Lease Review Checklist

1. Make sure all blanks are filled in within the lease.

2. Discuss right of entry – reasonable time and reasonable purposes – no notice period required in West Virginia.

3. Modifications (additions/deletions) – write-in or cross-out the provision and ALL parties initial for valid modification. *Verbal agreements are not binding.*

4. Renters insurance – check on parents’ homeowners first; if no coverage, consider purchasing renters insurance – landlord only insures building, not your personal property.

5. Joint & several liability versus an individual lease—make sure you know what type of lease you are signing *prior to* signature.

6. Security deposit – make sure there is a return time specified; review damage checklist.

7. If the property is within city limits, is there an up-to-date Letter of Compliance (LOC)? An LOC shows that a property is compliance with municipal housing codes (but that only shows compliance at the time of the inspection which is done every three years). Problems and/or violations can occur even with a current LOC.

8. Notice of repairs – call landlord first; if that fails, send written notice.

9. If four or more tenants are looking to sign one lease for property located within city limits, check the occupancy limits to be sure the lease is in compliance.

10. Look for a pet clause – DO NOT VIOLATE.

11. Watch out for utilities included clauses- is there a utility cap?

12. Take pictures of condition of apartment when moving in and when moving out. *Time stamp the pictures and keep for your records.*

13. Check if lease is for nine or twelve months. If it is twelve months, make sure rent gets paid on time during the summer if it is being mailed.

14. Move-out date – How close is it to finals? Do you have to move out during finals?

15. Smoke detectors – tenants are responsible for changing the batteries.
16. Cleaning – most leases require that the carpets be professionally shampooed when moving out and usually require a receipt.

17. Temperature control – does the landlord give a minimum temperature requirement for the winter? They usually check on this during winter break.

18. Is guarantor agreement required?

19. Is there a rent acceleration clause?

20. Is there an automatic renewal clause?

21. Underage drinking and using illegal drugs (even by visitors) is a violation of your lease and you can get evicted.

22. Is a parking space included? Is there a separate agreement? What are the terms? Can visitors park in the lot? What are the terms for visitor parking?