



Plainville Housing Authority

140 East Bacon Street, Plainville, Massachusetts 02762

508-699-4212

Tenant Handbook

A Handy Resource for...

Answers to common questions

Selected policies – with brief descriptions

Contacts at the PHA and in your community

Continuing to provide basic housing resources to ensure decent, safe and affordable housing for our tenants, we pledge to work to accomplish a high degree of living quality. In conjunction with this goal, we shall strive to improve this quality of living in a financially-burdened, subsidized living environment, work to ensure housing choice, promote self-sufficiency and therein further fair housing opportunity. We shall attempt to meet the needs of eligible applicants and tenants with support that promotes economic and social independence for our program beneficiaries.

We strive to enhance the quality of our communities overall. By addressing local housing needs, working to expand upon the viability of the existing supply of housing stock and encouraging self-sufficiency, we create opportunity for better housing choice. The expansion of housing choice and the increased ability of our assisted families to meet fundamental needs will allow us to progress toward ensuring effective fair housing opportunity.

The Plainville Housing Authority consists of forty (40) one-bedroom, elderly and non-elderly disabled, state public housing units, located at Hilltop Terrace, 140 East Bacon Street, Plainville MA.



ABOUT PLAINVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

PHA Manages 40 State-aided public housing apartments for families qualifying for residency under specific guidelines. Guidelines for our programs are established either as state housing regulation by the Executive Offices of Housing & Livable Communities (EOHLC), local policy by the Authority, or Massachusetts General Laws. During your tenancy you will be receiving the benefits of a regulated housing program as are all other families that occupy apartments in our elderly, handicapped, or family mix of pleasant and attractive communities. This property is owned by the Authority and are located at 140 East Bacon Street in the Town of Plainville.

Authority employees are highly trained housing professionals and maintain the property in excellent condition with very limited resources. All of our public housing resources are regulated by the Executive Offices of Housing & Livable Communities (EOHLC). Your help, however, is needed in order that we may continue to be effective in reaching our service goals and in maintaining the integrity of our apartments. Our communities are a reflection of the lives and interactions of their occupants, so the way in which you look upon and approach your tenancy within our community is very important. Your assistance to the Authority in addressing issues as soon as they arise, by bringing them to the attention of staff, will allow us to better serve all tenants.

Management welcomes your suggestions and observations and will advise and aid you in resolving housing issues that may arise. Should you have suggestions, please forward them, in writing, to the office. We are a state-regulated entity and, as such, we have a responsibility to inform you of all regulatory issues relating to your tenancy and will do so through appropriate form letters which address specific issues as the need arises. We will also provide management and maintenance of the property and offer related tenant support as our resources dictate.

We will attempt to do what we can to allow your tenancy to be as enjoyable and pleasant as possible. Cooperation is the basis of all success and we ask that as you continue your tenancy, please consider and attempt to understand the constraints under which we must provide services to you. Thank you and enjoy your stay with the Plainville Housing Authority.

This handbook does not contain all policies and regulations of State-aided public housing. This booklet provides some text and only a sample of the most common policies and regulations that a tenant will encounter. The full text and entire set of policies and regulations can be obtained by calling the main office at 508-699-4212. However, remember that single copies are free, but you may be charged for multiple copies at 5 cents per page.

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Community Contacts



Police, Ambulance, Fire – Emergency	9-1-1
Police, (Non-Emergency)	(508) 809-5555
Plainville Town Hall	(508) 695-3010
Plainville Council on Aging	(508) 699-7384
Plainville Health Department	(508) 695-3010
Plainville Post Office.....	(508) 695-4993
Already Taxi.....	(781) 929-6530
Community Care	(508) 223-4135
Dial-A-Ride GATRA	(800) 438-2500
Elder Abuse Hotline	(800) 922-2275
EOHLC.....	(617) 573-1500
Fuel Assistance.....	(508) 699-7384
HUD	(617) 994-8200
Legal Assistance.....	(800) 244-8393
Legal Services	(800) 696-1501
Meals on Wheels	(781) 784-4944
Medicare.....	(800) 633-4227
Medicare Advocacy (Complaints).....	(866) 778-0939
National Domestic Violence Hotline	(800) 799-7233
National Grid (Outages)	(800) 465-1212
National Grid (Emergencies).....	(800) 322-3223
New Hope.....	(800) 922-2275
Outreach Information/Referral	(508) 699-7384
Poison Control Center	(800) 682-9211
School Department	(508) 699-1300
Self-Help	(508) 588-0447
Senior Center Bus (Ext 5)	(508) 699-7384
SNAP (Food Assistance).....	(800) 645-8333
Social Security.....	(888) 655-6469
Sturdy Memorial Hospital.....	(508) 222-5200
United Way Info Line.....	2-1-1
Veteran’s Services	(508) 699-0120
W.I.C.	(800) 942-1007
Xfinity Cable	(888) 633-4266

GENERAL OFFICE INFORMATION

Plainville Housing Authority
140 East Bacon Street
Plainville, MA



Phone Number: 508-699-4212
Fax Number: 508-699-7408
Office Hours: Monday & Friday Closed
Tuesday & Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday By Appointment Only

Office Closings: in bad weather, listen to Plainville Public School announcements. The same will apply to the Authority for that day. Other daytime closings may be posted at the office entrance.

Maintenance Department: 508-699-4212



Maintenance staff normal business hours are:
7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

After Hours Maintenance Service Policy

Call **(508) 699-4212** for all emergency maintenance services when the office is closed. The answering service person will pick-up the call and relay your message to our on-call Maintenance staff person. The Maintenance person on-call will respond to emergencies immediately. To be considered an emergency, the maintenance call must be for a problem that presents a direct and immediate threat to the health and/or safety of tenants.

If, in the opinion of our Maintenance staff your call information indicates that it is not an emergency, Maintenance will contact you to inform you that your call will be addressed by the Maintenance person assigned to your development during normal business hours on the next day shift, sometime after 8:00 a.m.

Daytime work order calls can be numerous, so please be patient. Staff will schedule work orders with you and they will be done as workload permits.



YOUR LEASE is a legal written agreement between you and the Authority. It states the amount of your rent, your tenant responsibilities, management's responsibilities, any utilities you may be responsible for, and the way that the lease may be terminated by either you or the Authority. The Lease complies with State regulations and Authority Policy.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU READ YOUR LEASE

PAYMENT OF RENT

Your rent is determined according to your gross income and family size. Payment of rent should be paid by check or money order and must be on time at the beginning of each month.



You may mail your rent to Plainville Housing Authority, 140 East Bacon Street, Plainville, MA 02762, or you may drop it off in person, either to the Office during normal business hours, or deposit it in the secure lock-box, located in the Community laundry room.

If you are interested in enrolling in direct debit to pay your monthly rent, your rent will be debited on 5th day of each month. Please contact the office for an Authorization Agreement for Pre-Authorized Payments Form. You can also pay your rent using the online portal.

Any payment received after 4:00 p.m. is credited on the next business day. Tenants whose personal checks are returned due to insufficient funds will be charged a fee to be determined and be required to pay by money order or certified check.

If rent is not paid by the 7th (seventh) of the month it is late and a Notice for Non-payment will be issued. In the case of repeated late payments, eviction proceedings may be initiated. Actual costs incurred by the Authority may be charged to the tenant. If an emergency arises to prevent you from paying your rent for a particular month, you must contact the office prior to the rent due date to make other arrangements. In doing this, your emergency may be favorably considered.

RENT RECERTIFICATIONS

**Lease
Addendum**

ANNUAL

Once a year, you will be required to provide current information to re-evaluate the status of both your income and family size. This information must be used to adjust your rent for the next year.

Please contact the *Housing Specialist* at the Office to ask questions about either your lease or the re-certification process.

INTERIM ADJUSTMENTS TO RENT

Increases: If your monthly gross household income increases, the Authority is required to re-determine your rent. You must report all increases to PHA by the 7th (seventh) day of the month following the month in which the increase occurred, together with all verifications and appropriate paperwork. All increases are effective on the 1st (first) day of the 2nd (second) month following the increase. For example, if your income increased in June, your rent will change effective August 1st.

Decreases: If your income decreases, it is your responsibility to request a rent re-determination. All decreases in rent are effective on the (1st) first day of the month following receipt of all required documentation and paperwork.

FOR ALL RENT RE-DETERMINATIONS, A COMPLETED APPLICATION FOR CONTINUED OCCUPANCY MUST BE HANDED IN TO THE OFFICE. CURRENT INCOME VERIFICATION FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OLDER IS NECESSARY.

ALL INCOME MUST BE REPORTED, INCLUDING CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS AND SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS TO CHILDREN, ETC.

COMMON PROBLEMS

In the event you have a maintenance problem in your unit, please contact the *Main Office* (508-699-4212). For questions or comments about any Authority Policy.

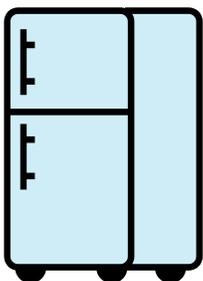


ALTERATIONS

Alterations to Housing Authority Property are strictly prohibited! Any alteration done in a unit without the permission of the Authority will be removed at the tenant's expense.

APARTMENT SIZE

The size of your apartment is determined by State regulation and is matched to you according to the number of persons in your household and listed on your lease. No additional occupants are allowed. Flammable materials cannot be stored in basements or apartments.



APPLIANCES

Refrigerators are provided by the Authority for tenants. Stoves are provided and must be kept clean at all times. Dried or baked-on grease is difficult to remove and is a fire hazard. You must clean your stove regularly. Notify the Authority about problems with your stove. Washers and dryers are located in the community room.

No other large appliances are allowed. This includes freezers and dishwashers.

CABLE TELEVISION

Most apartments have been wired for cable television. However, if you want cable TV service, you must pay for all costs of installation and removal. You should call Xfinity Cable at the number listed in the front of this handbook. Satellite (dish) t.v. is strictly prohibited without prior approval from the Office; and no cable t.v. equipment is allowed to be installed directly onto any structural surface of any Authority building.



COMMON AREA USE

(The following are summaries. For the complete Policy, please contact the Office)

Fences: You may not install a fence on Authority property. Border fences, not more than 20” high may be erected to enclose an approved plant bed.

No sheds, animal cages, storage sheds, play gyms or trampolines may be erected. No swimming pools are allowed on Authority property, including wading pools. No tires, batteries, or car parts may be stored on Authority property.

Seasonal Furniture: Tenants may have seasonal furniture in the outside their apartment at ELDERLY developments. All seasonal furniture must be neatly stored. Furniture permitted per household on the patios is limited to one table and two chairs provided by the Housing Authority. This is due to limited patio space. All items stored on the patio are “at risk.”

Cooking Grills may be stored next to rear entranceways. Whenever the cooking grill is being used, it must be placed at least ten (10) feet away from the building for fire safety.

Flowers and Plants: Tenants may plant flowers in their apartment’s designated garden plot. No garden may be created or altered without written Maintenance approval. Tenants are responsible for garden removal upon leaving the PHA.



Pets: Animals may not be chained or tied on Authority property unless the owner of the animal is present. Pets are permitted **only** in elderly developments and the tenant must obtain a waiver.

Trash: You are responsible for properly disposing of all trash and debris, daily, including large furniture items. If a grounds inspection reveals that you have failed to comply with this Policy, a written notice will be delivered. Failure to remove the items within the time allowed will result in a member of the Maintenance staff disposing of the item(s) and you will be charged a fee for the cost of this removal. The area around the dumpsters should remain free of trash and other items. It is not the responsibility of Maintenance to separate your trash. Please properly sort recycling and trash to there designated trash totes.

DAMAGES

When damages occur to your apartment and/or its fixtures, beyond normal wear and tear, you are expected to pay for the damage. When the damages result from your neglect or are intentional, you will be charged. Some examples include:

- Broken doors and window glass
- Defaced walls
- Cracked or clogged toilets, sinks, tubs, etc.
- Lost keys
- Damage caused by you not reporting a maintenance issue
- If your apartment is not cleaned when you vacate



EMERGENCY

If you have a medical, police, or fire emergency, call 911 immediately.

EXITS

You should familiarize yourself with all exits from your apartment or building. Do not block exits with furniture, trash or anything else that may prevent you from exiting in the event of an emergency. Do not store personal items in stairwells or walkways leading to these exits.



FIRE PROTECTION

REMOVING OR DISABLING SMOKE DETECTORS **IS AGAINST THE LAW**. Please vacuum your smoke detectors once a month to prevent false alarms. Use caution when cooking to avoid a fire. Should your smoke detector appear to be working improperly, please call the office IMMEDIATELY. **DO NOT TAKE IT DOWN.**

HOUSEKEEPING

- Dust and vacuum

Before you start dusting, make sure ceiling fans are turned off. Concentrate your dusting on the tops of furniture and the undersides of shelves, on handrails, picture frames, knickknacks and TV screens.

- Wipe mirrors and glass

Use one damp microfiber cloth, followed by one dry cloth in wiping clean all the mirrors and glass surfaces.

- Disinfect countertops and surface areas

Go through your house and wipe down the hard surfaces – from countertops, appliances and cabinets to doorknobs, light switches, TV remotes and telephones. You should disinfect some of those surfaces, particularly the ones that might deliver germs to people's fingers and faces. Make a nontoxic disinfection solution by mixing one-fourth to a half cup of white or apple cider vinegar with a cup of water.

- Kitchen

Spray cleaner on the kitchen sink, hard surfaces and appliances. Be sure to spray and wipe down weekly to keep germs at bay.

- Bathroom

Spray cleaner on the bathroom sink, shower/tub (ceiling if needed) and toilet. Let it sit for a few minutes so the cleaner has time to dissolve dirt and stains. A lot goes on in your bathroom, and it's important to keep it as germ-free as possible. These tips will help you get control over this highly frequented room. These commonly forgotten areas can include faucet aerators and the toothbrush holder. In fact, the toothbrush holder is the third germiest place in your entire home, so you will want to make sure it's cleaned often. Remove all hair from the drain (pop up) of your shower or tub each time you use it. Clean toilets last. **DO NOT FLUSH WIPES OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN OBJECTS DOWN THE TOILET.** After three occurrences if the Maintenance Staff reports wipes or other foreign objects being removed from a clogged toilet the tenant will be responsible for the cost of removal. ***If you have a clogged toilet please do not hesitate to call Maintenance but be sure you have cleared all matter from the clogged toilet and clean the toilet seat prior to their arrival.***

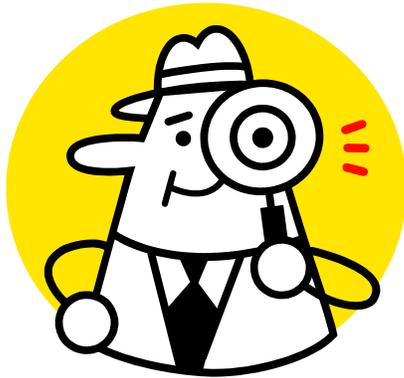
- Sweep, Vacuum then mop

Sweep the kitchen and bathroom floors and/or vacuum then mop your floors last.

Some tasks don't need to be done each week. These include waxing the furniture, cleaning the windows, and washing area rugs and bath mats. Inspect these areas and use your own judgment.

Don't forget to routinely wash your cleaning tools

An often overlooked part of cleaning the house is maintaining your cleaning tools. Using a dirty mop or a vacuum with a full bag is much less effective.



INSPECTIONS

State regulations require periodic inspections of your apartment. This can occur at any time during the year. We must view, test and report on safety equipment once annually for routine inspections. You will be given at least forty-eight (48) hour notice. In case of an emergency, staff is authorized to enter your apartment with no notice. Maintenance must be able to enter your unit at any time. You cannot install additional locks without the written approval of the Authority.

INSURANCE

The Authority is not responsible for loss or damage to your furnishings or personal property as a result of fire, storms, vandalism, burglary, flood, etc. (THE AUTHORITY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT TENANTS PURCHASE RENTERS INSURANCE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM PERSONAL PROPERTY LOSSES.)



KEYS AND LOCKOUTS

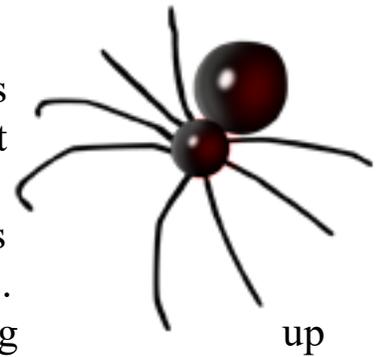
When you sign your lease, you are given a key to your apartment and your mailbox. If you lose your keys, you will be required to pay the cost of replacing the lock(s).



If you lock yourself out after normal maintenance hours and our On-call Maintenance staff is called to let you into your apartment, we must charge you a \$40.00 service fee.

PEST CONTROL

Insects and other pests can invade even the cleanest apartments through no fault of the tenant. If you see any signs of pest activity, you have a responsibility under your lease agreement to contact the Office immediately. The Authority has professional contractors ready to deal with these problems. Please refrain from retrieving items from dumpsters or picking furniture or mattresses from the side of the road. You could potentially be bringing in a insects into your apartment.



up

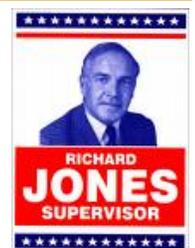


PETS

Elderly Communities: A companion animal is allowed at elderly developments and is defined as a dog, cat, bird, or fish. You may have one dog (limited to a weight of forty (40) pounds, or one cat, or two birds, or a fish aquarium with a 20 gallon capacity. *You must receive permission from the Authority before bringing a pet onto Authority property. You must make an application for a Pet Waiver and supply a pet deposit equal to the lesser of one month's rent or \$160.00.*

POLITICAL SIGNS

To protect tenants' rights to quiet enjoyment, the Authority does not allow the placement of political materials on buildings or property owned by the Authority. Permission for political gatherings must be approved by the Office.



REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

A reasonable accommodation is a request for a modification to an apartment or common area or an exception to the Authority's rules and regulations. This must be because of an existing medical condition that prevents normal use of the facilities or compliance with Policy. It must be supported by appropriate third-party documentation accompanying the request form.

SECURITY KEYS

Specific Authority buildings may have a “high-security” key system, which means that special rules are in effect that govern keys and copies of keys at those buildings. Copies of these keys are special order items and are only issued to tenants. Tenants cannot copy these keys. Requests for additional keys can be made to the Office. A form must be completed and the request approved. A request for additional keys due to severe medical reasons must be accompanied by doctor’s letters, etc. All additional keys are assigned to a specific individual. You are responsible for charges for additional high-security keys, lost keys and additional keys not returned to the Authority upon expiration of use or need.



STAIRWAYS, CORRIDORS, HALLWAYS & PATIOS

Your apartment and adjacent common areas, such as stairways, corridors, halls, and yards must be kept clean and free of personal items. Common areas and stairs CANNOT be used for storage for any reason. The fire department takes notice and you may be charged for removal of stored items.



HALLWAYS AND PATIOS ARE NOT AN EXTENSION OF YOUR APARTMENT. Anything left in these areas are **AT RISK** to be stolen, broken, vandalized, or disposed of with no liability to the PHA.

Also, do NOT block electric panels as full access is required at all times.

TRANSFERS

A tenant is allowed to request a transfer to another apartment, but only in the case of a change in family size or severe medical problem. You must obtain an application at the Office and you may be required to provide additional documentation supporting your transfer request. In order for your request to be considered, all monies owed to the Authority must be paid and you must be fully compliant with the terms of your lease.



VACANT APARTMENT

Your apartment is NOT ALLOWED to be left vacant for more than three (3) months out of the entire year or it can be considered abandoned. Exceptions to this must be approved in writing by the Executive Director.



VANDALISM AND OTHER VIOLATIONS

Vandalism will be investigated and if found to be caused by a you, your child or guest, you will be charged for cleaning/repairs. Continued vandalism and/or harassment of other tenants will not be tolerated and can result in eviction

Criminal activity of a tenant, household member, or guest will be investigated by the Authority and can result in eviction of the family. The tenant is responsible for the actions of all guests.



THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD IS RESPONSIBLE AND WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL OCCUPANTS AND GUESTS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES IN THE UNIT AND ON ALL AUTHORITY PROPERTY.

VISITORS

Tenants are responsible for the actions of their guests at ALL times. **Guests cannot stay overnight unless approved by Management** in writing on the appropriate form. Overnight guests with vehicles are required to register their vehicle with the Office. Vehicles parked in tenant parking overnight **WITHOUT** a pass are subject to towing at their own expense. **Tenants cannot have overnight guests on the premises for more than 21 days in any 12 month period.** If you allow guests to remain in your apartment for more than 21 nights without Management approval, you risk eviction for violating the terms of your lease.



VEHICLES AND PARKING

(For the complete Policy, please contact the Office)



If you have a vehicle, you must provide a copy of the registration and proof of insurance to the Authority Office in order to obtain a Parking Permit. Vehicle owners must be 18 years old or older. All vehicles on Authority property must be properly registered, insured and operable. Parking is limited to one (1) vehicle per licensed driver.

Restrictions:

- You CANNOT perform any work or repairs to vehicles on Authority property.
- Washing of vehicles is not permitted on Authority property.
- You must park only in designated, paved parking areas.
- Vehicles parked on lawns or walkways are subject to immediate towing.
- If your vehicle causes damage to Authority property, you will be charged for the labor and materials to repair such damages.
- Spaces have been set aside for visitors or handicapped. Tenants are not allowed to use visitor spaces and only vehicles with a handicap placard or plate are allowed to park in handicapped spaces. The handicap placard must be clearly visible in the front window of the vehicle as long as it is parked in a handicap space or the vehicle owner risks being towed (this is State law).
- Guests must park in available visitor spots or on the street.

Commercial Vehicles:

Commercial vehicles are prohibited from parking in Authority parking areas without written permission from the Management Office.

Recreational Vehicle Ban:

The following types of vehicles are banned from all Authority property: All-terrain vehicles, three-wheelers, four-wheelers, motorized scooters, etc. Also, none of these vehicles can be stored on Authority property.



WILDLIFE PROTECTION

- Birdfeeders are only allowed within the circle on the grassed areas. Feeders are considered **AT RISK!** If a tenant would like to put a feeder elsewhere they must get written permission from Maintenance.
- Tenants cannot feed any wildlife on Authority property, including but not limited to: ducks, geese or squirrels. Wildlife food includes commercial wildlife food, as well as household scraps.
- Tenants may not place food of any kind on Authority property for the purpose of attracting wildlife.

WORK ORDERS

PHA maintenance staff responds to all maintenance matters; however, maintenance emergencies are a priority. If you need to place a work order, please call the office at (508) 699-4212.

Please do not call the office after-hours for non-emergency work orders. Be aware that non-emergency work orders can take up to 14 calendar days to be resolved.

FOR EMERGENCY WORK ORDERS, please call the main office at (508)-699-4212 at any time, which includes after-hours. DO NOT USE THE TENANT PORTAL for any emergency word order. Examples of emergencies include:

- Fires of any kind (Call 911)
- Gas leaks/odor (Call 911)
- No electrical power in your unit (weather-related outages call National Grid 800-465-1212)
- Electrical hazards, sparking outlets
- Broken water pipes, flood
- Sewer or toilet blockage



- Roof leak
 - Lock outs
 - Door and window security defects
 - No heat
 - No hot water
 - Dangerous structural defects
 - Inoperable or beeping smoke/CO detectors
-

STAFF CONTACTS

Paul M. Dumouchel, Management Agent
508-222-0151, ext. 201
pmd@attleborohousing.org

Christina Harnois, Deputy Director
508-222-0151, ext. 204
christina@attleborohousing.org

Diane Raposa, Finance Director
508-222-0151, ext. 205
diane@attleborohousing.org

Sarah Goetzinger, Administrative Assistant
508-222-0151, ext 202
AHAadmin@attleborohousing.org

MeLinda Williams, Public Housing Specialist
(*Rent Re-determinations*)
508-222-0151, ext. 208
PHS@attleborohousing.org

Jim Feyler, Maintenance Director
508-222-0151, ext 200
jim@attleborohousing.org

Maintenance Staff:

Richard Precourt, Maintenance Mechanic (part-time)
Devlyn House, Maintenance Supervisor

NOTES