



THE LEGAL ADVISOR

The official newsletter of Scranton Road Legal Clinic



Things to Do Before You Sign a Lease

Written by Kwasi Bediako, Legal Extern

Okay, so after going through all the hoops of finding a suitable place to live; be it finding a suitable neighborhood, providing proof of funds and credit or passing the background checks, you are ready to move in.

Congrats! It is now time to sign the lease. Many people by then are already too tired and just want to sign the lease. However, it is always advisable to take a minute to review that lease agreement before signing to avoid the common misconception that all leases are the same.

Below are some ABCs to look out for when signing that lease!

A. **Make sure the lease is in writing:** No matter how long you have known the landlord, whether the landlord is a relative, acquaintance, or stranger, the first thing to do is make sure any agreement reached is in writing. This will protect you and provide legitimacy as a tenant if any issues should arise in the future.

B. **Terms of the lease:**

Make sure every agreement made, such as the amount of rent to be paid, length of lease, modes of payment and to whom payments are to be made, lease termination, any discounts, parking, agreements concerning pets, and all other concessions agreed to are written into the lease agreement. It is often very tricky to attempt to modify a lease to add terms that had not been originally written into it, so make sure anything agreed to, is within the written lease agreement.

C. **Record Keeping:**

Prospective tenants should make sure to obtain copies of any documents signed or provided prior to leasing, including copies of the lease agreements. Having copies of paperwork and keeping those copies safely will come in handy if any disagreements should ever arise. And always remember, even after the lease is signed, keep a paper trail of any communications and exchanges. Make sure to obtain receipts for all payments made - whether with a money order, checks, or cash (unless you really have to, avoid paying cash).

Now that you know the ABCs of signing a lease, and have hopefully done them, you can go ahead and sign that lease!

AWARD VS REWARD

Written by Natalie Thomas, Director

COMMON LEGAL MISCONCEPTION



When working with clients I often find there is some confusions with monies received from various sources in the legal world. People tend to confuse award and reward. An award of monies, such as a scholarship, is typically for doing something good or for recognition of someone. Legal cases do not have awards.

However, a reward of monies is usually, given for service or in return for a deed. For example a reward for finding a lost puppy.

A settlement in a law suit is neither a reward or an award; it is a compromise by the parties to settle the case.

Lastly, a judgment is a verdict by a judge or jury of a certain sum of monies. This is also neither a reward nor an award but should be properly called a money judgement.

Pet Resources During COVID-19: The Friends of the Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter established an emergency Pet Food Pantry to help assist cats and dogs during the pandemic. If you live in Cleveland and are interested in pet food assistance, call 216-505-5853. Interested pet owners living outside of Cleveland proper can call or text the Shelter at 216-706-9363 to get more information and to see if they qualify for pet food assistance. The Shelter can also be contacted by email at help@fccas.org. Contactless delivery of food items is available. The Shelter is also accepting donations (in-kind and monetary) at this time.

UNUSUAL LAWS

Strange Laws Around the US

- You cannot sing in the bathtub in Pennsylvania.
- In Utah, It is against the law to fish with crossbow.
- In Las Vegas, it is illegal to ride a camel on the highway.



Check out online virtual Know Your Rights Workshops at www.scrantonroadministries.org/legal

Formed in 2012, Scranton Road Legal Clinic educates and empowers our neighbors to make educated and prudent legal decisions, while providing the holistic support for the spiritual, emotional and relational problems that often accompany legal concerns. We offer brief advice via our brief advice telephone line at 216.861.5323 or via our online intake form at www.scrantonroadministries.org/legal. Contact us today to discuss your legal need.