

## Federal and Provincial Representatives

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If you would like to speak with your Federal or Provincial political representative in regards to housing issues they can be reached at:

### **George Abbott, Shuswap MLA**

Shuswap Constituency Office  
202A - 371 Alexander Street NE  
Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N7  
Telephone: (250) 833-7414  
Toll Free: 1-877-771-7557  
Fax: (250) 833-7422  
Email: [george.abbott.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:george.abbott.mla@leg.bc.ca)  
Website: [www.georgeabbottmla.bc.ca](http://www.georgeabbottmla.bc.ca)

### **Norm Macdonald, Columbia River—Revelstoke MLA**

Golden Constituency Office  
802 Park Drive, PO Box 2052  
Golden, BC V0A 1H0  
Telephone: (250) 344-4816  
Toll Free: 1-866-870-4188  
Email: [norm.macdonald.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.macdonald.mla@leg.bc.ca)  
Website: [www.normmacdonald.ca](http://www.normmacdonald.ca)

### **Colin Mayes, Okanagan—Shuswap MP**

Vernon Constituency Office  
#206, 3203 - 30th Street  
Vernon, BC V1T 9G9  
Telephone: (250) 260-5020  
Toll Free: 1-800-665-5040  
Fax: (250) 260-5025  
Email: [mayesc1b@parl.gc.ca](mailto:mayesc1b@parl.gc.ca)  
Website: [www.colinmayes.ca](http://www.colinmayes.ca)

### **Jim Abbott, Kootney—Columbia MP**

Cranbrook Constituency Office  
125 D Slater Road  
Cranbrook, BC V1C 4M4  
Telephone: (250) 417-2250  
Toll Free: 1-800-668-5522  
Fax: (250) 417-2253  
Website: [www.jimabbott.ca](http://www.jimabbott.ca)

# Housing Handbook

## Finding & Maintaining Housing

Prepared by CMHA Shuswap/Revelstoke Branch

2009



Canadian Mental Health Association  
Shuswap / Revelstoke Branch

433 Hudson Avenue  
Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4S1

• Phone: (250) 832-8477 • Fax: (250) 832-8410



**“Mentally healthy people in a healthy society”**

This booklet was created as a general overview for finding and maintaining housing in the Salmon Arm, Revelstoke, Enderby and Sicamous areas. Please note it is not intended to be the final authority on all matters pertaining to housing.

If you have any suggestions for information that would be helpful to include please contact:

Dianna Churchill at Canadian Mental Health Association,  
(250) 832 - 8477 or email [dianna.churchill@cmha.bc.ca](mailto:dianna.churchill@cmha.bc.ca).

For more detailed information on your rights as a tenant contact:

Tenants' Rights Action Coalition (TRAC)

1-800-665-1185 Tenant Hotline

[www.tenants.bc.ca](http://www.tenants.bc.ca)

**A special thanks to CMHA Kelowna for their support  
in developing this guide.**

### Enderby

- **Enderby Health Centre** 838-2450
- **Enderby Family Resource Centre** 838-9446

### Sicamous

- **Sicamous Health Unit** 836-4835
- **Eagle Valley Community Support Society** 836-3440  
Provides assistance in finding emergency food and shelter.

### Revelstoke

- **Queen Victoria Hospital** 837-2131
- **Revelstoke Health Unit** 814-2244
- **Women's Emergency Shelter** 837-1111
- **Community Connections** 837-2920  
Provides information while working to enhance people's ability to solve life challenges and transitions.

## Community Resources

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### Crisis Line

Salmon Arm/Sicamous/Sorrento	832-1488
Enderby	838-0880
Revelstoke	837-6601

### RCMP

Salmon Arm	832-6044
Enderby	838-6818
Sicamous	836-2878
Revelstoke	837-5255

**Employment and Income Assistance** 1-866-866-0800

**Tenants Rights Coalition** 1-800-665-1185

### Salmon Arm

- **Shuswap Lake General Hospital** 833-3600
- **Salmon Arm Health Unit** 833-4100
- **Advocacy Outreach** 832-3310  
Income assistance and disability advocacy available
- **SAFE Society** 832-9616  
Women's Emergency Shelter  
Children Who Witness Abuse  
Stopping the Violence  
Community Based Victim Assistance  
Youth Sexual Exploitation  
Police Based Victim Services
- **Salvation Army** 832-9194  
Emergency shelter and clothes
- **RCMP Victim Services Program** 832-4453  
Emotional support, crisis intervention, and court orientation and accompaniment
- **Shuswap Family Resource Centre** 832-2170  
Supports individuals and families and provides referral services to the community.

## Helpful Websites

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BC Housing	<a href="http://www.bchousing.org">www.bchousing.org</a>
City of Salmon Arm	<a href="http://www.salmonarm.bc.ca">www.salmonarm.bc.ca</a>
District of Sicamous	<a href="http://www.district.sicamous.bc.ca">www.district.sicamous.bc.ca</a>
City of Enderby	<a href="http://www.enderby.com">www.enderby.com</a>
City of Revelstoke	<a href="http://www.cityofrevelstoke.com">www.cityofrevelstoke.com</a>
Provincial Government	<a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca">www.gov.bc.ca</a>

For specific concerns regarding the BC Residential Tenancies Act:

Provincial Residential Tenancy Branch

101 – 2141 Springfield Road

Kelowna, BC

Forms & General Information: (250) 861-7415

Office Hours: 8:30 am to 12:00 pm Monday to Friday

Information Officer Services: 1-800-665-8779

Website for forms/publications: [www.rto.gov.bc.ca](http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca)

## **Where to Look for Rental Accommodations**

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### **Salmon Arm Newspapers - classified section**

- Salmon Arm Observer      [www.saobserver.net](http://www.saobserver.net)
- Shuswap Market News
- Lakeshore News            [www.lakeshorenews.bc.ca](http://www.lakeshorenews.bc.ca)
- Friday AM                    [www.friam.ca](http://www.friam.ca)

### **Enderby Newspapers - classified section**

- North Valley Echo            [www.northvalleyecho.com](http://www.northvalleyecho.com)
- The Morning Star            [www.vernonmorningstar.com](http://www.vernonmorningstar.com)

### **Sicamous Newspapers - classified section**

- Sicamous Eagle Valley News [www.eaglevalleynews.com](http://www.eaglevalleynews.com)

### **Revelstoke Newspapers - classified section**

- Revelstoke Times            [www.revelstoketimesreview.com](http://www.revelstoketimesreview.com)

- **Free Websites :**            [www.rentbc.com](http://www.rentbc.com)  
    [www.classifieds.castanet.net](http://www.classifieds.castanet.net)

• For a fee [www.homefinders.ca](http://www.homefinders.ca) provides up to 3 months of daily updates on rental listings. For listings under \$850 the fee is approximately \$45.

• Let your friends, co-workers, support workers and neighbours know you are looking for accommodations. Word of mouth is often the best way to find housing.

• Keep your eyes open for rental signs in the neighbourhood where you would like to live, jot down the important contact phone numbers and addresses.

## **Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)**

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You may be eligible for SAFER if you meet all of the following conditions:

- You are age 60 or older;
- You and your spouse (with whom you are living) have lived in British Columbia for the full 12 months immediately preceding your application; and
- Meet one of the following Citizenship requirements: Canadian citizen (s); or authorized to take up permanent residence in Canada; or Convention refugee (s)
- You pay more than 30% of your gross (before tax) monthly household income towards the rent for your home, including the cost of pad rental for a manufactured home (trailer) that you own and occupy.

If you are eligible, SAFER may subsidize part of the rent that is over 30% of your income. The subsidy is calculated to give the most assistance to people with the least income.

To get more details about this program and to download the application, go to [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org) or call 1-800-257-7756.

Keep your application up to date

&

stay connected!

## **Low-Cost and Subsidized Housing**

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The following is a list of organizations that provide low-cost or subsidized housing. Due to the limited amount of units available in the area there is often a long waiting list, however, it is worthwhile to register because when a unit does become available it may provide a more long term, affordable solution to your housing needs.

### **The Housing Registry** **1-800-257-7756**

To get on the Housing Registry you can obtain an application online at [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org)

### **Salmon Arm**

- **Canadian Mental Health Association** 832-8477  
433 Hudson Avenue
- **Shuswap Housing Society** 832-8655  
800 Okanagan Avenue
- **Shuswap Independent Living Association** 832-9726  
Clover Court - 51—9th Avenue S.E.  
Rotary Gardens - 141 10th Avenue S.E.  
The Terrace on Broadview - 3110 2nd Avenue N.E.
- **Ida Vista Housing Cooperative**  
120 8th Avenue S.W.  
Box 1003 Salmon Arm, BC V1E 3B9

### **Sorrento**

- **Sorrento & District Housing Society** 675-2757  
Shuswap Lions Manoe - 2780 Falaise Road

### **Sicamous**

- **Eagle Valley Senior Citizens Housing Society** 836-4687  
The Haven - 1095 Shuswap Avenue

### **Revelstoke**

- **Revelstoke Senior Citizens Housing Society**  
Monsashee Court - 505 3rd Street West 837-5062  
Mt. Begbie Manor - 1214 Dowie Street 837-3033

Keep your application up to date & stay connected!

## **What Are Your Rental Needs?**

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- Where would you like to live?
- Do you require access to public transportation?
- How much space do you require and what types of rooms do you need?
- Do you have or want pets?
- What is your budget for housing?
- Will you have a roommate?
- Will you need storage space?
- What features do you need?
  - Elevator
  - Intercom system
  - Security system
  - Wheelchair Access
  - Parking
  - Cable TV
  - Specific Kitchen Appliances (microwave, dishwasher)
  - Air Conditioning
  - Washer and Dryer

## **How To Prepare & Search for Accommodations**

Looking for suitable housing is like looking for employment. The more prepared and persistent you are the better your chances are for finding a home.

### **Have your paperwork in order:**

- Make a list of all your references with contact information. If you do not have references find someone who will vouch for you.
- If you are on any type of Income Assistance find out what the Ministry (MEIA) will provide for a security deposit and get an Intent to Rent Form. Some landlords may require that your rent portion be paid directly to them. This can be arranged through Income Assistance.
- If you are employed have all the contact information for your employer and the length of time you have worked for that employer.

### **Have a number where potential landlords can leave a message for you.**

- If you do not have a phone, arrange with an individual (friend or family) or service provider (social worker, outreach worker, etc.) to take messages for you. Contact that individual once a day to pick up any messages you may have.
- If your call has not been returned the next day, you should call again keeping in mind to be friendly and polite.

### **Dress and groom as though you are going to a job interview.**

- Landlords usually have their pick of several applicants.

### **They are looking for**

- Someone both able and responsible enough to pay rent on time
- People who will treat them and their property with care and respect
- Quiet tenants who will not disturb other tenants or neighbours

## **BC Housing Rent Supplements**

### **Rental Assistance Program (RAP)**

You may be eligible for the Rental Assistance Program if you meet the following criteria:

- You have at least one or more dependent child under the age of 19
- You have an annual income below \$35,000
- Some or all of your annual income comes from employment
- You have less than \$10,000 in assets
- You file an annual income tax return
- You pay more than 30 per cent of your household income towards rent for your home, or pay pad rental for a manufactured home (trailer) that you own and occupy
- You have lived in British Columbia for the full 12 months immediately preceding the date of application
- You meet the residency requirements for the program

**To get more details about this program and to download the application go to [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org) or call 1-800-257-7756.**

## Six Tips on Choosing the Right Roommate

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(These are things you need to consider before you commit to a place)

1. Find a similarly tidy roommate. Neat goes with neat and messy goes with messy. For a roommate to be right for you, it's important that they are roughly as clean or as messy as you are. For larger households--three or more roommates--the level of neatness tends to lean towards the majority preference, so avoid being the odd one out.
2. Find someone with whom you can discuss finances and money issues. This is essential. Because you'll be splitting the bills on electricity, gas, cable, Internet, telephone and possibly furniture, you must feel comfortable enough with them to talk openly about the size of the gas bill or whether premium cable channels are worth the cost. Open communication will ensure a longer, more fulfilling relationship with your roommate.
3. Discuss your preferences for inviting friends over. How often do you like having people over? Do you mind if your roommate's friends are at your apartment late or overnight? If you disagree over having people over all the time or letting friends sleep on the couch, it'll be a source of tension.
4. Discuss how late or early you go to bed and how sound of a sleeper you are. Could you handle it if your roommate always had people over who talked loudly late into the night? What about an early-to-bed roomie who's always yelling at you to turn down the TV to near silent levels? The right roommate should have a similar sleep schedule and / or noise preference as you.
5. Ask about pets. Don't forget to find out what pets they have or whether they're okay with yours. Are they willing to help care for the animal, say, when you're out of town? Also, discuss any allergies.
6. Choose a person for compatibility, not likeability. Friends do not always make the best roommates. You see your friends on a limited basis, so neither of you has to deal regularly with each other's habits or quirks. This would change once you became roommates, and your friendship could be strained as a result. So, make sure you're especially honest about your lifestyle preferences when discussing rooming with a friend.

Excerpt from About: Apartment/Living Rental, Jennifer Lai - [www.apartments.about.com](http://www.apartments.about.com)

**Always be prepared to submit your application or sign the lease on the same day you view the apartment. Bring all necessary materials when viewing available units:**

- Your cheque book (if using cash be sure to get a receipt for proof of payment)
- Intent to Rent Form (if on Income Assistance)
- Letter of reference from a previous landlord / advocate and their contact information
- Notebook & pen
- Tape measure, so you can make sure your furniture will fit into the space and through the doorways

**Always keep your appointments and always show up on time. No-shows are a major source of frustration for building managers and landlords.**

Don't get discouraged! Finding a great place is not easy, but it is well worth the effort.

Once you've decided on a place, secure the agreement between yourself and a landlord:

- Get everything in writing, including your tenancy agreement, plus any promises your landlord makes
- Get receipts, especially if you pay cash, to prove that you paid your security deposit and your rent
- Know your rights and obligations under the Residential Tenancy Act
- Get the landlord's proper name, address and telephone – this information is important if you ever end up in a dispute

## Hooking Up Your Utilities

Arrange for utility hook-up as soon as possible as this can take a while...

BC Hydro	1-800-224-9376	www.bchydro.com
Terasen Gas	1-888-224-2710	www.bcgas.com
Telus	1-800-884-5252	www.telus.com

### TV and Internet:

#### **Salmon Arm:**

Sun Country Cable            832-9711            www.sunwave.net

#### **Enderby:**

Sun Country Cable            832-9711            www.sunwave.net

#### **Sicamous:**

Sicamous Cable & Internet    836-3311            www.sicamouscable.tv

#### **Revelstoke:**

Revelstoke Cable TV Ltd.    837-5246            www.rctonline.net

## Tenants Rights and Obligations

As a tenant you have the right to:

- Quiet enjoyment
- To have the apartment repaired and maintained in good working order
- Exclusive possession
- To enforce contract and law (Residential Tenancy Act)

As a tenant you are obliged to:

- Keep the place clean
- Pay the rent on time
- Let the landlord know of any problems

(For detailed information contact the Provincial Residential Tenancy Branch and/or Tenants' Rights Action Coalition (TRAC) )