**HOW TO USE THESE DOCUMENTS**

Plain language makes important paperwork easy to understand. On this page we are talking about paperwork that you'll need to live in affordable housing. These documents represent agreements between you and the people who manage the property that you will live in or currently live in. They are very important because they explain what you need to do, what the property managers and staff will do, and your rights while you live in the housing. To have a good experience in your housing, it's really important to understand these papers as best as you can. So, we strongly suggest that you take your time to read them and don't be afraid to ask questions!

**IF YOU WANT TO KNOW, ASK FOR THIS:**

| **If you want to know…** | **Ask for this…** |
| --- | --- |
| * About your rent payments
* What’s included in your rent payments
* Security Deposit
* Program Rules for Housing at [Project Name]
* Who is allowed to live with you
* Health and safety rules
* Situations that could end this lease
* How you can end your lease
* Property Management’s responsibilities
* What happens if you damage your property
 | Lease Agreement |
| * Rent
* Resident Safety and Comfort
* Taking Care of Your Unit
* Community Safety and Care
 | Community Guidelines |
| * If you experience discrimination by anyone working at [Project Name]
* If you experience inappropriate behavior by any staff working at [Project Name]
 | Complaint Process |
| * How a person with a disability requests changes to their unit and how long will it take to get a response
 | Reasonable Accommodation |
| * Your protections as a renter
* Evictions must have a valid legal reason
 | CTCAC - Good Cause |
| * Landlord can change your lease
* Information if your income increases
* What happens if you are a student or become one
* Who can live in your home
 | CTCAC - Add On |

**HOW CAN I ADVOCATE FOR PLAIN LANGUAGE?**

Promoting the use of plain language in different communities and situations is very valuable. You can start by sharing your positive experience with easy-to-understand documents in your housing community. Then, encourage others to think about using plain language in other important papers. You can also get involved with local groups that support this idea, attend community meetings, or talk to decision-makers to explain why plain language is a good idea. By promoting it, you can make information easier for everyone to understand, no matter their background or abilities, and empower people in various situations.

If you are looking for ideas on how you can reach out to your current property manager or landlord, here is an example message you can use to reach out to them:

Dear [Property Manager Name]

I am currently a resident living in a unit \_\_\_\_\_\_ and I have a suggestion that can benefit all of us in the community.

I have found that leasing documents written in plain language are easier to understand. I propose that you consider using plain language in the leasing documents to make them clearer for everyone.

You can find examples and resources at plainlanguageleasing.org to get started on this valuable improvement.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

[Your Name]