being accepted?

1. The rent to income ratio is too high, or the debt to income is too high.
2. A felony or violent crime may prevent approval depending on the crime and timing.
3. An eviction or a judgment involving a lease.
4. An undischarged bankruptcy or foreclosure in the last 18 months.
5. Three or more late payments in the last 12 months, depending on the reason.
6. The source of income cannot be independently validated.
7. Rental history.

An application may be accepted with an additional security deposit of either 1.5 or 2 times the rent or rent pre-payment.

Our agents and office staff cannot “prequalify” an applicant. In fact, they are prohibited from discussing your credit history with you beyond explaining the application qualifications. All applicants must be submitted either through the online application or by completing the application and delivering it to our office or by email, fax or mail.

### Q3: My application has been accepted, what next?

The lease will be sent to all Lessees by email for electronic signature. Once you and any other Lessees have reviewed the lease and agreed to the terms, you must submit the Reservation Deposit to have the home removed from the market (i.e. advertising, MLS, agents showing the home).

Once the lease agreement is signed and the reservation deposit paid, you will receive a Welcome Email explaining how to set up your move-in date and additional information.

### Q4: What is the reservation deposit?

The reservation deposit is equal to one month’s rent and is required to reserve the home by removing it from the market, in other words, remove the advertisements and stop the showings.

After the home is removed from marketing, if you do not take occupancy (i.e. move-in) then you forfeit your reservation deposit.

At the time of the move-in inspection, the reservation deposit is deposited toward your security deposit in escrow.

## Leasing

### Q1: Do I have to sign a lease?

Yes, all residents will be required to sign a lease.

### Q2: Does my spouse have to sign the lease?

Yes, all spouses must sign the lease. If you are military, the same orders that allows you to terminate the lease early will also allow your spouse to terminate the lease and relocate or if you are deploying, they may continue to lease the home.

### Q3: What is the length of the lease?

Unless specified otherwise in the agreement, the lease is for one year with a one year renewal clause - unless either party notifies the other at least sixty (60) days prior to the initial lease term expiring. However, your lease may vary, so please refer to the Lease Agreement for lease specifics.

## Move-In Process

### Q1: What do I need to do before I move-in?

1. Review your welcome packet and go to the Resident Resource page at [www.msrihomes.com](http://www.msrihomes.com) to familiarize yourself with the available information and options.
2. Go ahead and log into your account through the web portal. Let our office know if you have any questions by sending us an email through the [www.msrihomes.com](http://www.msrihomes.com)-> Resident Resource's ->New Resident -> Contact Us option to ask for assistance, request a change of your move-in date, etc. and if needed, the best call back phone number and time.
3. Turn on all utilities in your name for the property including Electricity and Water as of the date of the move-in inspection.

Refer to the utilities listing at [www.msrihomes.com](http://www.msrihomes.com)->Resident Resource->New Resident-> Utility.

If you are not sure if gas is required, please contact Atlanta Gas at [www.aglc.com](http://www.aglc.com)

OR 1-877-GASCHOICE to determine if gas is used at the property.

4. Obtain Renters Insurance. It is required per the terms of your lease to cover your possessions. Why?

Property owners generally carry a standard fire and liability policy, and have additional coverage with "landlord/rental" insurance, but they normally cannot cover the contents or possessions of the resident. The reason that insurance companies do not provide this type of coverage is because they are "non-owner" occupied properties. Therefore, it is very important for you to have adequate insurance coverage for your contents.

If you think it is not important, sit down and write out a list of your possessions in one column. In a second column, list how much it would cost to "replace" them. You will be surprised how the list can really add up.

Contact an insurance agent if you do not have renters insurance. You can find them in the telephone directory, search the Internet, or ask a friend. The Internet can also

provide both information and comparison-shopping. **To avoid a loss and contract default, acquire renters insurance now.**

5. All deposits are required to have been paid *and* deposited at the time of move-in. This means the payments have to have been made to MSRI and Deposited prior to your taking possession. Since online payments and some checks may take up to five business days to clear the banks, if we have not received the payment within seven days of your move-in date, please plan on paying with either a certified check or money orders at the time of move-in.

The rents are due before your may take occupancy, as well as the balance of the security deposit if you owed deposit than received as the Reservation deposit.

If your lease beginning date and the move-in date are for after the 1<sup>st</sup>, then your rents will be prorated for the month. If you are moving in on the 25<sup>th</sup> or after, the pro-rated current month and next month's rents are due at move-in.

MSRI never accepts cash. Payments made at the time of move-in must be in the form of certified checks or money orders.

MSRI cannot allow a tenant to take occupancy until the full security deposit and the rents have been received.

## **Q2: What happens at the move-in inspection?**

Your agent will meet you at the home either on the day you are moving in or before your move-in date for the move-in inspection. You both will do a walkthrough of the property. Your agent will note anything you find regarding the condition of the home on your move-in inspection (MI Inspection) form. You will not be responsible for anything noted on the move-in inspection when you move-out, so be sure to have the agent note any damage you notice. The agent should also keep a list of any last minute repairs that need to be completed (e.g. blinds, loose handles, etc.).

Review the list for completeness before you sign the MI Inspection form. Remember you may be responsible for any damage noted during the Move-Out Inspection if it was not included on the MI Inspection.

The home will have been rekeyed just prior to your moving-in or be scheduled to be completed at the time of move-in. You will receive 2 copies of the keys.

## **Maintenance**

### **Q1: Who provides maintenance for my home?**

As the Lessee you are responsible for maintaining the home per the terms of your Lease, which includes changing air filters every month, lawn maintenance, cleanliness, and pest control (other than rodents, which are the landlord's responsibility), per the terms of your lease.

If you live in a community that provides maintenance services (such as lawn care) it will be included in your lease agreement.

### **Q2: Who provides service and repairs for my home?**

MSRI is to be contacted for *all* repairs and service to the home.

If there are any structural or system issues with the home, the landlord is responsible for paying for the repairs that includes: appliance (refrigerator, oven, dishwasher, garbage disposal) electrical, decking, HVAC, plumbing, sprinkler system, roof, etc. and you are responsible for letting us know in a timely fashion to prevent continued damage to the property.

**Q3: Do I have to pay for the maintenance and/or repairs for my home?**

All maintenance requests or issues resolved by MSRI vendors will be charged to you. For example, having the lawn mower because of HOA complaints or the air filter changed, etc.

All repairs due to structural or system failures are the responsibility of the landlord, unless the issue was caused by usage or neglect.

Examples:

If a toy were stuffed into the plumbing lines, the plumbing repair would be charged to you

If there is a water stain on the ceiling that has gone unreported and extensive damage has occurred, you will be responsible for the damage caused for not reporting the issue.

If the HVAC stops working and the technician reports it froze up because of dirty air filters, then you will be charged for the HVAC repair.

**Q4: How do we make a repair or maintenance request?**

All non-emergency service requests must be made in writing.

If you require routine maintenance or a repair, you may submit your request online through the Resident Portal or by filling out the service request form and either faxing or emailing or mailing it to our office.

Emergency maintenance issues should NOT be submitted online. Please notify us of your urgent need by using our Emergency maintenance phone number (706.210.2646 extension 500).

**Payments**

**Q1: What are my rent payment options?**

- We never accept cash.
- We do not accept partial payments
- You may pay online and set up a recurring payment and not worrying about it.
- You may mail your check to our office to arrive no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- You may pay in our office by check, money order, or certified check through the 5<sup>th</sup>.
- After the 5<sup>th</sup>, only certified checks and money orders are accepted to avoid the late fee.

**Q2: When is rent due and when will the late-fee be charged.**

- Rent is due on the first of the month and late as of 12:00 am on the second.

- Rents are not considered received until they are in our office. If you mail the payment or have your bank send your payments, when the check is written or mailed is not the delivery date.
- There is a grace period through the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month before the late fee is charged.
- Rents may be paid online or by check through the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month.
- After the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month, all payments must be in the form of certified check or money orders.
- Accounts with a balance in which payment is not received by 11:59:59 pm are charged a late fee.

**Q3: If my rent is late, do I need to pay a late fee?**

Yes. The late fee for having an unpaid rent balance by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month is 10% of the monthly rental amount.

Because MSRI cannot accept partial payments, you must include the late fee with your account's outstanding balance in your payment to bring your account up to balance.

Pay or quit notices are sent out on the first business day following the 6<sup>th</sup> for any accounts with unpaid balances.

**Q4: What is the eviction policy?**

Residents may be evicted for non-payment, egregious acts, or failure to follow HOA rules or they are in default of the lease agreement.

MSRI will file the dispossessory on the first business day following the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. After the dispossessory is filed, the court costs and dispossessory fees are also due.

Once the eviction process is started only full payment of the balance due will stop the proceedings. We will not accept partial payments, though the magistrate court will hold the payments for you.

**Military Deployment**

**Q1: Does MSRI honor military service member's early termination for orders?**

Yes. Please submit your notice to vacate at [www.msrihomes.com](http://www.msrihomes.com) ->Resident Resource ->Moving->Vacancy Notice.

And indicate you are vacating due to military orders. Please note that we must have a copy of your orders before you vacate for security deposit to be refunded and your liability for paying rents through your lease term to be waived.

**Q2: What if I am a single parent and I am deployed?**

Can I appoint someone to occupy my home to take care of my children?

Yes. They will need to fill out an application (for a background check only, unless they are being added to the Lease Agreement. Once they are approved, we need an addendum signed adding them to the Lease Agreement as an occupant. We will also need contact information, a copy of the Special Power of Attorney as well as the paperwork showing you've given temporary guardianship of your child/children to your appointee.

**Moving Out**

**Q1: What are the move-out procedures?**



1. Check your lease. If your lease is set to automatically renew without a sixty (60) day notice, be sure to submit your notice before the 60 day renewal period.
2. You may submit your notice on line at [www.msmrihomes.com](http://www.msmrihomes.com) ->Resident Resource->Moving->Vacancy Notice or by printing the Notice to vacate form and either mail, email, fax or deliver it to our office.
3. You must provide the vacancy date so the home's availability may be advertised and your move-out inspection may be scheduled. All move-out inspections must be scheduled M-F between 10:00am and 6:00pm.
4. Review the Move-Out procedures regarding cleaning, repairs, yard work, etc. in the Resident Resource->Moving

**Q2: What if I am vacating before the end of my lease term?**

Unless you have military orders, there is no early termination. That means you will forfeit your security deposit and be responsible for the rents through the lease term or until another tenant takes occupancy (actually moves-in).

Besides the forfeiture of the security deposit and the rents due through the lease term, any move-out requirements such as having the home professionally cleaned, professional carpet cleaning, utilities and lawn maintenance, court fees, rekey fees and repairs will also be due.

All unpaid fees will be turned over to collections company or taken to court for judgment.

MSRI must work to ensure all parties adhere to the terms of the lease agreement.

**Q3: Will rent be prorated if I move out other than the last day of the month?**

It Depends.

You owe rents through the end of your lease term, but if the following events occur you will be owed a refund,

- a) If you paid rents for a full month, but your lease-term ended *during* the month, then you will certainly be reimbursed the overpaid rents.
- b) You paid for the last month of your lease-term but you moved out on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. If a new tenant takes occupancy before the end of the month, then you will be refunded for the days you both paid rents.

For example: Your rents for any rental period, must be paid by the fifth of the month to avoid late fees so you decide to pay for the full next month only to learn three days later MSRI has another tenant ready to move in on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. As soon as the new tenant takes occupancy (i.e. moves-in) the rents you paid for the same days will be refunded to you.

**Q4: Will rent be prorated if I move out other than the last day of the month?**

The month will be divided into 30 equal periods, despite the number of days in any given month. The rent will be assessed only for the days that you lived in housing.

**Q5: When will my security deposit be refunded?**

After the move-out inspection is completed, the close-out will be prepared and the security deposit refunded within 30days.



The check and close-out paperwork will be mailed to the address that you provided on your vacancy notice or during the move-out inspection.

## **Buying a home?**

### **Q1: Could I buy the home I am leasing.**

If you are interested in buying a home you are leasing, we will contact the landlord and find out for you. If the owner is interested in selling we will work with the homeowner to determine a fair selling price.

Because we are representing the homeowner in the lease, we are still representing the homeowner during the potential sale of the home to the tenant. If this is the first time you are buying home, we strongly recommend you find a buyer's agent to represent you.

### **Q2: Would Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. represent us as our buyer's agent if we want to look for a home to buy?**

Certainly. Be sure to let us know you are interested in buying a home and an agent will help you begin. And ask us about our buyer's rebate.

## Giving your notice

Eventually, you will move, and we want you to be prepared when this is necessary.

MSRI tenants are required to give a 60-day notice or a 30-day notice for military service members in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 44-7-2. You may complete, sign and then drop off, email or mail the Notice to Vacate form to our office. If you complete the Notice to vacate online, it must be submitted with ALL of the email addresses that we have on file for all Lessees.

Whether by form or online, you will be required to you indicate that you have read and agree to the terms, as follows:

1. I (we) understand I (we) will be receiving a follow up letter or email from MSRI regarding my (our) move and receipt of this notice. If I do not receive the notice within 2-business days, I will administration at [admin@msricorp.com](mailto:admin@msricorp.com) or 706.210.2646 extension: 101.
2. I (we) understand I (we) are obligated to pay the rent, keep the utilities on in mine (our) name and, maintain the lawn and pest control until the end of mine (our) notice or the lease term, whichever is greater. If I (we) are a military servicemember(s) and have received or will be receiving orders in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 44-7-2, I will provide copies of mine (our) orders prior to vacating.
3. Unless I (we) are a military servicemember(s) who has received or will be receiving military orders in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 44-7-2, If I (we) are vacating the property *before* the end of the term, I (we) understand that my (our) security deposit transmittal will be forfeited (will not be returned), and I (we) must settle any security deposits with the other tenants on the rental/lease agreement.
4. I (we) understand that I (we) are obligated to pay any unpaid repairs, rents, fees, and other charges due and they may be deducted from any available tenant deposits; and (I) we understand that any balance due beyond the available tenant deposits will be due immediately; and I (we) must settle any disputes regarding the balance due with the other tenants on the rental/lease agreement.
5. I (we) understand the balance of our security deposit transmittal will be sent after vacating the property and within the 30-days required by law. We understand MSRI does not issue the security deposit until after I (we) vacate the premises and a walk-through is completed and issues noted on the Move Out are resolved and expenses deducted from the security deposit.
6. I (we) understand if I (we) fail to fulfill the terms of my (our) obligations, a negative credit report reflecting my (our) credit may be submitted to a credit-reporting agency.

You must receive back a Notice of Receipt from our office to the email you have provided for the notice to be deemed received. If you have not received the notice within 2 business days, please contact our office at [admin@msricorp.com](mailto:admin@msricorp.com) or 706.210.2646 extension: 101.

## Before giving notice

- Check your rental agreement/lease to see if you are eligible to give notice. It will specifically state when your lease term expires. A lease is a binding agreement for a set period and you may still be bound to the lease.
- If you need to move and you are still committed to a lease period, contact your MSRI management team to discuss your options.
- Notices must be in writing. The day MSRI receives the notice is the date the notice begins. For example, do not fill out a notice with the current date and mail it five days later, thinking the date on the notice or the date you mailed it is the notice date. The effective notice date is the date the notice is received by MSRI.
- You may either print the Resident Notice to Vacate and sign it and then mail it, email it to [admin@msricorp.com](mailto:admin@msricorp.com), or fax it to our office. MSRI will accept the online Tenant Notice to Vacate only if all Lessees fill out their names and the email address we have on record for them.
- Remember to supply a forwarding address and telephone number for your security deposit refund and close out documentation.

## Setting up your move out appointment

- After you submit your Notice to Vacate, MSRI will send you a verification that the notice has been received. This will instruct you on what to do during the notice period, and how to set up your move out appointment.
- MSRI only performs move out appointments during weekdays, **10 am to 6 pm**.
- It is the responsibility of the resident to deliver all keys (doors, pool, storage, etc.) and openers (i.e. garage) or remotes (i.e. fireplace, fans, etc.) to MSRI, either at the move out appointment or delivery to the MSRI office.
- Failure to deliver keys, openers, and remotes will incur additional charges for replacing these lost items. Remember the cost to have the home rekeyed will be charged and deducted from the security deposit, if available.
- Use the MSRI Move-Out Checklist so you remember important details.

## Preparing the Property

When you are ready to move, if you have questions on how to prepare your residence, please call your MSRI management team, and discuss your concerns with them. We want your move to be a pleasant and successful one. The following are the steps to take for your move.

### Replacements

- The following must be in working order to avoid charges when moving out:
  - Burned out light bulbs
  - Non-working smoke detector batteries
  - Missing doorstops
  - Furnace filters - change the filter just before you vacate the property, and please make sure you use the correct size.

### Cleaning

- Tenant caused dirt is not normal “wear and tear.”
- The home must be completed by a professional cleaning company and they have the property clean throughout the interior and the exterior.
- The receipt provided to MSRI at the time of move-out or prior. Without a receipt from a professional, MSRI will hire a carpet cleaning company and deduct the expense from the security deposit.
- Only receipts from a professional and reputable cleaning company will be accepted.
- Call MSRI for a recommendation on a professional who will give you reasonable rates on cleaning and who we know will guarantee their work.
- If you hire another professional cleaner, the cleaner must guarantee their work to the satisfaction of MSRI, and a receipt is required during the walk through inspection. If the home is not cleaned to professional standards, it will be up to you to contact the cleaner and have arranged to have the cleaning completed within 24hrs after the walk through. If the cleaner has not resolved the issues with 24hrs, MSRI will hire a professional cleaner to complete the work and deduct the cleaning expense from the security deposit.
- Please review and print the Move-Out Checklist for yours and your professional cleaner’s reference.
- The checklist is a guide for the needed cleaning items to be completed, but the quality of the cleaning is what the *professional* is responsible for achieving and for your reference we have included the following examples:
  - Cleaning a window entails cleaning the windows inside and out, window sills and door casings, mini-blinds
  - Cleaning the kitchen includes, wiping out drawers and shelves, all appliances, cleaning the microwave or vent filters, cleaning the refrigerator and dry well - DO NOT turn off the refrigerator.
  - Cleaning the bathrooms includes sinks, toilets, bath tubs, showers, vanities, *light fixtures*,
  - Please don’t let your professional forget the fireplaces and the removal of cobwebs inside and out.
- Remember to pick up debris and animal feces on the exterior of the property and place them in the proper trash receptacles.

## **Draperies/window coverings/windows**

- Do NOT wash draperies.
- You are not expected to dry clean draperies unless:
  - You have caused excessive soil or allowed water damage from open windows. Draperies with water stains could require replacement. Discuss this with your management team.
  - You have not been using the draperies provided and have not kept them in good condition
- Wipe all mini blinds – do not use harsh chemicals on the blinds.
- Clean all windows inside and out.

## **Carpet Cleaning**

- Carpet cleaning must be completed by a professional carpet company and the receipt provided to MSRI at the time of move-out or prior. Without a receipt from a professional, MSRI will hire a carpet cleaning company and deduct the expense from the security deposit.
- Do NOT rent carpet-cleaning machines, use home cleaning machines, or employ chemical cleaning companies. Only professional truck-mounted steam cleaning from a reputable company is accepted.
- Call MSRI for a recommendation on a carpet cleaner who will give you reasonable rates on carpet cleaning and who we know will guarantee their work.
- If you hire another carpet cleaner, the carpet cleaner must guarantee their work to the satisfaction of MSRI, and a receipt is required during the walk through inspection.
- Tenants, please note: MSRI will not reimburse for any carpet cleaning contracted by tenants.
- You will be charged to re-clean the carpets or replace the carpets if you have had pets and any odors and stains re-appear after the carpet has fully dried.
- You will be charged to re-clean the carpets or replace the carpets if you have soiled carpets exceeding normal wear and tear.

## **Pest control**

- If you have a pet, leave an adequate supply of insect/flea foggers. The minimum required is four (4) foggers. If you have three bedrooms, two baths, and 2-car garage home or larger, you must supply a minimum of six (6) foggers. There is a charge if you do not leave the foggers unopened in the property. Foggers are available at the MSRI office for \$25.00 - \$50.00 depending on the home.
- If you do not have a pet, you do not need to supply foggers unless you have not been exercising minimum insect control. If a property is found loaded with ants, spiders, cobwebs, etc., you can incur pest control charges. Therefore, follow the proceedings for using the foggers.
- All foggers must be left unopened and given to agent during walk through inspection.
- MSRI will place and discharge them after the walk-through.
- If you fail to leave the proper number of foggers, there will be a charge.

## **Trash**

- If you have trash that exceeds the normal pickup, you are to arrange to have it hauled away at your expense. If the trash remains on the curb after the move-out date, MSRI will have it hauled away and the expense deducted from the security deposit.
- Place all other trash within the appropriate trash receptacles for normal trash removal.

- Do not overflow trash receptacles.

### **Landscape clean up**

- The outside area is to be neatly mowed, trimmed, pruned, fertilized, and watered for outside areas that apply in your rental contract.
- Remove all trash and debris, placing in the proper receptacles.
- Remove grease or oil drips; dispose of motor oil properly – it does not belong in the garbage receptacles.
- Pick up any animal feces whether you have an animal or not.

### **Painting**

- We request that you do not spackle, putty, or touch up paint unless sure the paint will match.
- Charges can occur if unnecessary painting is required due to tenant painting.
- Charges for painting depend on whether it exceeds normal wear and tear for the length of time in the property. Refer to your lease to regarding the accepted wear and tear for hanging pictures. If anything is hung that requires spackle or putty to conceal, this would not be considered normal wear and tear and you will be responsible for the repair and paint expense.

### **Your security deposit refund**

When you follow the move out procedures, leave the property in good condition, it simplifies the task of refunding your security deposit. MSRI remits security deposit transmittals within 30 days in accordance with the state landlord/tenant law.

### **Applicable Rent Refunds**

If you paid a full month's rent and another tenant moves in and pays rents for that same month, the amount of rents paid by the new tenant for the same period will be mailed to you either with your security deposit refund or if no security deposit refund is due, by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

Rent refunds are only applicable if a new tenant takes possession (moves-in) and occupies the home for the same period that you have already paid rents.

# Appendix 1 – Know Before You Rent

## **BRETTA Disclosure**

Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. is a licensed Real Estate brokerage that in the context of property management, represents the homeowner (i.e. landlord) as our client and residents (i.e. tenants) are our customers. BRETTA requires that we disclose that we represent the homeowner (landlord) in all property *management* transactions.

As licensed agents we are responsible for ensuring that all parties comply with the terms of the Lease, both the landlords and the tenants. That means if something is the landlord's responsibility (e.g. a broken plumbing line), we make sure the landlord understands their responsibility and complies. However, if a toilet is stopped up (e.g. toy in the drain) up because of tenant usage, then the tenant will be charged for the expense.

## **Utilities**

You are responsible for all utility expenses and maintenance expenses for the home unless otherwise noted in your lease agreement. All utilities must be transferred into your name within two (2) business days of your lease begin date to avoid disconnected services.

Please contact the utility company and ask them for the average monthly utility expense for the home you are interest in leasing before you apply.

## **Application Fees**

1. The application fee for individuals who will be on the lease is \$55.00 each.
2. The application fee for married couples is \$75.00.
3. The criminal background check fee for all occupying adults who are not Lessees is \$25.00 ea.

## **Lessees vs. Occupants vs. Guarantors**

A Lessee is anyone who is both guaranteeing the lease and occupying the property. If the individual guaranteeing the lease will not be occupying, they will be a Guarantor rather than a Lessee.

The Guarantor is responsible for the financial obligations of the Lease but they are not occupants and do not have the legal rights of an occupant.

If married, both spouses must be Lessees on the Lease if both spouses will be occupying.

If individuals will be roommates, then all of roommates must be over 18 years of age and be a Lessee. Roommates must also sign a Roommate agreement and provide us with a main point of contact for all Lessees. MSRI will not manage Roommate payments. Either the entire rent is paid on time or Roommates have a late payment and may be subjected to a dispossessory. It is imperative that you carefully consider your roommates and understand the potential consequences of your roommates' actions. If you have any questions regarding roommates, please contact us.

An occupant is someone who has the legal right to occupy the property but are not legally responsible for the rents. An occupant may or may not be a dependent of the Lessees. All occupants 18 and older must also complete an application and have a criminal background check completed. Adult occupants' credit, financial, employment, and rental history will not be processed because their applications are not being processed as a Lessee.



All adults 18 or older must complete an application regardless of their relationship with the applicants. This is because MSRI has to complete a criminal background check on all adult occupants.

### **Military Members**

MSRI honors all early terminations but we must have a copy of the orders prior to vacancy.

### **Pets**

Some landlords allow pets and some do not. Be sure the property you are interested in allows pets before you apply. The standard maximum number of pets is 2. If you have more than two pets, please let us know so we can let you know if the landlord will allow more than 2 pets.

No violent animals or certain breeds (Pit-bull, Rottweiler, Doberman, etc.) are allowed – because of the limitations of many homeowner’s property insurance regarding violent animals. If you have any questions, please call our office.

For all pets, there is a Pet Fee, which means it is not refundable. For the first pet, the fee is \$350.00 and the second pet fee is \$50.00. The pet fee is for the right to have your pet occupy the property and normal wear and tear from the occupancy; however it does not cover pest control issues e.g. (fleas and ticks), urine stains or any property damage caused by the pet.

When you vacate the carpet must be professionally cleaned with a pet enzyme cleaner and foggers left on the property to be discharged by the agent after the home is vacant.

## Appendix 2 – Forms

We have provided you with the following forms to assist you during your residency. If you need more forms, contact the MSRI office. We have also included a copy of your rental agreements with your handbook.

# Emergency/Disaster Checklist

## Pre- Emergency/Disaster Checklist:

***Take the time to review and implement this list – it could be a lifesaver.***

- Take an inventory of your belongings, complete with photos, descriptions, and serial numbers. Items to list are TVs, VCRs, stereos, cameras, camcorders, sports equipment, jewelry, silver, computers, or anything of value
- Know where the shut off valves are in your residence, review page 9 in the MSRI Tenant Handbook, “getting to know your residence”
- Keep copies of important papers stored in a safety deposit box
- Make sure your renters insurance is current at all times
- Discuss with your family or other residents what emergency procedures you will use and post them in the kitchen, office area, etc.
- Plan escape routes in the event of fire and inform every resident of the routes, including children. Have a designated meeting place a safe distance from the home.
- Teach children how to use 911 or call for other services
- Always maintain a reserve of bottled water/drinks and non-perishable foods in your residence, along with a manual can opener.
- Have a portable radio with plenty of extra batteries and the right kind for the radio
- Have two or more flashlights with the extra batteries and for the right kind the flashlight
- Have large long-burning candles and matches available
- Have an adequate first aid kit and replace items when necessary
- Keep your cellular phone charged and backup batteries.

## Use this list when an emergency/disaster occurs:

- In a gas leak is possible during an emergency/disaster, immediately turn off the gas valve
- Keep your car in the driveway, if it is practical, for any necessary evacuation
- Call 9-1-1 only to access help and NOT to learn news
- Call MSRI when it is practical, but remember that MSRI will do what they can to help you, but is not an emergency service. Many repairs will have to wait until the emergency passes
- Only call people when necessary and have an emergency contact outside your area who can notify other people
- Limit use of the telephones during emergencies/disaster to avoid overloading the circuits
- Unplug or turn off major lights and appliances - such as space heaters, washers, dryers, computers, TVs, etc. Several appliances coming back on at the same time may overload circuits or hot appliances may come on while you are away or asleep causing fire hazards
- Leave a single light on to alert you that power is restored
- If you use candles and matches, do it safely – you do not want to create another problem
- Limit cell phone usage or use your car to charge batteries
- If you have to call emergency services, be calm, state your problem, and be patient. Emergency services will be overloaded.
- If you have standing water in a room, do not enter if the electricity is on; try to wait for a professional
- Do not vacuum wet floors or carpets unless you have the right equipment for water removal. Using a normal vacuum is dangerous with water
- Only open freezers & refrigerators when necessary to avoid losing food as long as you can
- Conserve water and food when disaster occurs
- If you are in a car when power lines fall, remain in the car until you can get help or you are certain that it is safe to do so; then jump clear of the car, not touching any metal.

# Add Roommate Request

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Morgan Smith Realty, Inc., agent for owner

From: \_\_\_\_\_ (Lessees' Names)

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Re: Request to add roommate

As of today's date, I (we) the tenant(s) at the above referenced address, would like to add \_\_\_\_\_ to the rental/lease agreement. I (we) have completed the rental application for this party online.

I (we) understand I (we) will be receiving a follow up letter from Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. regarding the approval or denial of the application

I (we) certify that the above applicant is not living in the property and cannot move in unless approved.

I (we) understand new rental/lease agreements are to be signed if the applicant is approved.

I (we) understand if I (we) fail to fulfill the terms of my (our) obligations, a negative credit report reflecting my (our) credit may be submitted to a credit-reporting agency.

|                 |               |                                    |               |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant                    | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant                    | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. | _____<br>Date |

# Add Pet Request

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Morgan Smith Realty, Inc., agent for owner

Re: Request for pet named: \_\_\_\_\_

Type:  Bird  Cat  Dog  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Male  Female Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

1. We are requesting to have the above listed pet
2. We certify that the pet has had all required shots by a licensed veterinarian and have attached proof for this.
3. We further understand that MSRI could approve or deny our request.
4. We certify that the pet is not currently residing in the property
5. If our request is denied, the above pet will not be moved into the property
6. If our request is approved, we understand that all tenants currently on the rental agreement must sign a pet addendum and pay an increase to the current security deposit of an additional \$350.00 for the first pet and \$50.00 for the second.
7. We understand that all current tenants must sign this request.
8. If the owner and (Company Initials) approve the pet, all the undersigned tenants are responsible for this pet, its care, and any damages that could occur.

|                 |               |                                    |               |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant                    | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant                    | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. | _____<br>Date |

# Satellite or Cable Request

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. agent for owner

Lessees: \_\_\_\_\_

Re: Request to install \_\_\_ Cable \_\_\_ Satellite Dish at \_\_\_\_\_

As of today's date, I (we) the tenants at the above referenced address, make a request to install the above

We understand the following if approved:

1. We are responsible for the cost of installation and this will not be reimbursed to us at any time
2. When the company completes the installation, there is to be no damage to the property. If there is damage, we are responsible for the cost of repairs and/or maintenance.
3. If a satellite dish, we must call (Company Initials) for approval of the location prior to installation.
4. If the company installing our request requires written authorization, they are to submit their documentation to the (Company Initials) office, and (Company Initials) will complete the documentation.
5. When leaving property, it is your responsibility to disconnect the services, and pay all billings incurred by the tenants listed below.
6. Any damage incurred upon disconnection will be at our expense.
7. We understand all persons on the rental/lease agreement are required to sign below and all are jointly and severally liable.

Respectfully submitted by:

|                 |               |                         |               |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant         | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>Tenant         | _____<br>Date |
| _____<br>Tenant | _____<br>Date | _____<br>(Company Name) | _____<br>Date |

# Automated Clearing House (ACH) Authorization

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Morgan Smith Realty, Inc.

Lessees: \_\_\_\_\_

Residing at: \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize Morgan Smith Realty, Inc. (originator) and Georgia Bank and Trust (originating depository financial institution) as listed below to initiate electronic entries to my account.

I accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information given to Morgan Smith Realty, Inc.

This authority will remain in effect until I have cancelled this agreement in writing.

I can stop payment of any entry by notifying my financial institution 3 business days before my account is charged.

I can have the amount of an erroneous charge credited to my account up to 15 days following issuance of my financial institution statement or 60 days after posting, whichever occurs first.

Tenant name \_\_\_\_\_

Financial institution \_\_\_\_\_

Type of account  Checking  Savings

Full name on account (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please include a voided check or copy of a check; deposit slips are NOT accepted.  
Thank you.**

Originating depository financial institution \_\_\_\_\_

Routing number \_\_\_\_\_





## Resident Notice to Vacate

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Morgan Smith Realty Inc., agent for owner

Notice for property at: \_\_\_\_\_

As of today's date, I (we) the tenants at the above referenced address, hereby give a \_\_\_\_\_ day notice and intend to vacate the premises on the date of \_\_\_\_\_.

I (we) are vacating because \_\_\_\_\_ it is the end of the lease term; \_\_\_\_\_ I (we) Received Military Orders; \_\_\_\_\_ I (we) Are vacating for other reasons: \_\_\_\_\_.

I (we) understand I (we) will be receiving a follow up letter or email from MSRI regarding my (our) move and receipt of this notice. If I do not receive the notice within 2-business days, I will administration at admin@msricorp.com or 706.210.2646 extension: 101.

I (we) understand I (we) are obligated to pay the rent, keep the utilities on in mine (our) name and, maintain the lawn and pest control until the end of mine (our) notice or the lease term, whichever is greater.

If I (we) are vacating the property *before* the end of the term, I (we) understand that my (our) security deposit transmittal will be forfeited (will not be returned), and I (we) must settle any security deposits with the other tenants on the rental/lease agreement.

(I) we understand that I (we) are obligated to pay any unpaid repairs, rents, fees, and other charges due and they may be deducted from any available tenant deposits; and (I) we understand that any balance due beyond the available tenant deposits will be due immediately; and I (we) must settle any disputes regarding the balance due with the other tenants on the rental/lease agreement.

I (we) understand the balance of our security deposit transmittal will be sent after vacating the property and within the 30-days required by law. We understand MSRI does not issue the security deposit until after I (we) vacate the premises and a walk-through is completed and issues noted on the Move Out are resolved and expenses deducted from the security deposit.

I (we) understand if I (we) fail to fulfill the terms of my (our) obligations, a negative credit report reflecting my (our) credit may be submitted to a credit-reporting agency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email





## Resident Move-Out Checklist

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** All utilities must be on at time of move out inspection. A fee will be charged per the terms of your lease if utilities have to be turned on to complete the inspection.

This Cleaning Checklist is a guideline for the Professional Cleaning Service you hire. As per the lease, all properties must be professionally cleaned, and the carpets professionally cleaned. The yard must be mowed, edged and shrubs trimmed. Please have receipts with you at the time of the Move Out inspection.

### Windows

- Wash all windows inside and out in all rooms.
- Clean out window tracks.
- Wash window sills and any curtain rods.
- Wash inside and outside of all exterior doors.
- Clean all blinds and replace any damaged blinds

### Lights and Fans

- Clean all light fixtures throughout home and replace any burnt out or missing bulbs.
- Clean fans and light fixtures

### Walls and Woodwork

- Scuff marks off walls
- Clean all woodwork, including baseboards, chair rails, moldings, doors and door frames and cabinetry and fireplaces.
- Remove spider webs from ceilings & corners.

### Floors

- Clean all vinyl, tile and hardwood floors using products specifically made for these type floors.
- Vacuum all carpeting
- Sweep porches, stoops, garage, driveways and sidewalks to be free of debris

### Bathrooms

- Clean all tile surround with appropriate cleaners.
- Clean bathtub, tile, toilet, sink, door & fixtures.
- Clean bathroom floor, including around the toilet, tub and cabinets,
- Clean the inside of medicine cabinet
- Wash mirror and make sure to leave streak free

### Replacement charges

Charges for these missing items:

- Drip Pans \$ 25.00 if not cleaned
- Standard Light Bulbs \$ 2.00 per each
- Non-Standard Light Bulbs \$5.00 per each
- Clean air filters \$ 25.00 dollars per each
- Garage Remotes Replacement Cost+ \$20.00.
- Remotes (fireplace, fans) Replacement cost+ \$20.00
- Tick and Flea foggers cost + \$20.00

### Kitchen

- Clean inside and out of dishwasher and range hood (including any filters)
- Microwave must be clean inside and out.
- Clean sink and counter tops.
- Clean kitchen floor (do not leave floor tacky), including under the movable appliances.

### Refrigerator

- Wash all of refrigerator w/warm water.
- Take out vegetable drawers and wash in warm water, dry and replace.
- Move refrigerator out from wall and clean underneath. Do NOT turn off refrigerator.
- Freezer must be defrosted and cleaned.

### Stove

- Remove racks and broiler pan, soak in hot water to clean, dry well.
- Clean inside of oven, top of stove, under elements, pan drawer, exhaust fan, hood.
- Replace drip pans under each electrical eye.
- Wash and dry outside of stove.
- Follow directions for self-cleaning ovens

### Cabinets and Drawers

- Wash cupboards inside & out. Remove any shelf paper.
- Wipe out drawers with damp rag.

### Exterior

- Haul away all garbage, leaves and debris.
- Sweep porches, stoops, garage, driveways and sidewalks to be free of debris.
- Leave yard clean & maintained per lease terms.

### Other

- Clean out soot and ash from fireplace
- Trash & Personal items removed from premises Air filters replaced
- If you have pets, leave the 4-6 flea foggers in the kitchen.

## Conclusion

We hope that you have found the *MSRI Tenant Handbook* useful and informative. It is our goal to prepare you for a successful tenancy and a pleasant move out when this occurs. If you have any questions on the enclosed information, please contact your MSRI management team.

*We wish you a successful residency*