

Upper Iowa University — Fayette Campus

OFF-CAMPUS LIVING *Guide*



UPPER IOWA[®]
— UNIVERSITY —



Dear Student,

You are at an important milestone in your life. As a college student, you are experiencing even more independence, choices, challenges and peer pressure.

Off-campus living is one of those first independent choices you may make. With it will come challenges and possibly new experiences in peer pressure. Once you've chosen your roommate(s) and identified an apartment or house to live in, there can be a great sense of excitement. Often that excitement overshadows the seriousness related to signing a lease.

The following guide, adapted from the Northeast Community College Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Workgroup and the Wayne State College TRUST Coalition, can assist you in renting a residence. We recommend that you read the guide before signing a lease. As a resource, it provides basic information regarding your responsibilities as a tenant, neighbor, citizen and college student. We encourage you to study this information regarding leases, tenant and landlord responsibilities, safety and utilities.

Community standards and consequences regarding alcohol-related citations in Fayette are discussed if you ever decide to host or attend a party. Those who choose to live outside of Fayette, should check with the City Hall in their community for similar information. Signs of alcohol poisoning and emergency phone numbers are also provided in the document.

It is our hope that this publication will assist you in being a good tenant, neighbor and contributing member of Fayette and the surrounding Upper Iowa communities.

Thank you in advance for reviewing this resource for a successful off-campus living experience. Feel free to call if there is any way we can further help you.

Best Regards,

Student Life

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE LEASE.....	2
Landlord Duties.....	3
Tenant Duties	3
Renter's Insurance	4
Temporary Emergency Housing.....	4
Unit Entry.....	5
Moving Out	5
THE CITY	5
Utilities	5
Garbage Pickup.....	6
Recycling	6
Animal Owners	6
Leaf Pickup.....	6
Mowing Grass	6
Parking for Snow Removal	6
Sidewalk Snow Removal	6
COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND CONSEQUENCES.....	7
If You Are Hosting a House Party	7
Alcohol Poisoning.....	8
IMPORTANT NUMBERS	9

THE LEASE

When you rent an apartment or house, you will be expected to sign a lease that includes your obligations and rights as a tenant and your landlord's right and obligations as the owner.

The lease may include the period of time the apartment/house/trailer will be rented to you, the cost of the rent, and the cost of a security deposit. Unless you have an allowable pet, a security deposit may not exceed the amount of one month's rent. After you move out, the landlord may use all or part of the security deposit to cover any damage or cleaning costs. However, your deposit should not be used to cover normal wear and tear. The lease may list the utilities covered by the owner and those for which the tenant is responsible.

The lease may indicate what items are included in the apartment/house, vanity changes that can be made to the apartment/house, and who is responsible for maintaining the facilities. It may also include by whom and when snow removal and lawn care will be completed... important things to know when it has snowed six inches and you need to be at class at 8 a.m.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Length of time the lease is effective
- Penalties for breaking the lease early
- Number of people permitted to live in the unit
- Pet policies
- Amount of rent
- Smoking policies
- Consequences for a late rental payment
- Utilities and repairs/Who is responsible for them?

Another important component of your lease, although not so obvious, is to ask about absences. How many days can you be away without notifying the landlord? If not properly notified, the owner may think you have abandoned the unit, remove your possessions and rent the unit to someone else.

It is also recommended that any renter review Iowa's Landlord-Tenant Laws, which can be found at the Iowa Legal Aid website or by using the following QR code.

THE LEASE

A lease is a legal contract to which you will be legally bound. Make sure that you read the lease, ask questions, and get a copy.



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THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK

- Where are the garbage and laundry facilities?
- Where are the gas lines and water shut-off valves located?
- Are these utilities included in the lease agreement or am I responsible for these expenses?



SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Well-lit entry ways and hallways
- Well-lit, off-street or on-street parking
- Well-lit and pedestrian-friendly areas and sidewalks
- A locked outer security door on multi-unit apartments
- Locked access to common areas such as laundry rooms and storage facilities
- Deadbolt lock on apartment doors
- Peepholes or chain locks on apartment doors
- Locks on all first-floor or ground-level windows
- A sufficient number of electrical outlets in every room (two or three prong)
- Working appliances plugged directly into the appropriate outlets
- Locked mailboxes
- A fire escape for upper floor apartments
- Working smoke detectors and fire extinguishers

LANDLORD DUTIES

- Making repairs on your home (they must obey city/local codes)
- Units may not be rented until they contain safe heating equipment, which heats the whole unit
- All foundations, floors, walls, ceilings and roofs must be reasonably weather proof, watertight and rodent proof.
- Units must be clean and fit for human occupancy
- All stairways, approaches and entryways shall be safe to use and capable of supporting people
- The landlord must keep all the provided and law-required appliances, air conditioners and other facilities in good working order
- If your unit was built prior to 1978, your landlord must inform you of any lead-based paint hazards. Landlords should also provide you with materials educating you about the hazards of lead-based paints

TENANT DUTIES

When you move into your new rental property, make sure you carefully fill out the form that states the condition of the property. This information will be essential to you when you move out and the landlord wants to charge you for a scratch on the floor that you know was there when you moved in. Protect yourself by going over your new home and writing down every mark, scrape and dent. Take a digital camera with you to snap photos of things that you might find in dispute when you vacate the premises. Make sure that both you and your landlord sign this inventory. Then give a copy of this information to the landlord and keep a copy for yourself in a safe place.



TO BE A GOOD TENANT

- Pay rent and utility bills on time
- Give written notice to the landlord when you are ending the lease or repairing the unit. Notices should be sent via certified mail with a return receipt requested. Be certain to check your lease agreement to determine how much notice is required
- Keep the unit clean and safe in compliance with the local city housing codes
- Use facilities in a reasonable manner
- Dispose of all garbage in a clean and safe manner
- Be responsible for any damages done to the unit by you, other tenants or your guests
- Respect your neighbors' property
- Give the landlord written notice of any needed repairs or problems with the unit
- Abide by all apartment complex or community neighborhood association agreements, expectations and guidelines
- Request in writing that your deposit be returned within 14 days after you vacate. The landlord must comply with either return of the deposit or list of expenses and reason for not returning all or part of the deposit.

TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

- Exchange phone numbers with your neighbors
- Understand where you are able to park and be aware of any parking needs of elderly neighbors
- Ask your neighbor to contact you first in case of problems (noise, parking, etc.)
- Keep your yard and outside property clean
- Offer to shovel snow, rake leaves or mow the lawns of elderly neighbors

RENTERS INSURANCE

When you move into a rental facility, the owner of the property carries insurance for the physical structure only and not for your personal property. You may want to look into purchasing renter's insurance. Many times, auto insurance carriers provide a discounted rate if you already have insurance with them. The average cost of renter's insurance is around \$100-\$200 per year (or about \$16 a month.) Most policies cover repair or replacement of your personal property if damaged, destroyed or stolen as a result of various types of peril: fire, lightning, windstorm, hail, explosions, smoke, vandalism, theft, broken glass, electrical surge and/or water-related damage. When you fill out your application for renter's insurance, it will ask you to itemize your belongings and approximate value. It is important to be honest here since it will determine the amount of coverage you need. It's a good idea to photograph/videotape your belongings.

One place students can obtain renter's insurance is through National Student Services Inc. (NSSI)

<http://www.nssi.com/portal/upperiowa>

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING

In the case of an emergency such as a fire or flood and your residence becomes uninhabitable, please contact Student Life at 563-425-5215 to look into temporary housing.

UNIT ENTRY

Your landlord will legally be able to access your apartment/house to inspect it, to make repairs, to show it to future tenants or prospective buyers, or in the case of an emergency. The landlord, except in the case of an emergency, must give 24-hour notice of the intent to enter your unit.

MOVING OUT

When moving out, be sure to know what is expected of the landlord. Know when you must be completely vacated from the property and where and when to turn in the keys. It is important to do a final walk through with your landlord to make sure things are as expected. You will want to know when you will get your deposit refunded, since that money will come in handy when moving to your new place.

If you have problems with your landlord, call your lawyer ASAP — the sooner the better. If you do not have a lawyer or cannot afford one, call Iowa Legal Aid to apply for service at 1-800-532-1275.

BURNING

The only burning allowed in Fayette is for burning leaves, branches and landscape waste. Open burning and burning on the street is not allowed.

Camp fires are allowed. Before you build one, make sure you know where your gas lines are located. Gas lines aren't very deep under the ground, so the heat from a fire over or near a gas line can cause an explosion. Those who ignore a gas line, tree/shrubs or nearby structure when installing fire pits, can create dangerous conditions. Call 811 (Iowa One Call) to locate your gas line if you aren't sure where it is located.

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regular city council meetings are held the first and third Mondays of each month in the council chambers at Fayette City Hall, 11 S. Main Street. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. All meeting agendas are posted in the entrance of City Hall, Post Office, Bank or online at www.fayetteiowa.com.

CITY UTILITIES

Water, sewer, landfill (this is not garbage), recycling and yard waste are billed monthly on one bill. Bills are mailed at the end of each month. They are due by the 15th of the following month.

The minimum fee is \$51.58 per month for a minimum of 150 cubic feet (1 cu. ft. equals 7.5 gallons) and increases 2% each year in June. There is a refundable deposit of \$150 required to set up a Water/Sewer account, which is payable at City Hall.

Even though you contract your own garbage pickup, there will still be a Landfill/Recycling/Yard Waste charge on each monthly bill because this is a fee to pay Fayette's share for the County Landfill/Recycling program and to manage its Yard Waste Site.



GARBAGE PICKUP

Citizens must contract for their own garbage pickup. Local haulers are:

Waste Management of Northern Iowa	800.747.0473
Kluesner Sanitation	563.927.5977

RECYCLING

There are recycling bins located by the Post Office on Washington Street where you can bring plastic, paper, cardboard and tin cans. If you have questions regarding recycling, you can call the Fayette County Recycling Center at (563) 422-3712.

REDEMPTION

In Iowa, all carbonated and alcoholic beverages have a 5-cent deposit. You can take the bottles and cans to the Kornhill Redemption Center, located at 5959 Kornhill Road near Fayette, to receive your deposit.

ANIMAL OWNERS

It is unlawful for any owner to allow an animal to run at large within the corporate limits of Fayette or cause damage or interference to someone’s premises. Animals caught running at large will be impounded. When animals defecate on either public or private property, it is the owner’s responsibility to clean up the waste.

LEAF PICK UP

In October, the Fayette City Public Works employees vacuum leaves that citizens pile in the city parkway between the sidewalk and the back of the curb. If you don’t have a curb, then place your leaves in the grassy area and not on the street. Please don’t mix sticks or branches with the leaves.

MOWING GRASS

Please don’t blow grass in the streets because it plugs the storm sewer intakes and grates. Property owners will be fined \$50 for each time they put grass or other substances in Fayette city streets.

PARKING FOR SNOW REMOVAL

All motor vehicles left parked, unattended or abandoned on any street, alley or city-owned off-street parking between the hours of 2 to 6 a.m. from November 1 through March 31 shall be ticketed by law enforcement officials or their designee and may be towed at the owner’s expense. The Fayette city street maintenance workers request that all vehicles parallel park on Main Street when there is snow covering the streets and until all the snow has been removed.

SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL

It is the responsibility of the abutting property owners to remove snow, ice and accumulations promptly from sidewalks. If a property owner does not remove snow, ice or accumulations within 24 hours after it snows, the city may do so and assess the costs against the property owner.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND CONSEQUENCES

In order to ensure a high quality of life for all its residents, the Fayette Police Department actively enforces the municipal codes. Those hosting social events in neighborhoods are expected to control the behavior of their guests or face stiff penalties.

As a college student, your behavior directly affects how the community views all college students and Upper Iowa University. The college has a strong working relationship with the Police Department. As a result, the police may notify college officials when they issue citations regarding loud, disorderly parties in Fayette. These citations often include, but are not limited to, citations for the following violations:

VIOLATION	TOTAL FINE AMOUNT
Possess/purchase/consume open container under the age of 21 (1 st Offense)	\$465
Permit Under 18 to consume alcohol under 21 on premises (1 st Offense)	\$465
Purchase/Consume/Possess alcohol under 21 (2 nd Offense).	\$1,072.50
Permit Under 18 to consume alcohol under 21 on premises (2 nd Offense)	\$1,072.50

OPERATING WHILE INTOXICATED (OWI)

Penalties for operating a vehicle over the legal limit of .08 BAC (Blood Alcohol Content) include the removal of a driver’s license for 6 months for a first offense and one year for a second offense. Felony charges and possible permanent removal of license occur for a third offense. OWI fines, court costs, civil penalties, high insurance rates and the possible installation of a breathalyzer in your vehicle could exceed \$10,000 in expenses. This is for a first offense only! Multiple offenses can exceed over \$30,000 on average.

IF YOU ARE HOSTING A HOUSE PARTY

BEFORE THE PARTY

- Tell your neighbors you are having a party.
- Ask them to call you with any concerns.
- Tell your guests what time the party ends.
- Seal off unnecessary rooms and lock up valuables.
- “Drunk proof” the house (switches, fuse box, thermostat).

DURING THE PARTY

- Have a designated sober person monitor guests and noise, and keep alcohol inside.
- Walk around the house to check the parking, noise level, and pick up litter.
- Use fans and vents to keep the inside cool.
- Have food and nonalcoholic drinks available.



- Keep the bathroom line moving so people don't go outside.
- Cut off people who are drinking too fast or are getting out of control.
- Watch for signs of fights starting and possible sexual misconduct.
- Don't let strangers in.
- Keep music low and doors and windows closed.
- Without a liquor license, you can't charge for alcohol. It is illegal to "pass the hat," sell cups or shots, or ask for contributions to the utility bill.

AFTER THE PARTY

- Don't let intoxicated people wander off, walk home alone or drive.
- Collect cans, cups and bottles at the door so nobody leaves with an open container.
- Clean up the outside of your property immediately.

THE MOST COMMON REASONS POLICE COME TO A PARTY

- Too noisy
- Too crowded inside so the party moves outside or there are too many people
- Fighting
- People urinate or vomit outside
- Cars are parked on lawns, in neighbors' driveways, or there are just too many cars
- A party has been busted there before for various reasons
- Property is vandalized or stolen
- Drug odor or complaint

WHAT TO DO IF THE POLICE SHOW UP AT YOUR PARTY

- DO NOT run away or lock the doors.
- Stop the music and ask everyone to set down their drinks and leave quietly
- Have your designated sober person talk to the officers.
- Do not interfere with police officers if they are dealing with an individual(s). Let the officers do their job.
- Listen to officer suggestions or directions.
- If you get a citation, DO go to your court date.

ALCOHOL POISONING

If any signs/symptoms of alcohol poisoning exist, call 911 immediately! DO NOT LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE!

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- You know the person consumed a lot of alcohol.
- The person is unconscious/cannot be awakened.

- The person has cold, clammy, unusually pale or bluish skin.
- The person is breathing slowly or irregularly (less than eight times a minute or 10 or more seconds between breaths)
- The person vomits while passed out and does not wake up during or after

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- Determine the person's consciousness level
- Try to wake up the individual (shout name, slap face, pinch skin, etc.)
- Check the person's breathing to evaluate slow or irregular breaths
- Check the person's temperature and assess their skin color
- Turn the person on his/her side in the rescue position (pictured above) to prevent choking on his/her vomit.
- DO NOT leave the person alone!



A person with alcohol poisoning cannot sleep it off! If he/she is extremely drunk or barely conscious, it is important to continue to monitor breathing, responsiveness and skin color.

CALL FOR HELP!

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Law Enforcement (Emergency)	911
Medical Emergency	911
Iowa's Drug and Alcohol Helpline	866.242.4111
Suicide Prevention Hotline	800.273.8255
Upper Iowa Counseling Center	563.425.5786
Fayette Police Department (Nonemergency)	563.425.3500
Poison Control Hotline	800.222.1222
Gundersen Palmer Hospital (West Union)	563.422.3811
Upper Iowa University	800.553.4150
UIU Student Life	563.425.5215

605 Washington Street — PO Box 1857 — Fayette, IA 52142 — uiu.edu

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