BEFORE YOU BEGIN A SEARCH

What kind of rental unit do you want to live in?

☐ studio, 1, 2, 3, or 4 bedroom apartment
☐ suite or apartment in private home
☐ room in a shared house
☐ room in private home

What are your transportation needs?

☐ within walking distance
☐ within biking distance
☐ on a Bus/Rail route
☐ using carpool or vanpool
☐ proximity to a shopping center or a job site

What features are essential?

☐ dishwasher
☐ washer and dryer in the unit
☐ air conditioning (room units or central air)
☐ cable and internet capabilities
☐ off-street parking
☐ furniture included
☐ handicapped accessibility
☐ private room and/or bath
☐ smoking (or not)
☐ pets permitted

What are your financial means?

☐ Living with others can lower housing expenses.
☐ Rooms in a student or private house tend to be the least expensive.
☐ Include the cost of renting or purchasing furniture, if needed.
☐ When calculating your maximum affordable rent, be sure to include utilities.

How much legal protection do you require?

☐ A one year lease offers a certain amount of legal protection.
☐ Units that do not carry a lease offer maximum flexibility but limited legal protection.
DURING YOUR HOUSING SEARCH

☐ Begin your search using the widest criteria possible. Narrow your choices by adding more features.
☐ Inspect the actual unit you intend to lease, and consider writing necessary repairs into the lease.
☐ Check the security of the unit.
☐ Check the fire safety of the unit (a smoke detector is required by law).
☐ Be sure that there are two means of egress (exit) from the unit.
☐ Arrange for telephone service and utilities to be turned on by the time you move in.

AFTER YOU MOVE IN

☐ Complete a thorough inventory of your apartment.
☐ Give a copy of your inspection form to the landlord.
☐ Purchase renter’s insurance.
☐ Consider purchasing additional fire safety equipment (fire extinguisher, and/or smoke detectors).
☐ Always get a written receipt from your landlord when you pay rent or deposits.