



Mississauga Good Neighbours Guide

for university students, community residents and neighbours, and landlords

This *Mississauga Good Neighbours Guide* provides information about community relations and resources for students, their neighbours and landlords. While the guide is designed for university students who live off-campus and their neighbours, other community members may also find the information useful.

This publication is one of many partnerships between the City of Mississauga and our local post-secondary institutions, building a community that supports our students and strengthens our civic environment and pride.



Students

When you sign a lease, you're not only gaining privileges that come with living on your own, but you're also accepting responsibilities of being part of a new community. We encourage you to be a good neighbour in whatever area of Mississauga you call home. Being a good neighbour will help ensure that you, your fellow students and your university maintain good reputations in the broader community.

At the same time, it's important for you to be aware of your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, which can vary depending on the type of rental agreement you have. Therefore, we advise you to consult the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board (www.ltb.gov.on.ca), where you can find a wide range of online resources to help you understand the legislation pertaining to your specific rental situation.

Tips on Being a Good Neighbour

Be friendly

Make a point of meeting your neighbours when you first move in. Remember you're likely to see them on a regular basis. Give your closest neighbours your contact information, and your landlord's information, and invite them to contact you if they have concerns.

Ask questions

Most people genuinely like helping others, so if you aren't sure about something in your neighbourhood, try asking a neighbour. This could include seeking recommendations for a good auto mechanic or how yard waste should be put out for collection, or something as simple as asking what time mail is usually delivered or the location of the nearest post office.

Make a good impression

Be aware of the appearance of your home – how it's maintained will have a huge impact on how your neighbours relate to you. While you are renting your house or apartment, your neighbours have likely invested a lot in their own home – your efforts to maintain a clean and tidy appearance of your home will help protect the investments of your neighbours.

Consider the following:

- Keep the exterior of your home clean and tidy – this includes storing waste and recycling appropriately, following garbage collection schedules, not leaving furniture or debris on your lawn, and avoiding hanging signs, banners or flags in windows.
- Tell your closest neighbours who is responsible (you or your landlord) for lawn care, snow removal and external maintenance of your home, so that concerns can be directed appropriately.

Follow parking and traffic rules

- Drive safely and slow down in residential areas since children may live and play nearby.
- Have only as many vehicles as parking spaces. Check your rental/lease agreement for specific information about parking privileges.
- Don't park or allow your visitors to park on your neighbours' property without their permission – this includes parking on lawns and driveways blocking walkways.
- Be aware of municipal bylaws that regulate parking in the city – for example, they prohibit parking on both sides of the same street, parking on a street overnight, parking on sidewalks and blocking bus stops or fire hydrants.

For specific information, visit www.mississauga.ca/parkingbylaws

Contribute to safety

- Watch for possible safety and security concerns and report suspicious activity to Peel Region Police and/or Crime Stoppers.
- Drive safely and slow down in residential areas since children may live and play nearby.

Be considerate and respectful

Almost every culture has an equivalent to the 'Golden Rule,' which suggests that you "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It's a basic concept that's so important when considering how to be a good neighbour.

For example:

- Develop house rules with others living with you. Assigning responsibilities for tasks like taking out the garbage will reduce concerns and conflicts within your space and with your neighbours.
- Avoid exposing your neighbours to activities they may find disruptive or offensive such as swearing, drinking, excessive partying or rowdy behaviour.
- If you think your neighbours have a concern with your behaviour or that of your guests, make sure it doesn't become a problem. Move the behaviour inside your home or somewhere else that might be more appropriate.



Photo: Michelle Gibson

- If you receive an unfriendly reaction from a neighbour, listen to his or her concerns – try to see the issue from his or her perspective, and make whatever reasonable adjustments you can.

Keep it quiet

Excessive noise at any time of the day is illegal and could carry a fine, but your neighbours are likely to be even more sensitive to loud noise at night. While your student schedule may include late night hours, most people in the community follow a more regular 9–5 schedule. Avoid excessive noise to help them sleep peacefully.

A noise bylaw can be enforced for noises likely to annoy or disturb the peace of fellow residents including sound from overly loud stereos or televisions, car engines and exhaust systems, and shouting.

Enforcement

Municipal law enforcement officers and Peel Regional Police take neighbourhood concerns seriously and will issue tickets and lay charges. Serious offences can lead to a criminal record, time in jail and can have a significant impact on your future career options.

Follow garbage schedules and rules

Some of the general guidelines include:

- Recycle and compost whatever you can. Ensure that waste is properly sorted and stored among your garbage container, blue box, green bin and yard waste.
- You or your landlord should invest in garbage cans with lids – they discourage raccoons and skunks from getting into your garbage.
- Put out your waste only on collection days. All materials, including garbage, recycling and organics, must be at the curb no later than 7 a.m. on the day of collection, and not before 7 p.m. the previous evening. At all other times, your bins and containers must be neatly stored elsewhere inside or outside of your home.

If you don't obtain one when moving in, contact the Region of Peel for a *Waste Management Guide* by calling 905-791-9499 or visit www.peelregion.ca/pw/waste/garb-recy

- You are allowed to put out two containers of garbage without a surcharge – if you have more garbage, secure those bags with garbage tags purchased at locations across the city, noted in the *Waste Management Guide*.
- If you're discarding furniture or other large household items, consider whether they may be reused by community agencies such as the Salvation Army or Goodwill – some of these groups will pick up larger items with advance notice. Otherwise, place items such as these at the curb before 7 a.m. on your regularly scheduled collection day.
- Toward the end of the school year, as you and your housemates prepare to move out or return home for the summer break, plan your move so you don't pile up a lot of refuse on the last possible garbage day. Planning ahead can make moving out more manageable for you and for the waste collection staff.

Plan parties responsibly

If you plan a party at your home, consider the safety of your guests and the comfort of your neighbours.

- Limit the number of guests you invite to one that's reasonable for your home.
- Let your neighbours know when you are planning a party. Give them plenty of notice and ask them if they have any concerns up front.
- Control the noise level and keep the party inside.
- If you are providing alcohol or your guests are bringing their own, you share responsibility, including legal liability, for their actions during and after the party. Information on party planning is available online, including at www.lcbo.ca/learn/planningtips.html. (Note that it is illegal to sell alcohol without a license, including selling cups for 'free' alcohol.)
- Monitor your guests and ensure that they are drinking responsibly and get home safely. Having bus routes and the telephone numbers of taxi companies handy will help.
- Ensure that there is a sober host, preferably the person responsible for the home, so that the host is fully capable of handling any problems that arise, including calling police if the event gets out of hand. Being intoxicated does not excuse a host from legal responsibilities – the "but I was drunk" defence doesn't work.
- If a neighbour or police official comes to your door, deal with the issue in a co-operative manner and do what you can to remedy the situation.
- Clean up the exterior of your place afterward – discarded/broken bottles and scattered garbage are unattractive and dangerous.



Photo: Michelle Gibson

Residents and Neighbours

Living in an area that is home to a major post-secondary institution, you may come in contact with students throughout the year. This might happen on campus, in your community or right next door. Regardless of circumstance, the University of Toronto Mississauga and the City of Mississauga encourage students and longer-term residents to develop a positive and co-operative relationship. As a resident, your actions play a large part in the establishment of such a relationship and there are measures you can take to encourage a better community.

How to Get Along with Student Neighbours

Introduce yourself

Your student neighbours are likely to be more considerate and understand your needs better if they know you. Make a point of meeting new neighbours moving into your neighbourhood, and introducing yourself and your family – a simple 'hello' will go a long way at the start. Consider giving neighbours your name and phone number and welcoming them with advice that's likely to be of help, such as the schedule for waste pick-up and tips on securing their green bin from raccoons.

Communicate

Realize this may be students' first time in a place of their own. If you have a problem with the behaviour of your neighbours, let them know how you feel – they may not realize that what they are doing is disruptive or offensive to you. If you are comfortable doing so, try to resolve the issue with your neighbours directly, then if necessary follow up with the landlord or authorities as appropriate.

Be reasonable

Student tenants are paying to live in their accommodations, and have the right to reasonable enjoyment of their premises. Of course, you should expect them to be considerate and follow the law. Make sure you have reasonable and fair expectations.

Know who is responsible for what

Tenants may or may not be responsible for lawn care, snow removal or other issues that might be

problematic, depending on their arrangements with their landlord. Talk to your neighbours first, then follow up with the landlord if responsibilities are not being fulfilled.

Handle problems politely

If you've made a point of meeting your neighbours early on and you have reasonable expectations, it's likely that you'll get a friendly reaction from them. If you have a problem, seek resolution before it becomes a significant dispute. If the problem can't be resolved mutually, contact the appropriate bylaw authorities or police, depending on the situation.

If you run into problems, seek assistance

If you have been unable to come to an understanding with the landlords or tenants of a specific property, please discuss any problems or concerns relating to noise, parking, property standards, fire code, etc. with the appropriate authorities. Contact information is available in the *Helpful Contacts* section of this guide.



Landlords

As a local landlord, you are providing an important service to your tenants. We appreciate your willingness to share a part of your home, a house or apartment that you own with students who are often new to both renting and living on their own.

It is important for you to be fully aware of your rights and responsibilities as a landlord, which can vary depending on the type of rental agreement you have with your tenant. Therefore, we advise you to consult the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board (www.ltb.gov.on.ca), where you can find a wide range of online resources to help you understand the legislation pertaining to your specific rental situation.

Community Relations for Landlords

Tenancy agreements

Whether you're renting out a house, an apartment, or a room, you should have a written tenancy agreement, signed by both the landlord and the tenants. The agreement should outline the roles and responsibilities of each party to the agreement and indicate things such as tenancy term, interior and exterior maintenance expectations, monthly rent and services provided. Make sure your tenants understand the responsibility of having their own space, and they will be more respectful of your property and the neighbourhood – be clear and up-front regarding lease restrictions, limits to extra housemates, sublets, cars and parking, noise, garbage removal, etc. A sample tenancy agreement is available through the Landlord Tenant Board of Ontario.

Clearly establish whether you or the tenant is responsible for yard maintenance and snow removal, and make sure you and your tenants are aware of any bylaws or regulations that may be in effect in the community. Gather and provide information that will be helpful to your tenant, such as garbage and recycling pick-up calendars.

Comply with fire code regulations

If you are renting part of your property, you must meet the legal requirements for fire separations, means of escape, smoke alarms and electrical safety. Tour the premises with each tenant to point out the location and operation of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers and reinforce expectations around this equipment being kept in place and in good working order. For a copy of Ontario Fire Code regulations, call 1-800-668-9938.

Comply with municipal bylaws and licensing requirements.

All home occupancies are subject to compliance with provincial and municipal laws. Charges may be laid for violations of zoning regulations, property standards, building codes and other municipal bylaws. It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that they have knowledge of and are in compliance with local regulations. Visit the City of Mississauga By-Law Enforcement section of the web site at www.mississauga.ca/residents/bylawenforcement

Be a visible landlord

Your job is not over once the lease is signed. Not only are your tenants paying for a place to live, but they are also paying for services from you. Consider providing your contact information not only to your tenant but also to close neighbours in case they identify concerns that would be appropriate for your attention.

Make sure tenants have a way to contact you at any time in case an urgent situation arises.

Visit your property regularly and talk with your tenants and neighbours about how things are going. If there is a consistent problem between your tenants and their neighbours, help them to work through it co-operatively. Your presence in the neighbourhood may help to ease the concerns of residents.

Safety checklist

Once you have tenants living in your home or property, you share responsibility for their safety and well being.

Here's a safety checklist that can help ensure you don't miss any important steps:

- Make sure you have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are on each floor of the property.
- Make sure there is a working fire extinguisher on the premises.
- Tenants need to arrange a disaster preparedness kit that includes flashlights, batteries, bottles of water, some canned food, matches, candles, a battery powered radio, a couple of blankets and a first-aid kit.

For fire prevention information, please visit www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/firesafety



Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs for Tenants

- 1) **If my landlord does not currently have a license, does this mean I am living in an illegal building?** If the dwelling unit falls under the definition of a Lodging House and no license has been issued then yes, the business is operating illegally.
- 2) **If my landlord does not have a license, is my lease null and void?** The lease is a private contractual agreement between you and your landlord and not impacted by the issuance or non-issuance of the license.
- 3) **If my landlord is required to have a license, do I have to move while one is being obtained?** No, but it is suggested that you consult with your landlord to ensure that one is obtained.
- 4) **Will my rent increase if my landlord gets a license?** The amount of rent you pay and any changes to that are governed by your lease, not the license.
- 5) **What should I do if my landlord does not have a license and does not want to get one?** Report this to the Compliance and Licensing Enforcement Section of the City Enforcement Division 905-896-5655 or to bylaw.enforcement@mississauga.ca

- 6) **Can I reside in the basement of the Lodging House?** No, a Lodging Unit is not permitted in the basement.
- 7) **Can I have a room-mate?** No, a Lodging Unit can only be occupied by one person.
- 8) **Can I have a fridge or stove or other types of cooking apparatus in my room?** No, a Lodging Unit may contain sanitary facilities but shall not contain equipment or appliances for storing, cooking, or heating food, and shall not contain equipment or appliances for washing clothes or washing dishes.

FAQs for Landlords

- 1) **If I already have tenants, am I allowed to honour their leases until I get my license?** The lease is a private contractual agreement between you and your tenants which does not involve the City. Should the license not be granted, you will be required to terminate the lease as per the termination clause and the tenants would be required to vacate the premises.
- 2) **How long does it take to get a license?** The license can be issued in a relatively short period of time provided the application and all

required supporting documentation is supplied and deemed acceptable.

- 3) **If I am not approved for a license will my tenants have to leave?** Yes
- 4) **Under the new by-law, if I have to evict my tenants due to licensing issues, they can hold me responsible for not honouring their lease. Is the City taking this into consideration?** Your lease should contain a clause related to termination should the license be refused or revoked.
- 5) **Where do I go to apply for the license?** The completed application with all supporting documentation must be submitted to the Compliance and Licensing office located on the ground floor of the Mississauga Civic Centre, 300 City Centre Drive, Mississauga.

A copy of the application form can be obtained from the City web site – go to Services Online, Forms on line, Enforcement Application for a Business license. Information on the application requirements as well as regulations related to license holders can be found in the Residential Rental Accommodation Licensing Bylaw found under Bylaws on line on the City web site, www.mississauga.ca

Helpful Contacts

Health and Safety

Emergencies
(police/fire/ambulance) 911
Peel Regional Police
(non-emergency) 905-453-3311
Crime Stoppers..... 1-800-222-8477
www.peelcrimestoppers.ca
Distress Centre of Peel..... 905-278-7208
www.distresscentrepeel.com
TeleHealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000
TDD for the Deaf 1-866-797-0007

Rental Resources

Student Off Campus Accommodation
places4students.com
Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board
www.ltb.gov.on.ca

Property Standards

www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/propertystandards

Mississauga Fire Safety Resources

(including student accommodation
safety checklist)
www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/firesafety

Enforcement

Noise Compliance 905-896-5655
www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/noisecomplaints
Parking Regulations
M-F, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. 311
Outside city limits 905-615-4311
Evenings & weekends..... 905-615-3000
www.mississauga.ca/parkingbylaws
www.mississauga.ca/parkingregulations

Transportation

Mississauga Transit..... 905-615-INFO (4636)
www.mississaugatransit.com
Peel TransHelp 905-791-1015

Hospitals

Trillium Health Centre 905-848-7100
www.trilliumhealthcentre.org
Credit Valley Hospital 905-813-2200
www.cvh.on.ca

City of Mississauga

General information 311
Outside city limits 905-615-4311
www.mississauga.ca

Peel Region

General information 905-271-7800
Emergency Preparedness
www.peelregion.ca/prep
Garbage and Recycling..... 905-791-9499
www.peelregion.ca/pw/waste/garb-recy

Change of Mail Address

www.canadapost.ca