



## DO YOU WANT TO BECOME A LANDLORD IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA? BE SURE TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW

### LICENSING

Residential Housing Licenses are required for all rental properties in the District of Columbia, including one-room rentals, homes, apartments/condominiums, and basement apartments. The specific license required depends upon the property type at issue.

The **One Family Rental License** applies if you own and rent out a single-family home, town house, duplex, individual condominium unit or individual room. This license does not include apartment houses (with three or more units) or rooming house (with six or more occupants). Follow these steps to obtain this license:

<b>Complete Basic Business License Application</b>	Available online at: <a href="https://cpms.dkra.dc.gov/OSUBI/Default.aspx">https://cpms.dkra.dc.gov/OSUBI/Default.aspx</a>
<b>Complete Clean Hands Self-Certification</b> (certifies that no more than \$100 is owed to the D.C. Government as a result of fees, penalties, interest, or taxes)	Available online at: <a href="http://dkra.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dkra/publication/attachments/CleanHands_Form.pdf">http://dkra.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dkra/publication/attachments/CleanHands_Form.pdf</a> .
<b>Complete the Basic Business License Self-Certification Form</b> (certifies compliance with D.C. laws and regulations)	Available online at: <a href="http://dkra.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dkra/publication/attachments/BBLSelfCertification_OneFamilyDwelling.pdf">http://dkra.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dkra/publication/attachments/BBLSelfCertification_OneFamilyDwelling.pdf</a>
<b>Pay Total Fee: \$190.30</b>	Fee includes: Application fee (\$70.00); Endorsement fee (\$25.00); Category license fee (\$35.00); RAO fee (\$43.00); 10% Technology fee (\$17.30).  Pay via cash, check, money order or major credit/debit card.
<b>Submit Application Material</b>	Submit Application in one of the following ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Online</i> – <a href="https://cpms.dkra.dc.gov/OSUBI/Default.aspx">https://cpms.dkra.dc.gov/OSUBI/Default.aspx</a>;</li> <li>2. <i>In person</i> – DCRA, Business License Center, 1100 4th Street, SW, 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20024. No appointments are required.</li> <li>3. <i>By Mail</i> – Mail complete application and payment to Wells Fargo Bank; DC Government Wholesale Lockbox 91360, 7175 Columbia Gateway Drive. Columbia, MD 21046</li> </ol>

### HOUSING INSPECTION

Following the issuance of a license, you must arrange for a housing inspection to be conducted by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (“DCRA”). The Housing Inspection ensures that the premises is in compliance with D.C. Housing Codes and is necessary to ensure the health and safety of tenants. Inspections must occur within 45 days after being issued a license. To schedule a housing inspection, call the Inspections and Compliance Administration, (202) 442-9557, Option 6.



## RENT CONTROL OBLIGATIONS

Your property may be subject to rent control law, as set forth in the Rental Housing Act of 1985 (D.C. Official Code § 42-3501.01, *et seq.*). **Every property** (“rental unit”) must be registered with the Rental Accommodations Division (“RAD”), located at 1800 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE Second Floor, Washington, DC 20020; 202.442.9505.

<b>Registration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Registration form is available online at: <a href="http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/form-1-rad-registration-claim-exemption-form">http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/form-1-rad-registration-claim-exemption-form</a>.</li><li>• There is a \$43.00 fee per rental unit.</li><li>• The Basic License Application must be approved and associated fees must be paid <b>before</b> submitting the Registration.</li><li>• Submit the Registration (and accompanying material) to RAD either in person or via US Mail (with a self-addressed envelope included). No online submission is permitted.</li></ul>
<b>Exemptions</b>	Exemptions are issued for a number of reasons, including, for example, where the rental unit is built after 1975 or owned by a natural person who owns more than four rental units that are registered as exempt). Where a unit is exempt, rent can be raised by any amount so long as it is not raised for an illegal purpose (e.g. retaliation for reporting violations). You must advise your tenant if your property is exempt from rent control rules.
<b>Rent Control Rules</b>	<p>If a rental unit is not exempt, any rent increase must meet specified conditions (e.g. annual increases are permitted based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, with a lower rent increase cap for elderly and disabled tenants; last increase was at least 12 months prior).</p> <p>Landlords must give tenants 30-day notice of any increase in rent.</p>

## COMPLIANCE WITH ANTIDISCRIMINATION LAW

Discrimination in the landlord/tenant context means treating certain tenants **differently** from other tenants. Examples include: imposing additional checks or requirements on tenant applicants, overtly refusing to rent to someone in a protected class, refusing to allow a guide dog in a pet-free building, refusing to allow a tenant to make reasonable modifications to accommodate a disability, asking screening questions that are discriminatory.

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of **race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or family status**. D.C. law further prohibits distribution on the basis of on **age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, source of income, place of residence or being a victim of domestic violence/ sexual assault**.

## WRITTEN LEASE

A written lease is not required (oral leases are enforceable) but if a landlord does require a tenant to execute a written lease, the landlord must provide a signed copy of the written lease within seven days of execution.