

Housing

Finding a Place to Live

There are many different types of housing available for renting or buying. Apartments/condominiums (condos) are living areas that are a part of a larger building. You have your own suite that usually consists of one or more bedrooms, a kitchen, living area and bathroom. A duplex is a house that is divided into two equal living areas. A townhouse can be generalized as smaller houses that are joined together.

Where can I find housing for rent?

You can look in the classifieds section of your local newspaper, look for advertisements on notice boards, some homes also put signs out that say either, "For Rent" or "Vacancy," another great place to look is online at www.rentbc.com



BC Housing

BC Housing is a government run program that aides families in need, to find housing.

Subsidized Housing

The provincial government provides a rental assistance for those with low incomes, including families/single parents, with at least one child, seniors (55 years or older), those with mental/physical disabilities, the homeless, those at risk of homelessness, women and children fleeing abusive relationships.

Who is eligible for subsidized housing?

All applicants must permanently reside in BC, be a Canadian citizen, government sponsored refugee or those that have applied for refugee/immigration status and private sponsorship has ended.

How much of a subsidy will I receive?

The rent that you pay will be based on your families gross income. Your rent will be no more than 30% of your family's gross monthly income, plus a minimum amount based on the number of people living in the home.

How do I apply for subsidized housing?

- 1) Visit the following website: http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Subsidized_Housing/Apply
- 2) Follow through Step 1 to Step 5.
- 3) First confirm your eligibility and then click on the link labelled 'Select housing'
- 4) Under the section labelled 'Find your zone,' scroll through the listing to find your city's zone (Surrey: 2)
- 5) Scroll down to the section labelled 'Housing listings (formerly The Link)'
- 6) Within both section 1 & 2, you can click on the links to view housing that is available
- 7) At the bottom of the page click on the link labelled 'Apply to the Housing Registry'
- 8) Click on the link labelled 'Download the Housing Registry Application Form'
- 9) Again, click on the link labelled 'Download the Housing Registry Form.'
- 10) On the same page follow the step-by-step instructions on how to fill out the form successfully.
- 11) Hit the 'back' button and return to the previous page and then click on the link labelled 'Go to Step 3- Apply to non-profit or cooperative housing providers'
- 12) Click on 'Housing listings,' and follow the how to apply to non-profit/cooperative housing providers steps
- 13) Mail the completed application to BC Housing Home Office, 101-4555 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4V8 or fill out the online application by clicking "Apply Online"
- 14) At the bottom of the page click on the link labelled 'Go to Step 4-Keep your application up to date'
- 15) Here you will be guided through a list of suggestions on how to keep your application up to date.
- 16) If you run into any difficulties during this process call 604-433-2218

When applying for subsidized housing do I have to select specific housing or can I select an area?

It is recommended that you select specific housing, since certain providers prefer applicants that specifically select their development.

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How often do I have to contact the Housing Registry?

Update your application once every 6 months. Provide an evening and a daytime phone number at which you can be reached if something becomes available.

How can I access emergency housing?

In Surrey, several community shelters provide short-term beds and meals for people who are homeless.

- 1) To find an emergency shelter, visit www.bchousing.org
- 2) Click on the tab labelled 'Housing Options'
- 3) Scroll down to the list of links and click on the link labelled 'Emergency Housing'
- 4) Click on 'Homeless Outreach Program' or any one of the programs that applies to you.
- 5) Then, click on the Service Provider based on the Community you are located in.

Rental Assistance Program

The Rental Assistance program provides low income, working families with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments. For a list of eligibility criteria visit http://www.bchousing.org/programs/RAP/info_applicants/eligible

How do you apply for Rental Assistance?

- 1) Visit the following website http://www.bchousing.org/programs/RAP/info_applicants/apply
- 2) If you have confirmed your eligibility click on the link labelled 'Step 2: Complete an application form'
- 3) Click on the link labelled 'Rental Assistance Program application form' to download the form.
- 4) Print out the form and fill it out
- 5) Then click on the link labelled 'Go to step 3'
- 6) Section 3 guides you through the process of collecting all necessary supporting documents. You can also click on the link labelled 'Rental Assistance Program checklist.'
- 7) Click on the link labelled 'Go to step 4' You will then be prompted to notify BC Housing of any changes.

When you move into a new place, make sure you are aware of all emergency exits.

If you are renting, it's important to communicate openly with your landlord. That way, if a problem arises, you can talk it through with your landlord and come up with a friendly and quick solution to your problem.

Where Can I find rental units?

- 1) To find a rental unit in your area, you can either look in the classified section of your local newspaper
- 2) You can also use several internet websites, such as:
My Ideal Home:
http://www.rentbc.com/vancouver_apartments.html
Craigslist: <http://vancouver.en.craigslist.ca/apa/>

Tenant Rights

If you are subject to discrimination when trying to rent a home, contact the B.C. Human Rights Coalition at 604-622-1100. If you are put into an unfair situation, remain calm and educate yourself about your rights and how to resolve the issue.

Where can I learn more about tenant rights?

To learn about your rights as a tenant and to gather resources visit www.tenants.bc.ca. If you have any questions or need help solving an issue between you and your landlord call 604-255-0546. You can also find a lot of information on the Rental Assistance Program website <http://www.bchousing.org/programs/RAP>

Do not pay a landlord unless you have a signed tenancy agreement!

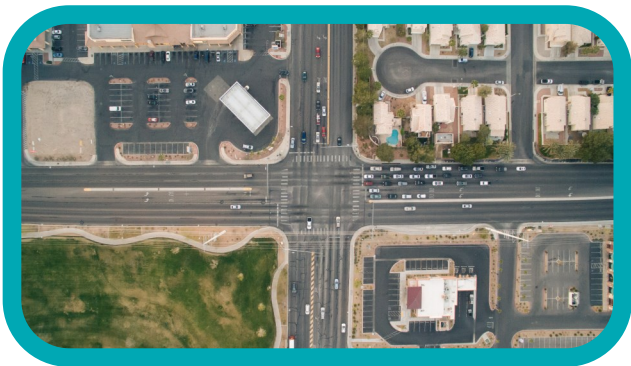
As a tenant it's your responsibility to pay your rent on time, keep your apartment neat and not disturb others

Note any damages that were present when you moved in. This way your landlord cannot claim that you are responsible for it.

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What types of questions should I be asking when I find a place to rent?

- 1) Ask how much the rent will be. The landlord can only raise your rent once a year, by a certain amount. If your landlord raises your rent, he must inform you in writing three months in advance.
- 2) Ask whether or not utilities (electricity, gas, fuel) are included in the cost of the rent or if you have to pay extra for them.
- 3) Ask the cost of the security/damage deposit. This amount is usually about half of your rent. This money will be kept until you move out. If you have damaged the home, the money from the damage deposit will be used to pay for the repairs. If you move out and there is no damage, your landlord must give you back your deposit plus interest within 15 days.
- 4) Ask about the rental agreement. If you decide to rent the place you will have to sign an agreement. Remember to ask for a receipt, every time you make payments.



Address System in BC

Every building, is given a specific number, called an address. In Canada, postal codes are a series of 6 alternating letters and numbers. Each provinces' postal codes begin with a different letter. In BC, postal codes start with the letter, "V."

How do you read an address?

- 1) A suite number tells you which suite your address is located in, when a building has more than one resident or company in it
 - 2) A building number may consist of 5 numbers if it is on an avenue and 4 numbers if it is on a street.
- 3) Streets go from north to south and avenues from east to west. As you travel east, street numbers increase and if you travel west, street numbers decrease. The same holds true for avenues, if you travel north, avenue numbers increase and if you travel south, avenue numbers decrease.

Suite Number	Building Number	Street/Avenue
#120	—7525	King George Hwy
		Surrey, BC, V3W 5A8
City	Province	Postal Code

When I move, who do I notify of my new address?

When you move it is your responsibility to notify others of your change of address. This will guarantee that all important mail and documents will be delivered to your new address.

- 1) Please visit your local Canada Post office to change your address or visit their website: https://www.canadapost.ca/web/en/products/details.page?article=forward_your_mail_wh This step-by-step procedure will ensure that your mail is delivered, while you go about notifying all agencies and individuals of your change of address.
- 2) Notify both the bank and school in person of your change of address.
- 3) The provincial government offers an online service that allows you to electronically send change of address information to various provincial government programs/offices, such as MSP and ICBC. Visit <https://www.addresschange.gov.bc.ca/> and enter your new address.
- 4) To change your address with the Canada Revenue Agency visit: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/tpcs/ncm-tx/chngdrrs-eng.html> and follow the instructions for using the phone, mail, fax or internet.
- 5) To change your address with Citizenship & Immigration Canada visit: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/change-address.asp> and follow the electronic prompts on how to enter your new address.

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How do I apply online to BC Hydro for a new residential account?

- 1) Go to <https://www.bchydro.com/accounts-billing/moving-electrical-connections/move-in-out.html>
- 2) Scroll down and click on 'Open a new account for my home'
- 3) Create a new BC Hydro Account by clicking on 'Sign Up'
- 4) You will need to provide the following information:
 - Your move in and move out dates for each address.
 - Your new address.
 - Phone number so we can reach you.
 - If you're renting, your landlord's name and phone number.

How do I alter an existing residential (home) BC Hydro account?

- 1) You will need to sign in to make an alterations to your BC Hydro account.
- 2) Please sign in to your account via the following link: <https://www.bchydro.com/sso/UI/Login?realm=bch-ps&goto=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bchydro.com%3A443%2FBCHCustomerPortal%2Fweb%2Flogin.html>
- 3) If you have any questions you may contact BC Hydro at 604-224-9376.

How do I apply online for a new FortisBC Gas account?

- 1) Call 1-866-436-7847 for any inquiries.
- 2) You can also visit the following link to create your own account: <https://www.fortisbc.com/Pages/Moving-New-accounts-stop-or-move-service.aspx>

How do I cancel an existing FortisBC Gas account?

- 1) Please call 1-866-436-7847
- 2) Please note that to avoid being charged for gas usage after you have moved, it is important that you let BC Hydro know of your move. If you want to stop service call them 2 working days before you want to close service.

How do I apply for a Shaw Cable TV?

- 1) Since there are so many different bundles available, it is best to call Shaw Cable directly at 1-888-472-2222 and ask them what package is best for you.
- 2) You can also check their website, which has all of their services and support listed on it at <https://www.shaw.ca/television/plans/?intcid=ib-2015-10-15-hpshop3-tvplans-all-nonshaw>

