

## Frequently Asked Questions

### About the City of Mississauga's New Residential Rental Accommodation Licensing Bylaw



To encourage healthier, safer and more community-friendly off-campus housing options, the City of Mississauga requires a license for landlords/homeowners renting a house to more than three individual renters. Among other issues, the licensing process addresses building and fire safety concerns, establishes a minimum amount of space for each renter's living unit, limits some types of services and appliances in individual rental units, and restricts the total number of lodging units and renters in a house.

The responsibility to comply with licensing requirements resides primarily with landlords/homeowners, although renters should be aware of whether their accommodations are required to be licensed and whether a license has been issued.

The FAQs below provide general information. For specific or detailed questions or concerns, contact the City's Bylaw Enforcement Office at 905-896-5558 or [bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca](mailto:bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca).

#### **Is a license required for my rental accommodation?**

If you live in a house with three or fewer rental units, a license is not required. If you live in a house with four rental units or more, which generally classifies as a 'lodging house', your landlord is required to have and display a license that indicates the building has met certain health, safety and building requirements. This particular licensing requirement does not apply to apartments, which have other, different obligations.

#### **Are rentals of basements allowed in lodging houses?**

No, basement units may not be rented in lodging houses.

#### **If I live in a house that meets the definition of a lodging house but my landlord does not currently have a lodging house license, is that a problem?**

Your landlord may be operating an illegal business which could be subject to enforcement action, include fines for the landlord and/or City-mandated closure. Encourage your landlord to consult with the City to determine what actions should be taken to make the lodging house a legally compliant business. You can also report this to the Compliance and Licensing Enforcement Section of the City Enforcement Division at 905-896-5655 or to [bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca](mailto:bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca).

#### **If my landlord does not have a license, is my lease null and void?**

The lease is a private contractual agreement between you and your landlord and is not impacted by the issuance of a lodging house license.

**If my landlord is required to have a license, do I have to move out while one is being obtained?**

Not necessarily, but you are encouraged to consult with your landlord to ensure that a license is being obtained. However, you must be aware that, if a landlord is reluctant or isn't compliant or cooperative with the city, the lodging house could be closed down which may force you to find other accommodation.

**Will my rent increase if my landlord gets a license?**

The amount of rent you pay and any changes to that are governed by your lease and the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Act, not the license.

**Can I have a roommate?**

Individual rental units in a lodging house can only be occupied by one person each. Note that an occasional overnight guest is not normally considered an occupant/roommate in this circumstance. An occasional overnight guest, for example, would not typically have keys to the dwelling nor leave belongings in the dwelling. If 'no overnights' is a condition of living somewhere, it should be stated in the rental agreement.

**Can I have a refrigerator or cooking appliances in my room?**

No, an individual rental unit in a lodging house cannot contain a refrigerator or any cooking appliances, although refrigerators and microwaves are generally provided in a common area of a lodging house.

**Can I have a clothes washer or dishwasher in my room?**

No, an individual rental unit in a lodging house cannot contain these appliances, although they may be provided in a common area of a lodging house.

**Is the lodging house I live in safe in a fire emergency?**

Through the licensing process, each lodging house is inspected annually for fire safety, including the landlord's provision of correctly installed and working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms, and easily accessible fire extinguishers. The landlord is also required to prepare a fire safety plan, and post a copy of fire emergency procedures on each floor of the lodging house. The City also encourages residents to have their own fire escape plans and, with the landlord's and fellow renters' knowledge, to occasionally use the 'test' feature of alarms to assure that these safety systems work. For more information about how to prepare your plan and other fire safety tips, see the Fire and Emergency Services website at [www.mississauga.ca/fire](http://www.mississauga.ca/fire).

**Who can I or my family contact with questions about a specific residential rental property or the new Residential Rental Accommodation Licensing Bylaw?**

The City's Compliance and Licensing Enforcement Section at 905-896-5558 or [bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca](mailto:bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca) will provide assistance with questions and concerns, including whether or not a particular address is required to have a license and whether one is in progress or has been issued.