

SHOWING APARTMENTS

It is mandatory prior to showing the apartment that the following steps are taken: A log will be kept tracking the apartment to be shown, time in and out. Ask the pre-resident for their driver's license or other picture ID, which will be placed on a clipboard with the log. If you have an Assistant or Leasing Agent, inform him/her what apartment you will be showing and approximately how long you will be gone. When working in the office alone, let your maintenance staff know the same information.

Keep the following in mind will help you successively market your available units. The Property Manager should ***always inspect the unit himself/herself*** when completed by maintenance staff to ensure that only top quality turnarounds will be shown to prospective residents. Remember that first impressions can make or break a future deal. There is nothing worse than walking into an apartment you assumed was rent ready and realizing too late it was not.

Each day the Property Manager should go over the list of available units and map out which route will be taken. Walk the route to ensure everything the pre-resident will see, looks clean, fresh and well kept – no trash. Remember the prospective resident sees not only common areas along the way but also neighboring porches. This is a good time to ensure compliance with Management Rules regarding storage in common areas. The unit should be checked in the morning by the Property Manager/Leasing Agent, turning on heat/AC at a pleasant level, opening blinds, checking light switches, bulbs, and wiping off counter tops which may have gotten dusty since housekeeping was completed.

In general, make the apartment as clean, fresh and inviting as the day it was turned around. When showing an apartment, the site person will want to take the **Guest Card** with them. Along the way he/she will want to collect any additional information that may be helpful later in closing the sale and recording it onto the guest card. Be sure to get a telephone number and other pertinent information that you may need later. *Whoever shows apartments should know virtually everything about a property.* This knowledge will be useful in showing the property and consequently, renting units. The site person should point out the values and amenities of the property itself, its architectural design, the quality of the maintenance and landscaping, and the recreational facilities available. This also may be a good time to tell the pre-resident about the neighborhood ...its shopping, schools, churches and other facilities. The pre-resident will probably have questions and all inquiries should be answered in a professional, clear, and honest manner. Erroneous responses can only lead to trouble, especially if the prospect learns he has been misled after move-in. Please do not make "promises".

Although a prospect may be influenced by tennis courts, laundry rooms, swimming pools, free parking, or other amenities, the final decision generally is based on the

attributes of the unit in which he/she would live and the amount of rent he/she will pay. A thorough and honest showing of an apartment is critical to getting a lease signed.

For instance, upon entering a unit, leave the door open and let the prospects enter the unit first. Then the unit's advantages should be immediately pointed out. These might involve the floor plan, ventilation, cabinet and closet space, quality of floor covering, electrical outlets, amount of sunlight and view. Above all, if an apartment meets any specific needs the applicant has, this should be pointed out. A positive attitude may be established by asking the prospect questions that require a positive answer. For example, "Don't you think this living room has a lovely view?" Is preferable to, "What do you think of this living room?"

Because use of terminology can be subtle but an effective sales tool, a site person should use brand names of appliances and such terms as "color coordinated", "individually controlled thermostats", "large walk-in closets", and "security system", etc. In addition, the site person should be armed with accurate knowledge regarding some details of construction, such as size of the water heater, the type of heating and air conditioning, the quality of the carpeting, the kind of insulation and soundproofing, and the unit's exact dimensions. Prospects are usually comparison shopping – rent versus amenities, size of the apartment, etc. No apartment, unfortunately, will be perfect, but the site person might suggest how disadvantages can be turned into advantages. For example, if a unit is small, a comment on how the furniture could be arranged for easy entertaining might be given. If the site person is aware of a unit's drawbacks, he/she can be prepared to convert them into assets.

A Property Manager or other site personnel should **never**:

- Make obvious and ridiculous comments, such as, "This is the kitchen."
- Send an applicant unescorted to see an apartment.
- Show an apartment that is not ready for occupancy.

Apartments generally are shown during regular office hours. However, because it sometimes may be impossible, or at least inconvenient, for prospective residents to conform to the schedule, arranging special showings or extending office hours may be necessary. During periods of high vacancy or special advertising promotions, showing units on Saturday or Sunday afternoons or during evenings may also be necessary. The decision to extend schedules should be determined by evaluation of existing market conditions by the Regional Property Supervisor. Be sure to follow the "Showing Apartments" policy and procedures.