

BROOKLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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<https://www.brooklinehousing.org/default.aspx>



Brookline Housing Authority

www.brooklinehousing.org

Resident Handbook

This handbook is intended as a summary of Brookline Housing Authority policies and does not replace the lease or other official governing documents

Brookline Housing Authority

Resident Handbook

Effective: 2026

This handbook summarizes important policies and rights and responsibilities for residents but does not replace the lease or official Brookline Housing Authority policies. BHA will provide a copy when a resident moves into a BHA property and maintains an electronic version at <https://www.brooklinehousing.org/>

You can find full versions of policies mentioned in the handbook here:

<https://www.brooklinehousing.org/about.aspx>

Handbook Revision Notice

This handbook summarizes important policies for residents of the Brookline Housing Authority. Policies may be updated from time to time in accordance with applicable laws and BHA policies. BHA will notify residents of significant policy changes, and BHA will update the online version of this handbook.

Language Access and Translation Services

The Brookline Housing Authority wants all residents to understand the information and services we provide. If you need help reading or understanding this handbook or other housing information, translation and interpreter services are available.

You can ask for translated documents or an interpreter by contacting your Property Manager or the BHA main office at (617) 277-2022.

These language services are free. Please contact your Property Manager if you need help.

For more information, see the [Language Access Plan](#) on [brooklinehousing.org](https://www.brooklinehousing.org).

Important Contacts

Maintenance 8:30 – 4:30, Monday - Friday	617-277-1884
Maintenance Email	maintenance@brooklinehousing.org
BHA Mainline 8:30-4:30, Monday-Friday	617-277-2022
Emergency Maintenance After 4:30PM, Weekends & Holidays	617-277-2022
Website and Tenant Portal	https://www.brooklinehousing.org/

Important Reminders

- ✓ Call 911 first in emergencies
- ✓ Report maintenance and pest issues promptly to 617-277-1884
- ✓ Rent is due by the 1st of each month
- ✓ Do not smoke inside apartments or within 25 feet of buildings
- ✓ Do not leave trash in hallways or common areas
- ✓ Quiet hours are generally 10:00 PM – 7:00 AM

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WELCOME

The Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) welcomes you and sincerely hopes that you will enjoy living in your new home in Brookline. The policies in this handbook are designed to help maintain safe, clean, and respectful communities for all residents and neighbors. With teamwork from residents, BHA staff, BHA contractors, town partners, and neighbors, we can make Brookline Housing Authority a place you are proud to call home.

BHA established the policies described throughout this Handbook to ensure safe, well-maintained housing and a positive living environment for all residents and their neighbors.

Resident Rights & Responsibilities

Your lease includes both rights and responsibilities, which this handbook summarizes and explains.

As a BHA tenant, you have the right to:

- Live in safe and sanitary housing;
- Request reasonable accommodation for disability and medical issues;
- Privacy, including 48 hours' notice for BHA entry to your apartment¹;
- File grievances without retaliation;
- Participate in resident organizations;
- Request rent redetermination if your income drops; and
- Receive clear, consistent, and professional written or verbal communication from BHA.

You also have the responsibility to;

- Pay rent on time;
- Submit recertification documents as needed;
- Report maintenance and pest issues promptly;
- Allow access to your apartment if given proper notice;
- Report increases in income; and
- Respect your neighbors and BHA staff.

¹ Exceptions for emergencies and tenant-requested work

Your apartment is your home, and you have the right to privacy and to enjoy your living space without unnecessary interference. Your neighbors share the same rights. To help create a comfortable and respectful community for everyone, we ask that you follow these guidelines and encourage your household members, guests, and neighbors to do the same.

Thank you and Welcome,



Ben Stone
Executive Director

Our Mission

The Brookline Housing Authority provides low-income families, seniors, and people of all abilities with safe, decent, accessible, and affordable places to live in an opportunity-rich community. The BHA works in collaboration with government and civic organizations to support and encourage the well-being and economic self-sufficiency of BHA residents; to sustain a diverse population in Brookline; and to maintain attractive residential neighborhoods.

Brookline has a rich history of cultural diversity and inclusion. It is truly a community of opportunity. We encourage you to get involved in your BHA and Brookline community and make a difference.

BHA Organization

Understanding how the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) is organized and regulated can help residents know who to contact and how decisions are made.

The BHA provides housing with funding from and under the guidance and regulations of the [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) or the [Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities \(EOHLC\)](#), depending on the property. The Board of Commissioners oversees the BHA and delegates day-to-day management to the Executive Director. HUD and EOHLC provide oversight and regulations under federal or state law; the Board of Commissioners governs the BHA and approves budgets and policies; the Executive Director leads daily operations; Department Directors manage specific areas; and Property Managers work directly with residents and oversee individual properties.

Brookline Housing Authority Organizational Structure

For questions about your apartment, rent, payments, or other concerns, please contact your property manager first.

For maintenance issues, please call or email the maintenance line to put in work orders and Director of Maintenance Chris Devoll (cdevoll@brooklinehousing.org) if you have questions and concerns about the work in your apartment.

Board of Commissioners

Provides oversight, approves policies and budgets, and holds monthly public meetings.

Executive Director

Oversees daily operations, staff, and implementation of Board policies.

Property Management

Your main point of contact for your apartment. Responsible for rent, recertifications, leases, and resident concerns. Also oversees units, common areas, parking, and overall property conditions.

- Handles rent collection and lease compliance
- Coordinates with Maintenance for repairs, pest control, and inspections
- Addresses questions, issues, and day-to-day needs at your property

Resident Services

Oversees BHA's resident services programs, including contracted service coordination (see below section on resident services) and BHA's economic mobility programs.

Maintenance

Handles repairs, work orders, pest control, and upkeep of units and common areas.

Modernization

Manage construction projects such as roof replacements, heating system replacements, and site improvements to preserve and improve BHA's properties.

Leased Housing (Section 8)

Manages applications, waitlists, and screening, and completes annual and interim rent certifications that determine rent for the Section 8 program. In LIHTC Properties (32 Marion, 50 Pleasant, 61 Park, 90 Longwood) Leased Housing is responsible for determining rent (tenant share).

Finance

Manages budgets and financial operations. Processes rent payments. For questions about your rent amount, or balances, please contact Property Management.

Redevelopment

Plans and implements major mixed finance redevelopments to preserve and expand the BHA's stock of affordable housing.

Language Access and Translation Services

The Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) is committed to ensuring that all residents have meaningful access to information and services.

BHA uses a Language Access Line at the main office and at each property management office to assist residents who need interpretation services.

All important documents and notices include a translation notice informing residents that translation is available upon request through the Property Manager's office. BHA prioritizes translation services for the priority languages Spanish and Chinese, based on analysis of census and tenant data, but will make resources available for translations in other languages as needed.

Residents who need assistance understanding written materials or communicating with BHA staff should contact their Property Manager to request translation or interpretation services. Language assistance services are provided free of charge.

See the [Language Access Plan](https://www.brooklinehousing.org/about.aspx) on our website at <https://www.brooklinehousing.org/about.aspx> for more information

Resident Service Coordinators:

BHA offers support services to help residents:

- Remain housed
- Maintain independence
- Improve health
- Participate in community life
- Access benefits
- Pursue economic opportunity

The BHA contracts with Hebrew Senior Life for service coordination senior housing sites and with the Brookline Center for Community Mental Health to provide on-site services at the family sites. Service Coordinators help residents with:

- Access to local resources
- Aging in place
- Benefit applications & navigation
- Fun and educational community activities

See the [BHA website or your property manager](#) for contact information.

BHA Economic Mobility Programs

The BHA supports residents in meeting their career and education goals through the [Self Sufficiency Program \(SSP – State\)](#) and Family Self Sufficiency (FSS – federal public housing and housing choice vouchers). These programs provide coaching and allow participants to build savings as they pay their rent. Contact Jacky Lara jlara@brooklinehousing.org for more information.

Community Resources

The Brookline Housing Authority connects residents to a variety of community resources and services. Below are programs available to support residents of all ages. More info here: <https://www.brooklinehousing.org/rsp/>

Food Resources

- [Brookline Food Pantry](#): (617) 800-5339
 - 210 Harvard St. United Parish Church: Wednesday: 2 - 5 pm
 - 226 High St. High St. Veterans Community Room: Tuesday 3 - 7 pm
 - 55R Egmont St. Community Room: Thursday 4 – 6p (BHA RESIDENTS ONLY)
 - [Brookline Thrives](#) – Friday snack bags for children delivered to your child’s class
 - Bring proof of address and ID to register.
- Springwell Lunch Program for Seniors & Persons with Disabilities @ 90 Longwood Ave.
 - For BHA residents of 90 Longwood, 50 Pleasant St., 61 Park St., 32 Marion & 190 Harvard St.
 - Lunch served Mon - Fri, 12-1pm
 - Dine-in or Grab ‘N Go available.
 - To register, visit the Community Dining Room Monday through Friday between 10am - 12pm and speak to the Dining Site Manager
- [Springwell – Home Delivered Meals](#) for Seniors: (617) 297-7685 | info@springwell.com

Resources for Seniors

- [Brookline Senior Center](#): (617) 730-2753
 - Senior programs: Health, arts, nutrition, and recreation services

Children, Youth & Family Resources

- [Steps to Success Inc.:](#) (617) 713-5310
 - Academic support services and enrichment opportunities for students from elementary school through college
- [Brookline Early Education Program \(BEEP\):](#) (617) 713-5471
 - Early education for children ages 3–5
- [Brookline Recreation Department:](#) (617) 730-2069
 - Recreation programs: Camps, sports, swimming, childcare, and special events
- [Brookline Teen Center:](#) (617) 396-8349
 - Community hub and programming for high schoolers

General Community Resources

- [Brookline Community Mental Health Center:](#) (617) 277-8107
 - Mental health services: Counseling, case management, and financial assistance
- [Brookline Public Library](#)
 - Multilingual resources, computers, lending library, community programs
 - Brookline Village: 361 Washington Street
 - Coolidge Corner: 31 Pleasant St.
 - Putterham (South Brookline): 959 West Roxbury Parkway

Domestic Violence & Safety Resources

The Brookline Housing Authority complies with all applicable HUD regulations and protections under the [Violence Against Women Act](#) (VAWA).

Residents who need assistance or would like to request accommodation or an emergency transfer should contact property management or Resident Services. Information will be handled confidentially to the extent allowed by law.

Residents may also contact [The Second Step](#), a local organization that provides confidential support services, safety planning, advocacy, and resources for survivors of domestic violence. The Second Step can be reached at 617-965-2538.

Domestic Violence Resources (see our website if you have a paper packet)

- [Resource List](#)
- [Federal housing emergency transfer packet](#)
- [State housing emergency transfer packet](#)

RESIDENT MEETINGS & BHA Board Meetings

Board of Commissioners Meeting

Each month, the BHA holds a Board of Commissioners Meeting. At these meetings, the BHA Executive Director, Commissioners, and staff talk about important issues, and the Commissioners vote on things like change orders, contracts, budgets and new policies. These meetings are open to the public, and residents are welcome to come, listen, and ask questions.

The meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month at 4:30 PM in the community room at 90 Longwood Avenue, and we generally provide a Zoom remote option. Notices about the meetings are posted in common areas at all BHA sites ahead of time, and the schedule and agendas are also available at www.brooklinehousing.org.

Quarterly Resident Meetings

Your property manager holds resident meetings every three months at your site. These meetings are a good chance to:

- Hear about what's going on at your property
- Learn about any changes or updates
- Ask questions and bring up any concerns

Your property manager will notify residents and provide an agenda ahead of each meeting. BHA senior staff, town officials, or other guests may join as well. We encourage you to come to as many of these meetings as you can, it's a helpful way to hear about updates, meet your neighbors and be part of the BHA community.

RENT

Payment

Rent is due on the 1st of each month. Late or unpaid rent may result in lease enforcement action. **The BHA does not accept cash.** Rent may be paid by mailed check, money order, online tenant portal, online bill payment through your bank, by mail, by placing your payment in a designated drop box, or delivering it to your Property Manager's office. See [How to Pay Rent to the BHA](#) for more information.

Please remember to include your name, address and unit number on checks or money orders to ensure proper credit to your account.

Rent Calculation

BHA calculates your rent based on your household income according to state OR federal law and regulation, depending on your property. If your income increases, so will your rent, and if you lose income, BHA will reduce your rent.

Residents of state-aided public housing will pay 32% (30% for residents of the small number of elderly/non-elderly disabled units) of their adjusted gross income in rent.

Residents of federal public housing or with Housing Choice Vouchers will pay 30% of their adjusted gross income in rent.

Both programs have various deductions (such as for medical expenses) and exclusions (such as for income from a part-time college student) that may lower your rent.

BHA will recalculate your rent at annual “recertifications”. BHA will contact you about four months before your certification date, requesting proof of income and any deductions or exclusions you may claim. Please respond promptly and completely to avoid any legal action or accumulating a debt for unreported income. You can find information on how public housing programs calculate rent at [Mass Legal Help](#).

Change in Income

Residents must report any significant changes to their income to their property manager. If your income decreases, you may request an interim rent redetermination to reduce your rent. If your household’s monthly income increases by more than 10% (state public housing) or at all (federal programs), you must report it to your property manager. BHA must give 14 days’ notice of increased rent, though the increased rent can be applied retroactively if the increase in income was not reported in a timely manner. Failure to report increased income may result in large assessments of unpaid rent due to unreported income and/or legal action.

Enforcement

BHA considers any unpaid rent after the 7th of the month to be late. BHA will send an unpaid balance letter to all households that have a balance as of that date. BHA may follow up with additional legal letters including a Pre-Termination Conference and Notice to Quit if the balance is not paid.

Please refer to the full [Rent Collection Policy](#) on the BHA Website for more details

Repayment Agreements and Assistance

BHA will only enter into court-ordered and enforced repayment agreements for balances above \$500. Households in a repayment agreement must stay current on their monthly rent and pay down an agreed-upon portion of their balance each month to avoid legal action.

There are various resources that can help you pay rent if you have a family circumstance that causes you to miss rent. You can apply for state emergency rental assistance through the [Rental Aid for Families in Transition \(RAFT\)](#) program or local resources administered by [Brookline Community Development Corp \(BCDC\)](#). These programs have limited funds and it's very important that you pay your rent on time. If you think you will have trouble paying your rent, please contact your property manager and/or service coordinator immediately for referrals for rental assistance resources and to make a plan to stay current.

LEASE

Your lease is a mutual agreement between you and the BHA. Please read your lease carefully. It explains the amount of your rent, the conditions of your occupancy, and the circumstances under which the lease may be ended by you or the BHA. It is important that you understand and follow all lease terms and community rules, as they are in place to support a safe and respectful living environment for all residents.

Reasonable Accommodation

Residents with disabilities may request reasonable accommodation or modifications to policies, procedures, or physical features of the property to ensure equal access to housing. Requests are confidential. Contact your Property Manager or Service Coordinator to start the process, which will include an interactive conference to discuss your needs and how the BHA can meet them. BHA may need medical documentation if the disability is not readily apparent.

Please refer to the full [Reasonable Accommodation Policy on the BHA Website](#) for more details.

Grievance Procedure

If you disagree with BHA's decision about a matter pertaining to your lease, you may file a grievance. Follow these steps:

1. Try resolving the issue with your Property Manager.
2. Submit a written grievance to the BHA (mail or hand delivered) at 90 Longwood within 14 calendar days if not resolved. If related to a lease or program termination, you must submit within 7 days of termination notice.

3. BHA will schedule an informal conference to discuss the issue
4. If necessary, BHA will schedule a formal hearing with a neutral party.

Residents may not grieve certain issues, including evictions for non-payment of rent or disputes between two or more residents.

Please refer to the full [Grievance Policy on the BHA Website](#), for more details.

Transfer Requests

Residents may request transfers for reasons of domestic violence, reasonable accommodation, or needing a larger unit (under-housed). Please contact your property manager to request a transfer – you may need to provide supporting documentation.

BHA will also assign over-housed (household too small for its number of bedrooms) to the transfer list for a smaller unit. BHA will notify you when placed on the over-housed transfer list. BHA pays moving costs for over housed households but will charge you one and a half times rent, and other legal actions may be taken against you should you refuse an overhoused transfer.

In general, BHA cannot transfer residents between different programs – for example from state public housing to a project-based voucher property. BHA maintains wait lists for each program and bedroom size, with the following priorities:

1. Domestic Violence
2. Reasonable Accommodation
3. Over-Housed
4. Under-Housed

Please be aware that we have a limited number of vacancies each year, and some must go to applicants from waitlists. We do our best to accommodate transfers but please note that wait times can be lengthy, especially for larger or 1st floor apartments.

While we cannot transfer residents across programs (federal public housing, state public housing, or Section 8/LLCs), we strongly encourage residents of family housing who qualify for senior housing to apply for our senior housing, which is all new or recently renovated with elevators, community space, and strong resident services. Please go to www.brooklinehousing.org or contact our office to apply.

Please refer to the full [Transfer Policy on the BHA Website](#), for more details.

Move-Out Notice and Procedures

Residents may end their lease by providing management with at least 30 days' advance written notice. Written notice must cover one full rental period.

Your Property Manager will inspect your apartment before your move-out date. BHA may charge residents for damages beyond normal wear and tear or for the removal of personal items left behind, such as wallpaper, contact paper, carpeting, or other belongings.

Residents must return all apartment and mailbox keys to your Property Manager or the main office. Move-outs should take place during regular business hours unless other arrangements have been made in advance with your property manager. Residents are responsible for rent until all keys have been returned.

Guests and Occupants Not Listed on the Lease

Residents are responsible for the conduct of their guests and must ensure that guests follow all community policies.

Only those listed on your lease may live in your apartment. Please contact your property manager about any changes to your household. Guests may stay for up to 21 days within a 12-month period but must be approved by management. People not listed on the lease are not permitted to stay overnight regularly without approval. This is considered a lease violation and may result in lease enforcement action.

If you plan to be away for more than 14 days, notify the property manager. If BHA finds you are not living consistently in the unit, you may lose your tenancy.

Personal Property and Renter's Insurance

The Brookline Housing Authority is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to residents' personal belongings.

BHA strongly encourages residents to obtain renter's insurance to protect their personal property in the event of fire, water damage, theft, or other unexpected events. Renter's insurance policies are typically inexpensive and may cover the cost of replacing personal belongings, and other losses. BHA also encourages residents to maintain documentation, including receipts and pictures, for important personal items to help with claims following a loss.

Maintenance and Repairs

The BHA is responsible for maintaining apartments, buildings, and common areas in safe and working conditions. Residents should report maintenance concerns promptly to help prevent further damage and ensure timely repairs.

Residents may not make repairs, alterations, or modifications to their apartment or hire outside contractors without prior written approval from the BHA. All maintenance and repair work must be performed or approved by BHA.

How to request repairs:

CALL: 617-277-1884: During business hours - 8:30-4:30pm Monday-Friday

CALL: 617-277-2022: After hours: 4:30PM – 8:30AM and weekends

USE THE TENANT PORTAL: <https://www.brooklinehousing.org/>

EMAIL: maintenance@brooklinehousing.org

If there is immediate danger, call 911 first.

BHA's maintenance staff generally work during business hours, with more limited on-call coverage nights and weekends.

Emergency Repairs (Call Immediately) - BHA will address within 24-48 hours

- No heat
- No hot water
- Major water leaks or flooding
- Sewer backups or overflowing toilets, or toilet clogs if only toilet in apartment
- Gas smell
- No electricity in your apartment
- Stove or refrigerator not working at all
- Entry doors or door locks are not secure
- Fire or smoke

*Heat must be provided from September 15 – May 31

Daytime (7:00 AM – 11:00 PM): At least 68°F

Nighttime (11:00 PM – 7:00 AM): At least 64°F; Applies to all living spaces and bathrooms

Routine Repairs – BHA will address within 14 days

- Dripping faucets
- Appliance problems
- Slow drains
- Broken fixtures
- Broken cabinets or doors
- Other maintenance concerns
- Pest sightings

If BHA has not completed the work order within the target time or you feel has not done the work properly, please contact Director of Maintenance & Modernization Chris Devoll at cdevoll@brooklinehousing.org.

Lockouts:

During business hours - 8:30-4:30pm Monday-Friday Call Maintenance 617-277-1884

After hours call 617-277-2022. You will be charged for lockouts.

Keys and Fobs

If you need an extra key or fob, speak with your Property Manager. Fees apply.

Please refer to the full list of [Maintenance charges on the BHA Website](#), for more details.

Pest Control and Pest Treatment Preparation

BHA takes pest control very seriously. If you see pests, call Maintenance at 617-277-1884 immediately. Early reporting helps prevent pests from spreading. BHA's pest control provider is onsite every Wednesday. Property Managers accompany the pest control provider. Call before 3 PM on Tuesday to be on the treatment list that week. Property Management will leave a door tag noting the pest control technician's findings and any treatment applied.

BHA and its pest control contractor also conduct pest control inspections of ALL apartments every 6 months.

BHA may require a full-building extermination when there is a severe or persistent pest problem. BHA will generally provide 14-day notice so you can prep (empty cabinets, move items away from walls, etc.), and will follow up with reminder 2-3 days before the treatment. Proper preparation and access are required to ensure the work can be completed safely and effectively. Failure to properly prepare the apartment or provide access will result in additional service charges and may be considered a lease violation.

If you have questions about scheduling or preparation instructions, please contact your Property Manager. If you have difficulty prepping for a spray treatment due to age or disability, please let your property manager know so they can work with you and resident services on a solution.

We need your help to combat mice, roaches, and other pests. Please keep your apartments clean and uncluttered, empty trash cans regularly, and report pest issues immediately. Even if you are frustrated that pests reappear after a treatment – please keep calling. This ensures that you remain on the list for treatment and management can identify recurring issues that need full-building extermination.

Annual Inspections of Your Unit

Both federal and state regulations require that BHA conduct annual inspections of each unit to ensure that they are in good condition and identify items that need repair or correction. You will receive written notice at least 48 hours in advance. During inspections, staff check:

- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- General cleanliness and housekeeping
- Clear and safe exits
- Pest activity or damage
- Damage or poor condition of unit components
- Lease compliance (occupancy, unauthorized alterations)

You do not need to be present for the inspection. The inspector will be accompanied by your Property Manager and BHA Maintenance staff. If BHA notes housekeeping concerns or blocked egress areas, they will notify you and schedule a follow-up inspection within approximately 14 days. The inspection may also result in work orders for BHA to complete any necessary repairs. You may request a copy of the inspection report from your Property Manager.

Notice Before Entry

The BHA may need to enter your apartment to perform inspections, pest control treatments, maintenance repairs, and construction (modernization) projects. This work may be completed by BHA staff or authorized contractors.

Except for emergencies and tenant-requested work orders, **residents will receive at least 48 hours' notice before entry.** BHA will post notices on the front doors of apartments. BHA or its contractors **will not enter if only minors are present in the apartment.** BHA will leave a notice if they are in your unit when you aren't there. BHA staff, or contractors accompanied by BHA staff will knock and announce themselves before entering. BHA and its contractors will act professionally in your apartment and will clean up their work and leave your apartment as they find it as far as possible. If you believe maintenance has not met these standards, please contact Director of Maintenance & Modernization Chris Devoll at cdevoll@brooklinehousing.org.

If a construction contractor has not acted respectfully or cleaned up after themselves, please contact Capital Projects Manager Akil Alexander at **857-274-4382** or aalexander@brooklinehousing.org.

If you request maintenance and submit a work order for your unit, this request gives BHA permission to enter your apartment to complete the repair. If you are not home at the time of service, Maintenance staff may enter, complete the work, and will leave a notice indicating they were in your unit.

Please Note: Residents may not refuse entry when proper notice has been provided. Refusing entry that delays repairs, construction, inspections, or pest control treatments is considered a lease violation.

Utilities and Energy Use

We appreciate your help in reducing energy costs, greenhouse gas emissions, and water use.

- Close windows when heat or A/C is on
- Turn off lights when leaving a room
- Properly seal around window-mounted A/Cs. If possible, remove them before winter. See [BHA Air Conditioner Policy](#).
- Report leaks or running toilets to maintenance immediately

Maintaining your unit

Residents should keep apartments clean and safe. Be sure bathroom fans are turned on to prevent mold and clean any damp areas. Bag all trash and place it directly into the appropriate chute or dumpster. Do not leave trash in hallways or outside dumpsters, as this attracts rodents and can result in maintenance charges. Contact maintenance immediately with any issues including leaks, damage to the unit, broken appliances, or pest activity.

Please Note: Residents may not paint, wallpaper, use contact paper on surfaces, glue or tack items to the floor, or drill into kitchen cabinets. Residents may not hire outside contractors or perform modifications. If you are unsure whether a change is permitted, ask your Property Manager before proceeding.

Thank you for your help in maintaining BHA's communities.

Resident Responsibility for Damages and Charges

Residents are responsible for maintaining their apartments in good condition. Residents may be charged for repairs resulting from negligence, misuse, or unauthorized alterations. Residents are NOT responsible for normal wear and tear.

- Lockout service calls
- Damage to appliances or fixtures caused by misuse
- Clogged plumbing caused by grease, wipes, or improper items
- Damage caused by unauthorized alterations
- Failure to prepare the unit for pest treatments
- Changes to the apartment without permission
- Excessive trash or belongings left at moveout

Please refer to the full list of [Maintenance charges on the BHA Website](#), for more details.

Kitchen and Bathroom Care

Proper care of sinks, drains, and plumbing helps prevent clogs, leaks, and water damage

To prevent blockages and overflows **DO NOT**:

- Pour grease, oil, or fat down sinks or drains
- Flush wipes (including “flushable” wipes), paper towels, sanitary products, cat litter, or ANY other non-toilet paper items down the toilet
- Place food, coffee grounds, or debris in sinks unless your unit has an approved garbage disposal
- Use chemical drain cleaners, as they can damage plumbing and create safety hazards

Report plumbing issues promptly to help prevent damage, including:

- Dripping faucets; Running toilets
- Slow or clogged drains
- Leaks under sinks or around fixtures
- Toilet overflows or backups

Appliances and Fixtures

Keep stoves, refrigerators, sinks, and bathroom fixtures clean and in good condition. Report any maintenance concerns promptly.

Washers/Dryers

Washers, dryers, or dishwashers are not allowed in your unit².

AIR CONDITIONERS

Properly installed air conditioners are permitted in your apartment. You must properly seal around window A/Cs to improve comfort and reduce energy use. Please check with your manager concerning installation.

² Some residents have long-standing washer/dryers in our family sites. However, the plumbing system cannot properly handle these, and we are removing washer hook-ups upon unit turnover.

Please refer to the full [Air Conditioner Policy on the BHA Website](#), policy section, for more details.

Outdoor Grills

You are not allowed to store a propane gas grill anywhere inside of your building. This is a serious fire code violation and a violation of your lease. BHA does not allow charcoal grills.

Please refer to the full [Outdoor Grill Policy on the BHA Website](#), policy section, for more details.

Community Rooms

Community rooms are for residents only. Use of the community room is subject to the Community Room Policy. Residents interested in using the community room for events must contact their Property Manager for information on availability, guidelines, and approval. Community rooms, like all common areas, must be used respectfully and left clean after use.

Please refer to the full [Community Room Policy on the BHA Website](#) for more details.

Laundry Rooms

Laundry rooms are available for resident use during posted hours only. Please be respectful of others by:

- Removing your laundry promptly
- Cleaning out lint traps
- Keeping the area tidy

If a washer or dryer is not functioning, notify your Property Manager so repairs can be scheduled. If you lose money in a machine, contact the laundry company directly. Their phone number is posted inside the laundry room. They will assist you with reimbursement.

Trash and Recycling

Please do not leave trash, recycling, or bulk items in hallways, common areas, or outside of designated disposal areas. Residents must dispose of trash and recycling in the designated areas or containers at their property. Depending on your building, this may include trash chutes, dumpsters, compactors, or recycling bins. Recycling must be properly sorted and placed in the appropriate labeled containers. Please follow the posted instructions at your property.

Please Note: Sharp items must be safely capped and placed in an approved sharps container or a sealed, puncture-resistant container before disposal.

Resident Conduct

Conduct of Residents

The BHA is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful community.

Verbal abuse, physical threats, harassment, or intimidation toward staff or other residents is not permitted.

BHA takes discriminatory or threatening behavior, including conduct based on race, gender, disability, or other protected characteristics, very seriously. Such behavior may result in lease enforcement action and may also be referred to law enforcement if needed.

No-Smoking Policy

Smoking violations will result in lease enforcement. Smoking is not allowed inside apartments, common areas, or within 25 feet of buildings. See our [Smoke-Free Housing Policy](#) for more details. This applies, but is not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Cigars
- Pipes
- Vaping and e-cigarettes
- Marijuana smoking (regardless of legal status)

Alcohol and Drug Policy

BHA has a zero-tolerance illegal drug policy. Alcohol is not allowed in public or common areas. Illegal drug use or distribution is strictly prohibited and will lead to eviction.

Noise and Quiet Enjoyment

Quiet hours are 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Please take extra care to keep music, voices, and other noise at a reasonable volume during this time.

Residents are responsible for the conduct of household members and guests.

Residents must comply with all applicable local noise ordinances, including the [Town of Brookline Noise Bylaw](#).

Residents and guests are expected to be considerate of their neighbors and help maintain a peaceful living environment. Noise that disturbs others' reasonable enjoyment of their home is not permitted.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

The safety of residents is a top priority for the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA). BHA works closely with the Town of Brookline's first responders and Emergency Management team to support building and resident safety. BHA provides important building information and, when appropriate, resident information to assist emergency personnel in responding effectively.

These partnerships help ensure a coordinated and timely response in an emergency.

Residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with building exits, fire alarms, and evacuation routes in advance.

Emergency Alerts and Notifications (Everbridge)

The Brookline Housing Authority uses an emergency notification system called Everbridge to communicate important information to residents.

BHA uses Everbridge to send alerts about emergencies, building issues, safety information, weather events, resident events, or other important notices related to your apartment or community. Everbridge helps BHA provide real time updates on emergencies. BHA will inform residents when the emergency (i.e. power outage, elevator down) has started, any relevant information during event, and when it has been resolved.

Everbridge sends messages by text, email, and phone call. The texts will generally come from "89361"

Please keep your current phone number and email on file with your property manager to make sure you receive these messages. If your phone number or email address changes, please notify your Property Manager immediately.

Smoke Detectors and Fire Safety Equipment

Smoke detectors are provided for your safety and must always remain installed and operational. **Do not** remove, disconnect, cover, or tamper with smoke detectors or fire safety equipment. If

your smoke detector is not working or is sounding improperly, report it to Maintenance immediately so it can be repaired or replaced.

Tampering with smoke detectors or fire safety equipment is a serious lease violation and is also prohibited by Massachusetts law. Violations may result in lease enforcement action and legal penalties. BHA will charge you for replacing smoke detectors you have removed.

Reporting Safety Concerns

Residents should promptly report safety concerns or hazards to the BHA Maintenance Office or their Property Manager. In emergencies, always call 911 first. Working together helps maintain a safe and secure community for everyone.

Fire Safety

For smells of gas or fire: evacuate and call 911 immediately.

In the event of a fire, staying calm and acting quickly can help protect your safety and the safety of others.

Here are some important steps to follow:

- Know your exits: Learn where the stairs and exits are in your building. Evacuation routes are posted in BHA buildings that have elevators.
- Check before opening doors: If you think there may be a fire nearby, feel the door with the back of your hand. If it's hot, do not open it. Look for smoke or other signs of danger before leaving your apartment.
- Use stairs, not elevators.
- Plan a meeting spot. Choose a safe place outside where your family or household can meet after evacuating.

Help for those who need assistance:

BHA keeps a confidential list of residents who may need help during an emergency. If you have a medical condition that an emergency worker should know about, we encourage you to disclose it to your property manager for inclusion in this confidential file. We work closely with the Town of Brookline's emergency response team, and first responders will come to assist you if needed.

Don't go back inside until emergency personnel say it is safe.

Building Security and Safety

For the safety of all residents, building entrance doors must remain closed and locked. **Do not** prop open doors, block them from closing, or tamper with locks or security equipment. Use the intercom system to confirm visitors before allowing them into the building. Do not allow entry to individuals you do not know.

Please Note: Tampering with doors, locks, intercoms, or other security systems is a serious lease violation.

Security cameras are in use at entrances and indoor and outdoor common areas to help maintain a safe living environment. See [BHA Security Camera Policy](#) on our website for more information

Hallways and Common Areas

Hallways, elevators, lobbies, and other common areas are for entering and exiting the building and accessing shared facilities. These areas are not intended for playing, gathering, or extended socializing.

Hallways, stairwells, landings, and all common areas must always remain clear for fire safety and emergency access.

Personal items may not be stored* or placed outside your apartment or in any common area. This includes shoes, bicycles, strollers, toys, furniture, trash, decorations, or any other belongings.

*Residents may store bicycles at bike racks provided by the BHA and may store propane grills outside their building entrance at a safe distance.

Items may not be hung on hallway walls or outside your unit.

Please Note: Items found in common areas are a fire code violation and will be removed without notice.

Parking

Parking at Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) properties is limited and not guaranteed. When available, parking is generally limited to one vehicle per household. Parking is for registered resident vehicles only. Guest parking is not permitted on BHA property. All vehicles must be registered with the BHA and display a current and clearly visible BHA parking sticker or temporary yellow parking pass. Vehicles must also have current registration, insurance, and a valid state inspection sticker.

Vehicle repairs and maintenance, including oil changes, fluid changes, or mechanical work, are not permitted in parking areas.

Vehicles parked in violation of BHA parking rules or without a valid and visible BHA parking sticker or temporary pass may be towed at the owner's expense. If your vehicle is towed from a Brookline Housing Authority property, it will be removed by:

Robert's Towing

171 North Beacon Street Brighton, MA 02135

Phone: (617) 254-0303

Residents should contact the towing company directly to obtain information about retrieving their vehicle and any associated fees. If you believe your vehicle was towed in error — for example, if your vehicle was not parked in a fire lane or other restricted area and your valid BHA parking sticker was clearly visible — please contact your Property Manager as soon as possible so the situation can be reviewed.

Please see [BHA Parking Policy on our website](#) for more information.

Snow:

The BHA may ask residents to move their cars before or after a snowfall so that the parking lot can be plowed. Residents should take care not to throw snow back into the parking lot, walkway or into their neighbor's parking space.

Please refer to the full [Storm Policy on the BHA Website](#), policy section, for more details.

Motorcycles and Motorbikes:

Motorcycles, scooters, and similar vehicles may not be chained to fences, railings, or any part of the building structure or parked on sidewalks or grass areas within the site. You should register them with your property manager per the parking policy to get a tag and parking space.

Please refer to the full [Parking policy](#) and [Grounds policy](#) on the BHA Website, policy section, for more details.

Pets and Service Animals

Pets are allowed at BHA properties under certain conditions. Refer to the [full Pet Policy](#) at www.brooklinehousing.org for rules about breed, size, licensing, and required documentation. Households cannot have more than one pet, and pets cannot be larger than 18 pounds at adulthood. BHA must approve all pets in advance.

Service/Support Animals:

Residents with disabilities may request accommodation to keep a service or emotional support animal. Contact your Property Manager to start the process.

Cleaning Up After Your Pet:

Pet owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets immediately and properly disposing of waste in designated trash bins. Failure to clean up after pets creates health and cleanliness concerns and results in lease violations or fines.

Leash Requirements:

Owners must always keep pets on a leash when outside the unit. This applies to all common areas, including parking lots, walkways, and green spaces. Pets may not be left tied up or unattended outside at any time.

Town Registration:

Per local Town of Brookline regulations, all dogs must be properly licensed with the town and up to date on required vaccinations. You must provide proof of registration and vaccination to the BHA.

Noise and Behavior:

Pet owners are responsible for ensuring that their pets do not create disturbances (e.g., excessive barking) or pose a threat to others.

Inspections and Work Order Calls:

When inspections or work order calls occur, pets should be crated, secured in a separate room, or removed from the unit entirely to ensure safety for the pet, the inspector or maintenance staff responding to the work order. Residents should inform inspectors and maintenance staff in advance about your pet and follow their specific instructions provided by the property manager.

Please refer to the full [Pet Policy on the BHA Website](#), policy section, for more details.

Tenant Organizations

BHA residents have the right to form tenant organizations. In state public housing, residents may form a Local Tenant Organization (LTO) to represent the tenants and discussions issues with the Housing Authority. Once properly formed and recognized, LTOs meet with management periodically and must be consulted on areas involving residents, including:

- hiring of Executive Directors;
- hiring of LHA employees that will have direct dealings with residents;
- regulatory waiver requests;
- modernization and redevelopment;
- LTO and resident participation at LHA Board meetings;
- LHA policies affecting the status, rights, duties, or welfare of residents;
- annual budgeting;
- Annual Plan; and
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

LTO's are also entitled to \$25/year from the Housing Authority budget per covered apartment to support their activities.

See Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants for more resources on LTOs and assistance organizing.

Tenant Concerns

If residents have concerns about their tenancy, lease enforcement, or property we ask that they first talk to their property manager. If their concerns aren't addressed, we ask that they follow this escalation pathway:

1. Director of Property Management: Ana De La Puente
adelapuate@brooklinehousing.org
2. Senior Leadership:
 - a. Assistant Executive Director: Lisa Brown lbrown@brooklinehousing.org
 - b. Executive Director: Ben Stone bstone@brooklinehousing.org
3. BHA Board of Commissioners: Note that Commissioners do not get involved in individual tenant issues but provide oversight to BHA management through the Executive Director.

- a. Emails here: <https://www.brooklinehousing.org/about.aspx>
 - b. Residents can also give public comments at board meetings.
4. BHA's Funding and Regulating Agencies:
- a. State Public Housing residents – Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities: Housing.Help@mass.gov (reference Brookline Housing Authority in subject)
 - b. Federal Public Housing: HUD Customer Service Line **(800) 955-2232**

If residents have concerns about work order completion or other issues with maintenance, please start with Director of Maintenance & Modernization Chris Devoll
cdevoll@brooklinehousing.org.

Legal Aid

BHA seeks to resolve all issues amicably with residents. However, residents are entitled to seek legal assistance and there may be free or reduced cost legal services available to you.

Mass Legal Help has information on a variety of topics related to housing tenancy and has a tool to help you find a lawyer if needed. <https://www.masslegalhelp.org/find-lawyer>