

**Advisory Guidance for Safe Practices for Property Management Office and  
Rental Agents for  
Residential Landlord Tenant Rentals in Delaware  
to Comply with the State of Emergency  
as declared for our safety by Governor Carney.**

**This has been reviewed through the Division of Small Business which has the  
authority to issue clarifications of the Declaration of Emergency Concerning  
Essential Businesses.**

**Your actions impact your neighbors and your neighbors' actions impact you  
It is your duty to protect yourself, your clients and customers.**

1. As an Essential Business under the Declarations we have the privilege of continuing to manage rental properties and rent units covered by the Delaware Residential Landlord Tenant Code. With privilege comes responsibility. It is **your** responsibility to follow these guidelines. If you do not, we risk all being shut down completely.
2. Your property management office may remain open, with the doors locked. Managers, bookkeeping, administrative and maintenance staff are permitted to be in the office for the purpose of maintaining “Minimal Basic Operations including Emergency Maintenance or Repairs as defined below”. Property Managers may process necessary financial information and respond to time sensitive items, preferably by electronic means. Call center employees may need to be in the office to handle the current volume of calls for cancellations and the occasional new rental. If possible these calls should be automatically forwarded to employees working remotely. However, if there are others in the office, practice physical distancing and CDC Guidelines. Rental Agents may stop in the office to get supplies and drop off papers. Follow your Employers Rules about office access.
3. **YOUR RENTAL OFFICE IS CLOSED. DO NOT TAKE THE PUBLIC TO YOUR RENTAL OFFICE.** Your rental office should be closed for all face to face interaction. Rental agents should refrain from spending time in the office and should work remotely making maximum use of electronic tools to facilitate rentals, renewals of rentals and the acceptance of terminations from tenants. Rental applicants, and current renters should not be allowed access to your office for any reason. Keep the front door to the office locked so you can ensure limited access to the office.
4. Complete paperwork electronically except when it is absolutely necessary to have a “wet” signature. Whenever possible, utilize counterpart signing arrangements.
5. Instead of personal viewings of rental units you should encourage the use of virtual tools such as high-quality photographs of rentals, virtual tours, and interactive floor plans to replace in person showings and limit the number of units that must be viewed in person.
6. Avoid all in person showings of rental units. Only allow personal inspections by applicants of un-occupied units. If there is a need to show a rental unit, for instance to allow a disabled applicant to make sure the unit is accessible to the applicant, limit your contact to opening the door to allow the applicant access, wash your hands, wear gloves. Do not use the bathroom facilities, and the rental agent should only spend enough time near the entry to the unit, to allow the prospective tenants to view what they need to see

in the rental unit. Rental Agents should go outside, or into an open area and stand apart from the prospective renters to have conversations about the rental unit.

7. You may continue your property management functions such as accepting deposits, arranging for emergency maintenance or repairs, cleaning, and allowing those contractors access to your properties. However, arrange to provide keys without contractors coming into your office space.
8. All internal common areas are closed to residents. No packages are to be accepted by management staff for residents.
9. Do everything you can to keep yourself healthy and teach others how to stay healthy. Follow CDC guidelines.
10. Maintenance work should be limited to Emergency work and move in preparation only.<sup>1</sup>
11. For renters who have already been accepted, executed their rental agreement and made all payments necessary to take occupancy the property manager or rental agent should make arrangements through electronic communication for the new resident to receive a key and gain access to the rental unit. If the rental unit is in a multi-unit building, the property should provide safe move in guidelines to the new resident to be in use at all times during the move-in. Those safe move-in guidelines should be executed by the new residents and shall constitute an amendment to the rules and regulations of the community for the duration of the State of Emergency.
12. Don't socialize face to face with applicants or approved residents or others in the transaction. Avoid fact to face contact if at all possible. Keep your time together to a minimum. For transactions that occur that occur which require a wet signature, at the conclusion of the execution of the documents all items that have been touched should be sanitized consistent with CDC guidelines. Be social by phone and other electronic means.
13. Use social media to show you are acting responsibly in compliance with the Governor's Orders and this Advisory Guidance, and not to entice people to leave their homes to visit the property. Remember they are subject to an order to "shelter in place of residence".
14. As a property manager, who works for other property owners who want to rent their homes, you can take new rental listings or execute property management agreements. If at all possible this process should be completed either electronically or through the mail. If that process absolutely requires a face to face meeting with the owner of the property, have the meeting outside away from your office and follow CDC guidelines, at all times.
15. For renters who want to make application to rent, you can negotiate and execute new rental agreements consistent with the above listed safe practices.
16. You can continue to advertise available rental units.
17. Renters may travel to Delaware to execute a rental agreement. Renters must practice physical distancing, instructions from the rental agent, and CDC guidelines while in Delaware. They may leave Delaware after executing the rental agreement and any other necessary documentation.
18. If renters are going to stay in Delaware after executing a rental agreement they must bring 14 days of food and provisions with them to be able to stay in the rental unit for 14 days. Renters who have traveled from out of state and are taking occupancy of a rental unit are prohibited from leaving the rental unit to go to the grocery store and must follow all other provisions of the State of Emergency. If the Property Manager or the rental

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<sup>1</sup> See, the attached [Emergency Repairs and Maintenance Safe Practices during the State of Emergency](#).

agent is aware of violations of the self-quarantine by renters they must report the violation to law enforcement.

19. Display a positive attitude to help people through this. Do not panic, stay informed, and use your best judgment and common sense.
20. Property managers and rental agents who live out of state may come to Delaware only as necessary for the completion of their job duties, but then most promptly return home.

**Advisory Guidelines for Safe Practices for Property Management Companies and Owner managed Residential Landlord Tenant Code Properties in Delaware to Comply with the State of Emergency for our safety by Governor Carney. This has been reviewed through the Division of Small Business which has authority to issue clarifications of the Declaration of Emergency concerning Essential Businesses.**

**EMERGENCY REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SAFE PRACTICES**

As a safe practice only emergency maintenance or repairs will be made during the Declaration of the Delaware State of Emergency.

Emergency maintenance or repairs are defined as follows:

For the duration of the State of Emergency the following list are emergency maintenance or repairs that require immediate response:

- Maintenance and repairs necessary to prepare a rental unit for immediate occupancy;
- Water lines and/or heat lines broken;
- Leaking pipes;
- Drains backing up;
- Toilet not working (unless there is a functioning second bathroom in the apartment);
- No water;
- No hot water - Central water heaters or boilers require immediate attention as it affects numerous residents. Individual water heaters can wait until the next day UNLESS they are leaking;
- Complete electrical failure of apartment/sparking outlets;
- Elevator is stuck or not operating (call elevator company but go out to property for residents);
- Building power failure (regardless of surrounding area power outages);
  - Check for emergency generators;
  - Check elevators;
- Emergency generator running;
- Main entry doors or locks are stuck or broken;
- Building fire alarm is going off for any reason;
- Apartment doors or windows broken;
- Wind/storm damage;
  - In the event of major damage, alert your property manager to contact [the company's main office emergency number](#);
- Smell of gas;
- No heat/AC;
  - If the weather is extremely hot or cold, maintenance is required to respond quickly to AC/heat calls. If a resident of the apartment is elderly, very young or sick they will require immediate attention;
  - Be sure to set the expectations of the resident before coming out for the call. Let the resident know that the issue may not be fixed immediately, that

there is a chance only a temporary fix will be completed (ex: a space heater is placed in the bedroom) until the next working day;

- Fridge not working;
  - A second person may be needed to replace a fridge on weekends that cannot wait; this is in accordance with safety regulations that two people are required to move fridges;
- Pest issues related damage or safety issues;
  - Technicians are expected to respond to emergency calls for bats and squirrels and a claim of bed bugs;
  - Birds can wait until the next day unless they pose a real threat; instruct residents to open a window so they can get out;
  - On-call personnel should contact animal control for any raccoon, skunk, feral cat or possum issues;
- Lock outs;

This list is not complete but meant to exemplify the most common maintenance or repair emergencies our technicians encounter. Use your best judgement during emergency calls and always err on the side of caution. You should wear gloves at all times during emergency repairs or maintenance. Anything that might cause damage to the property or residents will always be considered an emergency maintenance call.

You should at all times comply with CDC recommendations during ALL emergency repairs or maintenance. If you have any questions about what a safe practice is you instructed to call your supervisor or the property manager before starting work.

Maintenance should always be dressed in company uniform and carry company ID when responding to an emergency maintenance or repair call.

All applicable and recommended COVID-19 precautions must be taken before during and after every emergency service call. Report any indication of Virus within the rental unit immediately to your supervisor.

You are not permitted, nor are you required to go into a rental unit where the tenant(s) have indicated they may have the COVID-19 virus, or that they have been in contact with someone who has been tested as positive for the Virus. Contact the manager on duty to have appropriate sanitation of the unit consistent with CDC recommendations planned and implemented.