



APARTMENT SAFETY TIPS

Property Managers by State Compensation Insurance Fund

Property managers oversee and maintain residential units, apartment buildings, commercial stores, office complexes, and community/homeowner associations. Renters, tenants, and owners expect property managers to keep their properties safe, secure, and properly functioning. While the job tasks and properties may vary, property managers must always manage safety first.

- Remain aware of your personal safety as you deal with the public; people can be unpredictable. Areas of conflict may include enforcing lease agreements and parking zones, and handling complaints, disputes, and tenants.
- Get training in conflict resolution and managing hostile behavior.
- Employ safe methods for cash management when collecting rent or dues. Avoid carrying too much money by making frequent drops; time your money handling during regular business hours.
- Ensure that someone knows your daily routine; have a means of communication on hand at all times.
- Keep managed properties safe by employing good risk management. Conduct regular safety inspections of the grounds, facilities, and equipment to identify hazards. Watch for slip and trip hazards such as uneven pavement, irregular landscaping, and puddles of oil, water, or other liquids.
- Maintain site security with locked doors, limited access, and adequate lighting. Trim landscaping to allow a clear view of sight around the property.
- Communicate about identified hazards in order to protect tenants and the public. Post signs, place defective equipment out of service and/or restrict access to unsafe areas until they can be made safe. Advise property owners of their liabilities and responsibilities to correct the hazards. Follow up on necessary corrective actions by promptly arranging repairs or service.

Owners and tenants may expect you to provide basic operation, maintenance, and repairs on mechanical and HVAC systems, plumbing, electrical work, minor carpentry and painting, and landscaping. Make sure that the services you are providing are within your knowledge, training, and abilities.

- Don't use tools and materials or complete tasks for which you are not trained. If you are responsible for contracting for these services, ensure that you communicate any site-specific or job task hazards to the service employee(s).
- When performing odd jobs on a property, use safe work practices, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and the correct tool for the job. Use caution when working on electrical equipment and services; use lock-out, tag-out and test the circuit before you begin work.

- Take care around equipment such as fans, elevators, and trash compactors that can cause crush injuries. If you are working at heights, evaluate the need for fall protection or barriers. Work safely with ladders by choosing the correct ladder for the job and inspecting it before use. While on a ladder, use both hands to climb, never step above the “no step,” height, and avoid reaching to the sides.
- If you purchase and move supplies and equipment for the property, use proper lifting techniques to protect your back. Practice good ergonomics whether you are painting or planting petunias. Always use proper, neutral postures, avoid extreme force, and take frequent mini-breaks.

While property managers are often "jacks of all trades" they should always be experts in safety.

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