



Rantoul Police Department



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CRIME FREE HOUSING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. What is Rantoul's crime-free housing program?

Rantoul's crime-free housing program gives rental property owners and agents a powerful tool to help reduce the chances of criminal activity in individual rented units and throughout the Village. The cornerstone of the program is a crime-free lease addendum that puts potential tenants on notice that they are liable for certain criminal activity committed by themselves, a member of their household, or a guest. And if certain criminal activity does occur, the lease can be terminated and eviction action initiated.

2. Does crime-free housing really work?

Yes. Crime and drug plagued properties around the country have seen dramatic decreases in calls for police service after crime-free housing was implemented. Through the training provided, and active communication between you and the police, we should experience these same results. For example, the Village of Schaumburg saw a 12-percent decrease in calls for police service at their 18 major rental properties over the first five years of the program. In Mount Prospect, calls for service at rental properties have dropped by 20 percent since a crime-free housing program was launched in 2007.

3. Does the ordinance require me to evict a tenant for any criminal activity?

No. The ordinance requires the use of a crime-free lease addendum, or similar wording in the body of the lease, that makes certain criminal activity a cause for eviction. Prohibited criminal activity includes the commission or attempted commission of: murder, kidnapping, arson, sexual assault, felony sexual abuse, indecent solicitation of a child, stalking, home invasion, robbery, burglary, burglary from motor vehicle, motor vehicle theft, aggravated fleeing and eluding, mob action, aggravated battery, aggravated assault, prostitution, solicitation of prostitution, child pornography, possession of explosives, unlawful use of weapons, unlawful discharge of a firearm, unlawful sale of firearms, gambling, keeping a gambling place, concealing a fugitive, felony violation of the Illinois Cannabis Control Act, violation of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, violation of the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act; or the commission of two (2) or more of any other

offenses under the Illinois Criminal Code of 2012 not specifically listed above; or the commission in a six-month period of four (4) or more village ordinance violations that threaten the health, safety or welfare of other residents or the right to peaceful enjoyment of the property by other residents.

4. What is in the crime-free housing lease addendum and how do I get one?

The crime-free lease addendum, which is provided by the Rantoul Police Department, makes certain criminal activity engaged in, facilitated or permitted by the tenant or any member of the tenant's household when occurring on or off the property a lease violation. In addition, it makes certain criminal activity engaged in, facilitated or permitted by any guest of or any person under the control of the tenant or any member of the tenant's household when occurring on or near the property is a lease violation. The addendum provides notice that a violation may result in lease termination and possible eviction. Proof of a violation does not require a criminal conviction, but a determination by the Police Department based on a preponderance of the evidence.

5. Must I use a crime-free housing lease addendum?

Yes. An owner or agent entering into leases must utilize a crime-free housing lease addendum, or similar clause in the lease substantially similar to a crime-free lease addendum which has been approved by the Rantoul Police Department. In addition, the owner or agent should advise prospective tenants of the required crime-free lease addendum. The use of the addendum applies to all new or renewed lease entered into after January 1, 2018, but no later than January 1, 2019 all leases must include the addendum

6. Doesn't crime-free housing promote discrimination or profiling?

No. The Federal Fair Housing Act, which is discussed during the seminar, contains seven protected classes – race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status and disability. A person's behavior is not a protected class. The program is intended to deal with the behavior of a tenant, members of the household, and guests whose behavior is affecting the health, safety or quality of life in a neighborhood regardless of the tenant's race, ethnic background or income status. The lease addendum was originally developed by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is part of leases used by federally subsidized housing management authorities. Evictions based on this concept have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

7. Does the ordinance require a criminal background check for rental applicants?

No. Thorough applicant screening is recommended and discussed in the seminar, however, the ordinance does not require criminal background checks.

8. How can I be held responsible for the actions of my tenant?

A rental property, regardless of size, is in fact a business operation. While the Village has the power to declare certain businesses a nuisance, it has the right and responsibility to do the same for troublesome rental properties. The ordinance is designed to provide education and tools to rental property owners, managers or agents that will assist and empower them to reduce the chance of problems and be prepared to quickly and effectively deal with problem tenants. This will not only assist the Village and local neighborhoods, but may also protect the rental property owner from potential loss of rent during a protracted eviction and costly repairs to damaged units.

The ordinance declares it a public nuisance for an owner or agent to allow or permit criminal activity to take place on or within any rental property if the owner or agent had knowledge or reasonably should have known of facts indicating a reason to believe that such criminal activity was about to occur or was occurring and took no action reasonably calculated to prevent or stop such criminal activity, or occurred and took no action reasonably calculated to prevent the same or similar criminal activity from happening again.

9. What happens if I don't comply with the crime-free housing ordinance?

By not complying with the ordinance, you may subject yourself to being cited by the Village. Any person violating any of the provisions of ordinance shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$75.00 nor more than \$750.00 for each offense. A separate offense shall be deemed committed on each day during or on which a violation continues.

10. Does this apply to me if I have family members and/or friends living in a property I own but do not reside at and am not collecting rent?

Yes. The ordinance will apply to any owner of residential rental property with two or more units, or who owns two or more single residential units within the Village of Rantoul.

11. Is there a cost associated with the crime-free housing program?

No.

12. Why is the 4-hour seminar required?

The crime-free housing program was developed in 1992 by the Mesa, Arizona Police Department. Over 2,000 communities in 48 states, including numerous communities in Illinois, have been trained in crime-free housing. The information contained in the seminar is a compilation of experience and proven methods from professional rental property managers, lawyers, and police officers. This vast experience can be passed on to the rental property owner or representative, possibly saving you money or a decline in property value.

Seminar topics include:

- Explanation of the Village of Rantoul's crime-free housing ordinance
- Overview of community policing and village resources available to assist you
- Explanation of the crime-free lease addendum with samples provided
- Crime prevention and risk management
- CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) overview
- Applicant screening
- Active property management and working with the police
- An overview discussing leases and evictions
- Village of Rantoul's rental issues/inspections/miscellaneous ordinance

13. What opportunities will be available for me to attend a seminar?

In an effort to provide the residential rental property owner or agent an opportunity to attend the seminar with the least amount of difficulty, we are offering several sessions throughout the year. Residential rental property owners or agents are required to complete the seminar by January 1, 2019. These seminars can be scheduled on weekdays during the day or evening and on Saturdays. Specific dates will be listed on the Rantoul Police Department website: police.myrantoul.com.

14. I live out of state. Do I have to attend?

Not necessarily. If you live out of state, you most likely have a local individual that handles matters for you related to the rental property, an agent. With this in mind, the ordinance does allow the rental property owner or agent to attend a crime-free housing seminar.

15. How many seminars do I need to attend?

The property owner or agent, under normal conditions, needs to attend only one seminar regardless of the number of rental units that you own or operate in the Village. However, you must take a refresher course every 3 years.

16. How can I get more information on Rantoul's Crime-Free Housing Program?

Contact Rantoul's Crime-Free Housing Coordinator at 217-893-5600 or email: police@myrantoul.com.