Moving into Your New Home

AT LAST, YOU’VE FOUND A PLACE TO LIVE. Moving into a new place carries with it obligations and commitments that go beyond the specific conditions listed in the rental agreement.

Inventory & Condition Report
An Inventory & Condition Report (see sample in appendix) should be completed within the first few days of tenancy, preferably with the property provider present. How much of your security deposit you get back will be determined not only by the cost of cleaning but also by the cost of fixing any damage for which you can be held accountable. Make sure that both you and the property provider sign and receive a copy of the completed report. If you use photo or video documentation, you can date the materials by sending them to yourself in the mail and leaving them in the sealed, postmarked envelope.

Move-In/Move-Out Video
The Community Housing Office offers a Move-In/Move-Out Videotaping service ($15 for one video or $25 for the video package- see inside back cover). This video service will provide you with excellent documentation if a dispute ever arises related to the condition of your unit. Visit our office to set up an appointment at least one week prior to picking up your keys.

Utility Hook-Ups
Most rental rates include trash removal and water usage, but tenants usually pay for other utilities. The combined cost for gas and electricity is about $50 a month for the average rental.

If you think you might be eligible, ask for information about low-income discounts for utilities. Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company offer a discount for eligible low-income households. Verizon offers a Lifeline Service at reduced rates to qualified income households. Anyone claimed as a dependent on another person’s tax return is ineligible for Lifeline Services.

**Furnishings**
Once you have moved in, all you just need are some items like furniture, linens, kitchenware, plants and decorations to fill up the rest of the space! There are many places near UCSB to find furnishings: Bed Bath & Beyond, Costco, Home Depot, K-Mart, and Ross. Or, you can save money by acquiring previously-owned (used) goods. Check classified ads in The Daily Nexus, S.B. Independent, Trade Express and The Recycler; look for signs around campus and I.V.; shop at IV Give, garage sales, and thrift stores; craigslist.org; or find graduating students who are selling their furnishings. Sign up for Free and For Sale on Facebook!

Picking Up Your Keys
From the day you turn the key on your new home you have “taken possession” of the unit (this is a legal term) and accepted it in the condition it is in. **If you are unhappy, for any reason, about the condition, speak with your property provider and return the keys if necessary.** If the property provider makes promises to fix or alter the premises, get these promises and a date for completion in writing.

**DON’T WRITE BAD CHECKS!**
Writing a “rubber” check is a serious offense, not to be taken lightly. One bad rent check can bounce back in your face with dire consequences. In Santa Barbara, these include a six-hour diversion class, or, for those with multiple bad checks, criminal charges!