



# Tenant Handbook



*First Edition - January 2011*

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



### **Vision Statement**

To provide homes\* primarily for Aboriginal people, where they can have pride and feel connected to traditional values and a community.

\* “Homes” includes a range of residential programs and services, including those that provide appropriate care and support

### **Mission Statement**

To provide affordable and appropriate homes primarily for Aboriginal people on Vancouver Island, and to enhance community partnerships.

M’akola Group of Societies acknowledges and thanks all the three Nations on Vancouver Island: Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, Kwakwaka’wakw people for allowing us to work, provide housing and support on their traditional territories.

Excerpts from the Traditional First Nations Code of Ethics that the M’akola Group of Societies follows are referred to throughout. They are highlighted in red as follows:

*Each morning upon rising, and each evening before sleeping, give thanks for the life within you and for all life, for good things the Creator has given you and others and for the opportunity to grow a little more each day. Consider your thoughts and actions of the past day, and seek for the courage and to be a better person. Seek for the things that will benefit everyone.*



## Table of contents

Important Telephone Numbers .....	iv
Introduction .....	1
About M'akola .....	1
Roles of Property Management Staff .....	2
Your Rights & Responsibilities.....	3
Tenancy Agreement .....	3
Residential Tenancy Act .....	4
Privacy Policy .....	4
Human Rights .....	5
Conflicts & Complaints .....	5
Safety .....	9
Protect Yourself & Your Home .....	9
Fire Safety .....	9
Be Prepared for an Emergency .....	10
Safety for Kids.....	10
Crime Free Multi-Housing Program .....	11
Vandalism .....	12
Care of Your Home .....	12
Appliances .....	13
Bathrooms.....	13
Conserving Energy .....	14
Tenant Newsletters.....	14
Tenant Advisory Committee .....	14
Community Programs .....	16
Bursary & Scholarships .....	16
Transfers .....	17



Your Tenant Rent Contribution .....	18
How To Pay Your Tenant Rent Contribution (TRC) .....	18
How Is Your Tenant Rent Contribution Calculated? .....	18
Annual Review Process .....	19
Your New Home .....	19
Moving-In .....	19
Keys & Locks .....	19
Parking.....	20
Insurance .....	20
Renovations & Alterations .....	20
Basements & Storage Areas .....	21
Yards & Balconies .....	21
Pets.....	21
Cable, Telephone & Satellite Dishes .....	21
Hydro & Gas .....	21
Smoking .....	21
Guests .....	22
Laundry Rooms .....	22
In-suite hook-ups for Laundry .....	22
Pest/Flee Control .....	23
Bed Bugs.....	23
Mice/Rats.....	24
Garbage & Recycling .....	24
Noise & Disturbances .....	24
Moving-Out .....	25
Maintenance & Repairs .....	25
Making A Request For Maintenance & Repairs .....	25
Preventative Maintenance .....	25
What To Do If You Have Maintenance Issues .....	26
The Board of Directors .....	26
Important Community Resources .....	26
Your Fire Escape Plan .....	27



**Use this page to log important names and phone numbers:**

Regional Property Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Tenant Relations Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

Tenant Rep: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Maintenance Worker's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:**

Water Shut-off is located: \_\_\_\_\_

Electrical breaker is located: \_\_\_\_\_

Natural gas shut-off is located: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY:**

**CALL 911 to report a life-threatening emergency situation.**

**AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY NUMBER (such as flooding or fire): 1-866-301-4072**

**Report all other damages and repairs to your local office the next business day.**



**OFFICES:**

**SOUTH ISLAND**

**VICTORIA**

2009 Fernwood Road  
Victoria BC V8T 2Y8  
PH: 250-384-1423  
Fax: 250-381-1438

Toll Free: 1-877-384-1423

**DUNCAN**

#26 – 3170 Gibbins Rd.  
Duncan BC  
V9L 1G5  
Fax: (250) 746-1707

Tel: (250) 746-1785

**MID-ISLAND**

**NANAIMO**

#22-3201 Shenton Road  
Nanaimo BC  
V9T 5X6  
Fax: (250) 756-4262

Tel: (250) 756-4217

**PORT ALBERNI**

#17-3777 Argyle Way  
Port Alberni BC  
V9Y 8C7  
Fax: (250) 723-1744

Tel: (250) 723-9855

**NORTH ISLAND**

**CAMPBELL RIVER**

47A-300 Robron Road  
Campbell River BC  
V9W 5P2  
Fax: (250) 923-2597

Tel: (250) 923-4145

**COURTENAY**

316 – 2060 Laketrail  
Courtney, BC V9N 9E8  
Fax: (250) 703-9530

Tel: (250) 703-0357





## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to M'akola! This Tenant Handbook has been prepared to provide you with an understanding of the approach and policies that M'akola Housing follows to help make your home a safe, affordable and comfortable place to live.

The Tenant Handbook does not include detailed information for specific locations. However, it does provide you with a good overview of how M'akola operates, as well as what is required of you as a tenant.

We suggest that you keep this handbook in a convenient place for future reference. If you have further suggestions or ideas to offer us for future editions, please feel free to do so by contacting our main office.

**This handbook is for information only, simply to provide an overview. The Tenancy Agreement supersedes all aspects of this handbook if there is an unforeseen discrepancy.**

## ABOUT M'AKOLA “A Safe Place”

The ‘Victoria Native Indian Housing Society’ was incorporated on February 6, 1984 as a non-profit society. The name was changed to the M'akola Housing Society on April 5, 1988.

The Society was originally established to provide safe, affordable housing for families of First Nations ancestry who were in core need of housing in urban centres on Vancouver Island. Since that time, the Society and its mandate have expanded into what is now the M'akola Group of Societies.

1. M'akola Housing Society has built and now manages 372 townhouse units in Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, and Port Alberni through the Urban Native Program funded by CMHC. These units are only for Aboriginal families.
2. The M'akola BC Housing Society manages 125 units in Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo and Port Alberni.
3. The M'akola Leasehold Housing Society manages all developments under the Homes BC Program including a 42-unit townhouse development in Courtenay, a 22-unit complex in Victoria and four complexes in Campbell River totaling 151 units. These units are for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal families.
4. M'akola ILBC Housing Society is a partnership between the District of Langford, Homes BC, Vancouver Island Health Authority and M'akola Group of Societies. This building is called Jesken Aerie, “Golden Eagle Nest” providing housing for Seniors, Elders and



people with disabilities. To apply contact: VIHA General Inquiries # 250-388-2273 or Toll Free # 1-888-533-2273. Please do not contact Jesken Aerie directly.

5. The Rural and Native Housing Program (RNH) started in 1974 as the Rural and Remote Program for Vancouver Island. It was created under Section 40 of the National Housing Act for homeowners, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The Vancouver Island portfolio consists of 75 rental units and 24 homeowner accounts. It is divided into 3 regions and managed by Regional Property Managers for each region.
6. Mi's Kow A Ao Development Society was incorporated in 1988, and was established to ensure the appropriate designation of funds for the management and development of M'akola projects. It also currently manages four properties, three of which are market residential dwellings. There is no application process for these homes; they are advertised in the local newspaper when one becomes available.

## ROLES OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT STAFF

PLEASE NOTE: in some regions, certain positions are not available due to different funding sources. In buildings managed by M'akola on Vancouver Island Region, you may meet the following people:

**Regional Property Managers (RPM)** – There are three RPMs, one in the North, Mid and South Island. The RPM is responsible for the management and efficient operation of their regional office and the staff.

- **North Island** – covers Courtenay and Campbell River areas, along with RNH units in and around these areas.
- **Mid-Island** – covers Nanaimo and Port Alberni areas, along with RNH units in and around these areas.
- **South Island** – covers Duncan and Victoria areas, along with RNH units in and around these areas, and Mi's Kow A Ao rentable houses.

**Office Coordinator** – is usually the first person you see when you walk in our offices. They take all general inquiries and for most offices, they are the person you pay the rent to! (except Duncan)

**Tenant Relations Liaison (TRL)** – South & Mid-Island only. TRLs work closely with tenants.

- Move ins/outs
- Inspections
- Annual rent reviews



- Questions about tenancy agreement
- Tenant related issues/concerns
- Complaints/requests
- Late rents
- Payments plans for work orders
- Change in income or family status
- Received warning letter/notice to end

**Maintenance Staff** – The maintenance staff are called in when you need something in your home repaired. For example, they deal with leaky pipes, re-hanging closet doors and some appliance repairs. They also handle repairs in common areas.

Requests for repairs are only made through local Office Coordinator or local Maintenance Coordinator (Victoria only). Please do not contact Maintenance staff, as it takes away from their current duties.

**M’akola Tenant Support Worker** - Is available to tenants and can provide information and support with issues and concerns you may have. Such as, parenting, household management and budgeting support, support resolving issues with neighbours, help understanding warning letters, support maintaining tenancy and more... if you are unsure of what you need, they can provide referrals and information on community resources. As required, worker may also provide culturally appropriate recreational and social activities to children and their families.

For Victoria & Duncan, call 250-384-9466, provided by Hulitan Family & Community Services Society in Victoria.

Other areas call: 250-898-3315, provided by Upper Island Woman of Native Ancestry in Courtenay.

*Listen with courtesy to what others say, even if you feel what they are saying is worthless.  
Listen with your heart.*

## **YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Tenancy Agreement**

Before moving into your unit, you signed a Tenancy Agreement with M’akola and should have a copy of this agreement. (If you have lost yours, you can call your local office to request another copy.)



You are responsible for following the rules in this agreement – for pets, guests, storage, parking, noise and moving, for example. If you find some of the rules difficult to understand, your TRL/RPM will assist you.

***This agreement governs your stay with M’akola and supersedes all aspects of this handbook if there is an unforeseen discrepancy.***

### **Residential Tenancy Act**

The Provincial Residential Tenancy Act explains the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

The rights in this Act protect you as a tenant in public housing, and you have the same responsibilities as any other tenant in B.C. Unless you are paying market rent, the rules for rent increases do not apply to you, because the Tenant Rent Contribution you pay is based on 25 or 30 per cent of your household’s gross income (subject to minimum rents).

For more information on your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, you can phone the Residential Tenancy Office at 250-387-1602 or 1-800-665-8779 outside the Victoria area or visit: [www.rto.gov.bc.ca](http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca)

### **Privacy Policy**

M’akola is committed to maintaining confidentiality, respecting personal privacy, and, as a public body that falls under the B.C. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP), is responsible for the protection of all personal information under its custody and control.

When you applied for housing, we collected only the personal information required to administer our housing programs. As a tenant, we will only use the personal information we collect as required to support you in your tenancy.

Your personal information will only be used by authorized staff to fulfill the purpose for which it was originally collected, or for a use consistent with that purpose. We do not disclose your personal information to other public bodies or individuals except as authorized by legislation or through your consent.

M’akola has safeguards in place to protect your electronic records against risks of unauthorized access. Staff access information on a need-to-know basis to perform their jobs. We only keep your personal information for the length of time governed by our records retention schedules and other legislative requirements and records are then destroyed.



To obtain access to your records or to request a correction to a record, you must make a written request. Please contact the M'akola Privacy Officer or to receive more information about M'akola's Privacy Policy.

*Respect means "to feel or show honour or esteem for someone or something; consider the well-being of, or to treat someone or something with deference or courtesy." Showing respect is the basic law of life.*

### **Human Rights**

The Human Rights Code states that with respect to a tenancy, people cannot discriminate against, or harass someone, because of their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or lawful source of income. Discrimination may involve harassment, which includes actions or words meant to embarrass or mistreat someone, based on the grounds described above. Some examples include repeated insults, name calling, sexual or racial remarks and touching someone who does not want to be touched. Grabbing, pushing and hitting are types of assault, and legal action, including the filing of police reports, can be undertaken immediately.

No one, including M'akola staff and tenants, should harass you, and it is wrong for you to harass anyone. If possible, tell the offender to stop. It's also a good idea to write down the details of what happened (who, what, when, where). You should report any forms of harassment to your Regional Property Manager or Tenant Relations Liaison. When we receive a harassment complaint, we will try to correct the problem as quickly as possible, to the extent that our authority allows.

M'akola must protect the safety of its staff as well. If a tenant harasses or assaults M'akola staff, we will take immediate action.

For more information, visit the BC Human Rights Tribunal website at [www.bchrt.bc.ca](http://www.bchrt.bc.ca) or call 1-888-440-8844

*The hurt of one is the hurt of all; the honour of one is the honour of all.*

### **CONFLICTS & COMPLAINTS**

The following charts are the steps we recommend you do for resolving a conflict, if you have a

1. Complaint about another tenant



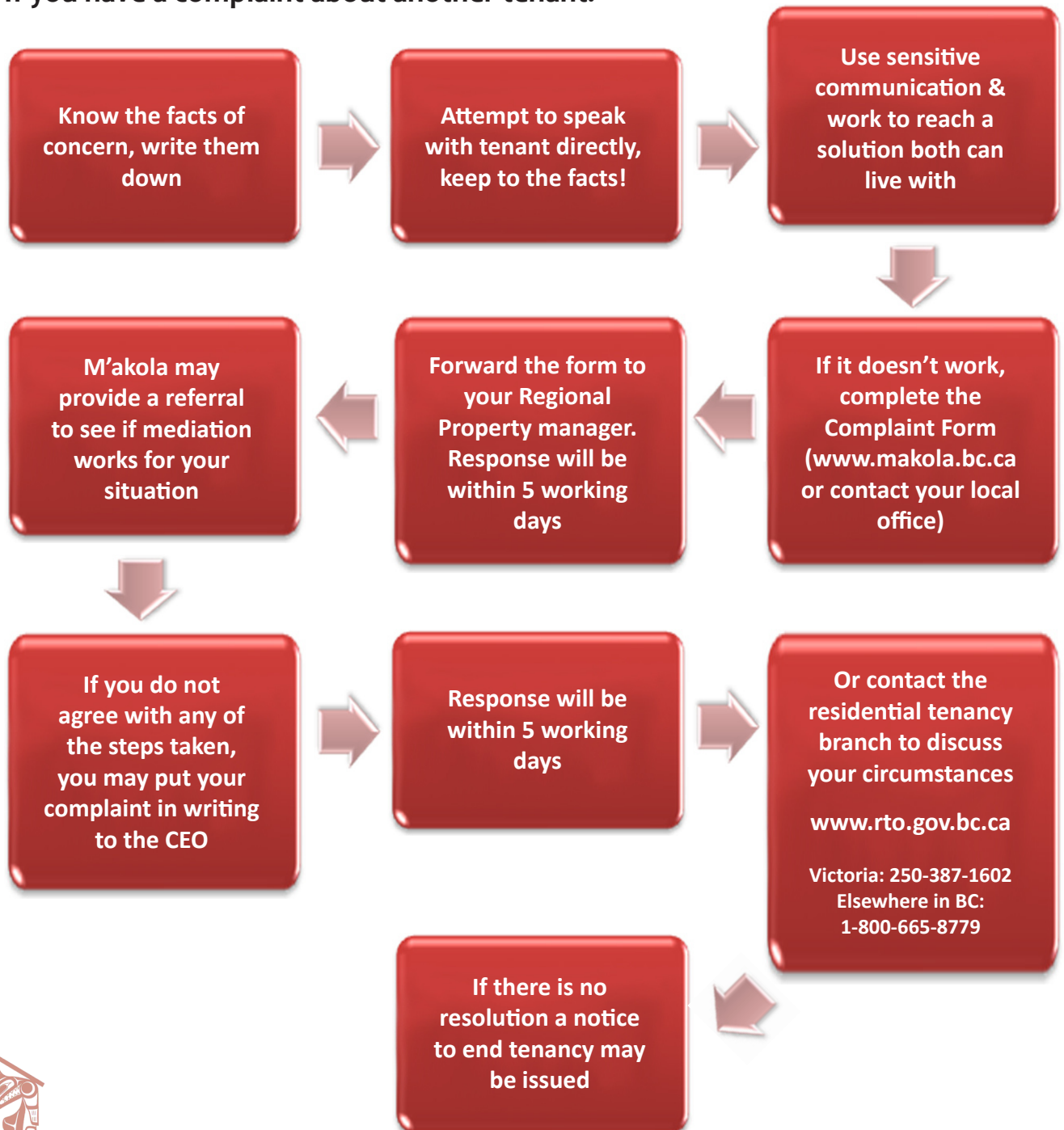
- 2. Complaint about an employee
- 3. Complaint about your Tenancy Agreement

Complaint forms can be found on our website [www.makola.bc.ca](http://www.makola.bc.ca) or you can contact your local office for a copy. A referral can be made to the Tenant Support Worker that can go through these methods with you! You can also call yourself.

Victoria and Duncan Call 250-384-9466 or visit: [www.hulitan.ca](http://www.hulitan.ca)

Other areas call: 250-898-3315, provided by Upper Island Woman of Native Ancestry

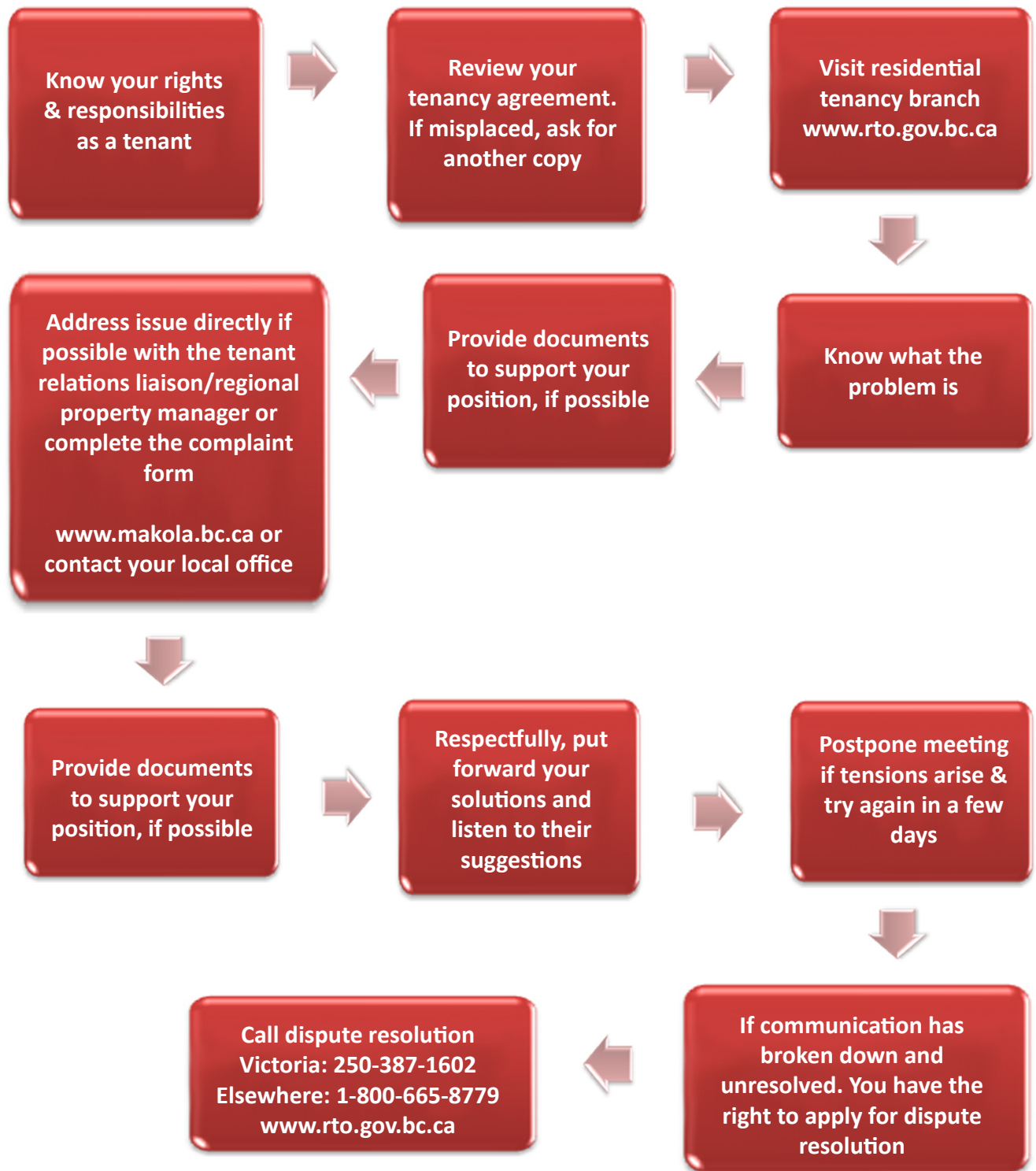
**If you have a complaint about another tenant:**



**If you have a complaint about an employee:**



### If you have a complaint about Tenancy Agreement:



*No person should be made to feel "put down" by you: avoid hurting others hearts as you would a deadly poison.*

## **SAFETY**

### **Protect Yourself & Your Home**

There are locks on all patio doors and on all the windows - be sure to use them for security purposes.

If you see strangers loitering around the complex, please contact your local office and/or the police. If you observe suspected criminal activity, do not attempt to intervene, phone the police immediately. If concerned about visitors of other tenants, please fill out a Complaint Form.

### **Fire Safety**

Here are some fire safety tips to protect your home and your family:

- Have a fire extinguisher handy and know how to use it!
- Do not store flammable materials such as paint thinner, solvents, propane tanks or gasoline inside your home or attached storage.
- Regularly recycle old newspapers because they are a fire hazard if you let them stack up.
- Space heaters are the number one cause of house fires, so use it safely.
- Call your local office or Maintenance Coordinator if the smoke alarm in your home goes off frequently. This alarm is wired, so you do not need to replace a battery. We will inspect it and test it regularly. Do not remove or disable the smoke alarm as it is a breach of your Tenancy Agreement.
- By keeping your stove, oven and toaster clean so they do not smoke, you can help prevent setting the alarm off. Also, use the exhaust fan when cooking to reduce the possibility of “false alarms” and never leave cooking food unattended.
- Do not overload power outlets. A power bar with a shut-off feature can protect your electrical appliances.
- If a fire occurs, only use a fire extinguisher if you have been trained. If you want to learn how to use a fire extinguisher, contact your local fire department.
- Draw a floor plan of your unit on the Fire Escape Plan that is on the last page of this handbook
- Make sure you know at least two ways out of your home in case one escape route is blocked by fire. Plan these escape routes with your household members so everyone knows how to exit safely and practice them regularly.



- If you hear a fire alarm you should always leave the unit right away, as it might be an adjoining home.
- If a fire occurs in your home, evacuate to safety and call the fire department.

### **Be Prepared For an Emergency**

Keep an emergency supply kit with a minimum five-day supply of water, food (especially foods that do not require cooking, such as energy bars and crackers) and clothing. Also include a first aid kit, flashlight, extra batteries, a portable battery operated radio and any required medications.

If you live in an area where an earthquake could happen, you can prepare your family ahead of time:

- Know the safe places in your home. You are usually safest against an inside wall, under a strong table or desk and away from falling glass or objects.
- Know that dangerous areas are near windows, mirrors, hanging pictures or plants, tall furniture and ceiling fixtures.
- If there is an earthquake and you are at home, you should:
  - Remain calm.
  - Drop – under or near something sturdy...
  - Cover – your head and neck for protection...
  - Hold – on to the sturdy object that is covering you.
  - After the shaking stops, wait 30 to 60 seconds before moving.
  - Check yourself and your family for injuries.
  - Listen to the radio for information and instructions.
  - Be aware of overhead dangers if you go outside.
  - Assist neighbors wherever possible.

Check the Information Section of your local telephone directory for more information on first aid and preparing for an earthquake.

### **Safety for Kids Playing**

#### Traffic Safety

- In parking lots, use precaution and drive slowly when driving in and out.
- Ensure your kids are not playing in the parking lot, as cars may get damaged and kids may not be seen by drivers if they are small or hiding.



## Outdoor Safety

- Wading pools must be supervised and emptied daily and turned over after each use to prevent them from filling with rainwater
- Lawn and gardening equipment can cause serious injuries and should be stored out of the reach of children
- Periodically check your yard and the complex for hazards such as animal feces, broken glass, garbage and metal etc...
- No playing in garbage bins

Have safety rules for when your kids are playing outside, such as:

- Supervising children outside is a preventative measure.
- If you children are outside, do not let them play alone.
- Know what area your kids will be playing in and who they are playing with
- Have your kids inform you if they move to another area of the complex
- For the safety of your kids, tell your kids not to go into someone else's home without your knowledge.

If you have concerns of other children in your complex, please supervise your children while they play outside so that you can watch over and positively intervene with your child as necessary.

*Treat every person, from the tiniest child to the oldest elder with respect at all times.*

## Crime Free Multi-Housing Program

You will be informed if your complex participates in Crime Free Multi-Housing training offered by the BC Crime Prevention Association. The program is designed to help residents, owners and managers of rental property, in co-operation with the police, to keep illegal activity away from rental properties. The result of the team effort is a safer, more habitable environment in which to live.

The program recommends the use of the Residential Tenancy Agreement Addendum for Crime Free Housing. Since 1998, all new M'akola BCH tenants sign the Crime Free Housing Addendum when they move in. The Addendum states that:

The tenant(s), any occupant of the tenant(s)' household, and any persons invited onto the residential property or residential premise by the tenant(s) or any member of the tenant's family shall not engage in any criminal activity on the premises or property including, but not limited to:



- a. any drug-related criminal activity
- b. solicitation (sex trade workers and related nuisance activity)
- c. street gang activity
- d. assault or threatened assault
- e. unlawful use of a firearm
- f. any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or welfare of the landlord, other tenants or persons on the residential property or residential premises.

A single violation of any of the provisions of this addendum shall be deemed a serious violation and material non-compliance with the Residential Tenancy Agreement. (Please refer to the Crime Free Multi-housing Addendum attached to your Tenancy Agreement.)

## **VANDALISM**

Vandalism in and around the complexes can result in costly repairs. Graffiti on brickwork is difficult to remove and is very unsightly. We ask that you call the police right away and tell your local office if you see anyone damaging M'akola property.

## **CARE OF YOUR HOME**

It is your responsibility to keep your home safe and clean. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.)

*Treat the earth and all her aspects as your mother. Show deep respect to the mineral plant, and the animal worlds. Do nothing to pollute the air or the soil. If others would destroy our mother, rise up with wisdom to defend her.*

Please leave common areas like the laundry rooms and grounds clean for other tenants. Remember to teach your children that laundry rooms, locker rooms, underground parking garages, and landscaping are not play areas. In addition, if your children keep bicycles in your home, please make sure they do not ride them inside. Tenants will be responsible for the replacement cost of any damages to the landscaping or project area, which they or their children cause.

M'akola requests that you not use liquid bleach to clean. It is harsh on the environment and can damage building materials, such as carpets. Instead, use alternatives such as washing soda powder. Picture hooks, rather than nails or screws, must be used to hang wall decorations.



## Appliances

Many refrigerators are frost-free and do not need to be defrosted. If your fridge is not, we suggest you clean and defrost it regularly to keep it in good condition and save energy. Do not use knives or ice picks to scrape the ice off because they can damage the freezer and you will be charged with repair costs. Do not put a kettle or pot filled with boiling water in the freezer to melt the ice, because the heat could also melt the plastic parts.

Use a mild soapy solution to clean the smooth surfaces of appliances, and for grease and dirt, try a paste made from baking soda and water. Please do not use abrasive cleaning products because they will damage the surfaces of your appliances. You can use oven cleaning products for cleaning your oven.

## Bathrooms

Please use a gentle non-abrasive cleaner on bathtubs, sinks and toilets. A rough cleaner will scratch the surface and make the fixtures harder to keep clean.

You have a condensation problem if you have any of the following:

- condensation on the fixtures, windows or walls;
- mould and mildew between ceramic tiles, in the corners or on the ceiling;
- peeling paint; rotting, blackened window sills; damaged drywall under windows; curling floor tiles; musty smells; or water dripping from vents.

Condensation is caused by:

- excessive house humidity;
- moisture from hot baths and showers;
- dampness from wet bath mats, towels and drying clothes;
- inadequate ventilation;
- uninsulated vent ducts;
- paint or wallpaper not designed for use in bathrooms; and
- cold outside air leaking through insulation.

While you cannot change the structural causes, there are a number of things you can do to reduce condensation:

- turn on the bathroom fan or open the bathroom window while you are showering or bathing. Be sure to keep the fan running or window open until the condensation has evaporated;



- turn on the heat lamp during your bath or shower;
- keep the kitchen fan on, or a kitchen window open, while cooking and washing dishes.

NOTE: It costs less to heat dry air than wet air, so keeping a window slightly open or the fan running will result in smaller hydro bills for you and your family.

### **Conserving Energy**

M'akola is making significant investments in infrastructure and retrofits in order to conserve energy at our complexes. All of us can cut the cost of heating and electrical bills and help the environment by conserving energy.

If your residence has a de-humidistat, please consult with your TRL or RPM to ensure that you are following the recommended operating guidelines.

Here are some ways you can save energy in your home:

- When it is cold out, keep the temperature at 20 degrees Celsius (if you have a thermostat in your unit). Lower the temperature at night or when you are not home.
- Do not turn the heat off if you will be away during winter.
- Turn off the lights in rooms that are not being used and whenever you leave a room. Wherever possible, use energy efficient light bulbs.
- Keep your refrigerator on a medium or low setting.
- Unplug electronic devices and re-chargers when not in use.
- Plug the sink or rinse dishes in a dishpan or clean rinse water rather than under hot running water.
- Report leaky taps and toilets to your local office.
- Use cold water to wash clothes.

### **TENANT NEWSLETTERS**

M'akola's newsletter is distributed four times a year. If you would like to contribute, like an announcement, please contact your local office.

### **TENANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Who attends? There is one Tenant Representative each for the South, Mid and North Island, along with three M'akola staff and one board member.



### **Purpose of Committee:**

- Improve the well-being of tenant communities and to promote tenant involvement in their complexes.
- To ensure that the tenancy relationship and treatment throughout the tenancy is maintained in a professional, objective and fair manner.
- Provides advice and input to makes recommendations regarding 'Tenancy Issues' that will be put forth to the M'akola Board of Directors.
- Time-to-time participate in reviewing processes to provide input that improves tenancy

### **Tenant Representatives:**

- Is a volunteer position, there is no remuneration for participation
- Is elected for a term of 2-years, unless ceases to be a tenant in good standing or moves-out.
- Meets with committee at minimum two times per year and is expected to attend all meetings and to complete tasks aside from the committee meetings at minimum of 2-4hrs between each meeting date.
- All meetings take place in Victoria, travel expenses incurred to attend meeting will be reimbursed as per policy.

### **How to become a Tenant Representatives**

Tenant must be in good standing of their Tenancy Agreement. Potential candidates are asked to put their name forth to local office. Notices will be distributed bi-yearly for new representatives.

### **When to call your Tenant Representatives**

If you have any questions, suggestions or input about any of the above list about Purpose of Committee then contact your local representatives.

If you have a complaint, please use the Complaint Form and submit to main office, please do not address complaints with the tenant representatives as they are not equipped to deal with these issues.

To contact your Tenant Reprmentatives, please visit our website [www.makola.bc.ca](http://www.makola.bc.ca) for current list or contact your local office.



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

There are many types of support services in your community. You can contact the local Tenant Support Worker for assistance in locating the appropriate services in your area.

### Communal Rooms

Communal rooms are available for tenant use only for recreational use and meetings, and are unfortunately not available in some complexes. Locations include:

**Victoria** – Goldstream, Quadra and Admirals;

**Duncan** – Chesterfield and Skinner;

**Nanaimo** – Winchester;

**Port Alberni** – Argyle;

**Campbell River** – Cedar Grove, Simms Creek;

**Courtenay** – Laketrail.

Booking must be made at least one week in advance. Tenants and guests are required to clean-up room to its original condition or be billed for cleaning.

Contact your local office for more information or booking a time.

*Observe moderation and balance in all things.*

## BURSARY & SCHOLARSHIPS

### M'akola Housing Society Bursary

Is created in partnership with Camosun College, the extreme generosity of the late Dorothy Mary Price and M'akola Group of Societies. This bursary is for assisting First Nations peoples who live off reserve and are committed to their education. The M'akola Housing Society Bursary is managed through Camosun College and applications may be obtained at [www.camosun.ca](http://www.camosun.ca) and questions can also be directed with Camosun.

### Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarship

Is in recognition of Judy Bourne, Judy taught for many years and was a nationally and internationally recognized volleyball coach. Under her guidance as the Executive Director, M'akola became a model for many housing projects across Canada. During her tenure, she along with well-known artist Mr. Roy Henry Vickers were chosen by the First Nations Education Department as role models for their contributions to the First Nations Communities of this area.

The M'akola Housing Society Judy Bourne First Nations Memorial Scholarship is for students



of Aboriginal ancestry living on Vancouver Island who are graduating from Grade 12 planning to enrol in a full-time program at a post-secondary institution. Applications may be obtained at [www.bcawardsonline.sd61.bc.ca](http://www.bcawardsonline.sd61.bc.ca) or [www.makola.bc.ca](http://www.makola.bc.ca). All Bursaries except SD#61 are managed through the M'akola Group of Societies main office. SD#61 is dispersed by the Aboriginal Nations Education office.

## TRANSFERS

M'akola receives many requests each year from tenants wishing to transfer to another location. There are no guarantees whether a transfer will be approved or how long it will take as transfers are evaluated along with new applications for housing.

### Basic Transfer Eligibility Criteria:

- have lived in unit for a minimum of one year
- tenancy is in good standing
- have no outstanding debts including chargeback's, rent arrears or audit arrears
- still meet basic eligibility requirements for housing, and
- one of the following transfer reasons outlined below

### M'akola may approve a transfer if:

- Your place of employment or schooling has changed and transportation is either unavailable when you need it, or your commute is more than three hours round-trip. Please note that you need to provide a letter of employment or school registration verification:
- A change to your household size or composition requires a different size unit (over-housed tenants are required to move to an appropriately-sized unit);
- You or a family member has a medical condition that would be stabilized or improved by a change of location. Please note that your physician must provide documentation that supports the need for a medical transfer; or
- You or a household member's well-being is at serious risk from trauma, violence, harassment or other undesirable consequences. Please note that you will need to provide supporting documentation from the police or an appropriate social agency.

If you would like to transfer and/or are unsure of your eligibility for a transfer, please contact your TRL or RPM who can advise you regarding your options. If you are behind in your rent payment or owe M'akola any money when you are offered a transfer, it is expected that all outstanding



charges will be paid in full before you transfer. Your transfer may be cancelled or put on hold until all outstanding charges are paid in full.

## **YOUR TENANT RENT CONTRIBUTION**

### **How to Pay Your Tenant Rent contribution (TRC)**

Your TRC must be paid on or before the first day of each month. You may pay by:

- Have your Ministry funded payments mailed directly to your local office
- Cheques, either post-dated or dropped off monthly
- Money order
- Debit for all M'akola tenants (excluding: BCH tenants, Port Alberni and Duncan)

Please note that if you are unable to pay your rent on time, you must contact the local office and speak with the Tenant Relations or Property Manager to make the necessary arrangements. A Promise to Pay must be signed prior to the first of the month. Late payments are subject to a \$10.00 late fee. If your rent is not paid by the first of the month and no agreement has been arranged, you will be issued a Notice to End Tenancy. Cheques not honored due to insufficient funds (NSF cheques) on deposit are subject to a \$20.00 service charge payable by the tenant. The amount may change as per the Residential Tenancy Regulations.

### **How your Tenant Rent Contribution (TRC) is calculated?**

For tenants who pay “rent geared to income” or RGI – your monthly TRC is 25 or 30 per cent, (depends on type of housing you live in, your TRL will inform you of the correct amount) of your adjusted total household income (which means 25% or 30%, of the income from anyone over 19 living in your home) subject to minimum TRC or flat-rent. We look at family income, sources of income, family size and whether someone is a student when we assess the amount of your TRC. For example, student scholarships are not included as a source of income while wages and income assistance are. Check with your TRL for more information on what types of income are and/or are not included, and for details on the TRC calculation process.

A change to your family size or income could affect your TRC. Please notify your TRL/RPM immediately of any change to your family size or significant income changes ( for example, if your source of income changes from employment, employment insurance, income assistance, or any change in the amount of income ) Your TRL/RPM will advise whether your TRC will be adjusted at that time.



## Annual Review Process

- At least once each year “Annual Rent Reviews” will be completed.
- The office will contact you with a request for documentation that provides proof of your income.
- Documentation for your income must be original and verifiable. It may include items such as pay cheques, letters from employers, notice of tax assessment, bank statements and BC benefits confirmation etc... Your TRL/RPM can let you know if it is the appropriate documents.

Should M’akola believe there might be some problem or discrepancy in the records, we will follow up with employers, etc. Additionally, each year we randomly audit a percentage of the declarations to ensure that we are following proper procedures and the information provided is adequate and accurate.

Under the terms of your Tenancy Agreement, you are responsible for paying the tenant rent portion established for your unit, which is based on the information provided at your review. It is very important that all adults sign the rent calculation sheet and return to the office. Failure to complete the necessary paper work means that you could lose your rent subsidy and be charged the market rent for the unit. If you fail to comply with the review, you are in breach of your Tenancy Agreement and a Notice To End Tenancy may be issued. If a Notice to End Tenancy is issued, you have jeopardized your tenancy and we are in a position to take the necessary steps to gain possession of the unit.

*Never speak about others in a negative way, whether they are present or not.*

## YOUR NEW HOME

### Moving In

Your TRL or RPM will let you know what day you may move into your new home. Before you move in the TRL/RPM must complete a move-in inspection by walking through the unit with you, this determines the initial condition of your unit, current damages and necessary repairs. This also helps when you move-out to decide your security deposit return. Keys will be provided to you by the TRL/RPM.

### Keys & Locks

We will install a new lock on your door before you move in, and give you keys for your unit and



your mailbox. Please note that we charge a replacement fee if you lose any of your keys or for lock replacement.

We keep master keys to all M'akola units to ensure tenants safety in the event of an emergency. You cannot change your locks or add security devices without prior written approval from your TRL as per your Tenancy Agreement. If you are locked out of your building, you can phone the office during office hours to let you in; however, we will charge a fee for these services. After-hours please call a locksmith.

There are locks on all patio doors and on all the windows - be sure to use them for security purposes.

### **Parking**

One tenant parking spot is available for each home. There are conditions to be followed, such as vehicles must be licensed for the road and be in running order. It may also be necessary to “register” your vehicle to obtain a parking space and decal. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.) Guests can park in the “Visitor” spots only, tenants cannot use these spots and must find alternative parking off-site.

### **Insurance**

M'akola insures the buildings only, not tenants' belongings. Although you are not required to purchase contents insurance, we recommend that you do so to protect your belongings in case of fire, theft, earthquake, flood or other damage. For example, if your neighbor has a flood or fire that has involved your unit and you have insurance, your belongings can be replaced by the insurance. If you do not have tenant insurance, you will be responsible to replace all of your possessions at your own cost. This can be problematic as a couch, bed, table, lamps etc... would be costly to replace. If you had a fire in your unit, your insurance could cover your hotel costs along with your belongings. Contact different insurance companies to see what they each can provide.

Please note that you are required to carry a minimum of \$100,000.00 waterbed liability insurance if you have a waterbed. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement or contact your TRL for more information.)

### **Renovations & Alterations**

M'akola requests that you do not carry out any renovations or alterations to your unit without prior consent and, should there be any repairs required, that you contact your local office. Renovations and alterations include painting, wallpapering, changing the flooring, installing a satellite dish and making structural changes. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.) Depending on



the age of your building, asbestos or other hazardous materials typically found in floor, wall and ceiling materials might be present. These materials are not a health risk when undisturbed. Thus, for your safety, it is very important that you do not do any renovations or alternations without prior consent.

### **Basements & Storage Areas**

Some townhouses have basements or storage areas. If your home has a basement or storage area, it must not be used as a sleeping area as most do not have proper fire exits or ventilation and could endanger your family.

Freezer outlets are located in the storage area.

### **Yards & Balconies**

If you live in a townhouse with a fenced-in yard, it is your responsibility to mow the grass and weed the garden. If you have outside water taps, ensure you shut them off inside your unit before winter starts. Your Maintenance worker can show you where the shut-off is located if you are not sure. M'akola staff will shovel snow from the city sidewalks and parking lots but it is your responsibility to shovel the walkway and steps to your unit. Please note that birdfeeders and bird feeding are not permitted for health reasons.

### **Pets**

Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement.

### **Cable, Telephone & Satellite Dishes**

All buildings have individual cable hook-ups, and tenants are responsible for contacting their local cable and telephone companies to arrange for connection and payment. Satellite dishes cannot be attached to the building.

### **Hydro & Gas**

In most buildings, tenants are responsible for paying for their own hydro and/or gas. Your TRL or RPM will provide a hydro application form for you to complete during your sign-up meeting. If your hydro has been disconnected it is a breach of your Tenancy Agreement and may result in a one-month notice. In buildings where bulk hydro is provided, a hydro surcharge is included in the rent.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted in any of the building's common areas and, in some developments may be allowed only in designated areas outside. If you live in a smoke-free complex you are not permitted to smoke anywhere on the property, your TRL or RPM will inform you.



In accordance with the Tobacco Control Act, smoking must take place at least three meters (10 feet) from all common doorways, opening windows and air intakes. Smoking maybe permitted in individual units, refer to your Tenancy Agreement. If you are a smoker, and maintenance staff must come to your unit for any repair work, you will be asked not to smoke inside your home for one hour before they arrive and while the work is being carried out, as per WorkSafeBC regulations.

### **Guests**

It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure safe and reasonable use of all common areas by household members and guests. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.)

Your guests may stay with you for a total of 14 days in a one-year period. If you want or need to plan a longer visit by guests, you must obtain written approval in advance of the visit from your TRL or RPM. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.)

*Touch nothing that belongs to someone else (especially sacred objects) without permission, or an understanding between you.*

### **Laundry Rooms**

Most complexes have coin operated laundry rooms available for use by registered tenants only. You will be informed at your move-in time, if unsure please contact your TRL/RPM. If your complex does have a laundry room, to maintain a clean and respectful environment we ask that you:

- Check for posted laundry room regulations.
- Clean around the drum and exterior of the washing machine after you have used it, and remove the lint from the lint screen in the dryer after each use.
- Report any washer or dryer that is not working to the number provided on the machines, if not provided, call your local office immediately, so the office can contact contractor that deals with the machines. PLEASE NOTE: these machines are NOT M'akola property, and M'akola is unable to refund any lost money or make repairs to the machines.
- The laundry room is to be used by adults only

### **Hook-ups for Laundry**

Some units have hook-ups for washer and dryer. Your RPM/TRL will provide you with instructions.



### **Pest & Flee Control**

Pests, particularly insects, may become a problem in your home. If you discover cockroaches, flees or other bugs in your unit, contact your local office. We may have to spray the units in the building to keep the bugs under control. If we have to spray, you will receive a notice that explains what must be done before any treatment can be completed. You may be responsible for the cost.

You can reduce the incidence of pests by keeping food stored in glass, metal or hard plastic containers with tight-fitting lids. We recommend that you clean behind and under the fridge and stove every six months.

### **Bed Bugs**

You can easily get Bedbugs from the following:

- Secondhand items or free furniture such as, furniture, beds/mattresses, alarm clocks, radios, any electronic devices, clothing, toys, and miscellaneous items, even from the bags/boxes used to purchase second hand items. Bedbugs are incapable of flight; they either must crawl into or (more commonly) be transported into your home.
- Movement of possessions between hotels, residences or businesses may allow a bedbug to hitch a ride into your home.
- Bedbugs can also crawl between rooms or apartments/townhouses using wall voids, pipes, or wiring as their highways.
- If you purchase used items in plastic/paper bags, be sure to tie the bags into a knot and put into another trash bag, and throw out immediately. Do not re-use the used bags.

### **What to do, if you suspect you have Bedbugs?**

- Do not discard the mattress, box spring or furniture until its determined you have bedbugs.
- Gather a specimen/sample of a bedbug in a jar with a lid, (live or dead), to confirm the identity of the insect, and contact your local office.
- Once an Inspection from the Pest Control has determined you have bedbugs, you may call the office to arrange for Hauling at tenant's expense. You must keep all unwanted items in your unit or in the carport/patio areas until we arrange for hauling. All unwanted items must be clearly marked indicating unsafe, such as spray painting wood furniture or slit the MATTRESS/BOX spring so no one else can re-use or reclaim items.
- Bedbugs can affect the units besides yours also, so please be mindful of your home



and others. If you infest other units due to carelessness or found putting items out by the bin, and others take items into their home, you will be financially held responsible.

- Detailed handouts and instructions about bedbugs are available at your local office.

### **Mice/Rats**

To keep rats/mice from coming into your home and from finding food scraps around the building. You can:

- keep your dry goods (flours, cereals, sugars, etc.) in glass, metal or hard plastic containers with tight-fitting lids;
- keep your garbage, including recyclables, in tight closing, hard containers;
- block any holes in your deck or foundation; stuff steel wool into holes around water pipes that can be found in the kitchen and bathroom;
- keep the grass and shrubs in your yard trimmed; and
- make sure the drain cover on your basement drain is securely in place.

### **Garbage & Recycling**

Garbage bins are provided at every complex for tenant use only. Please ensure your garbage is put in the bin properly, as garbage left about can entice little or big creatures to come around. Please do not give children 13 years of age and younger the responsibility of the disposal of garbage. The garbage will be picked up as scheduled for your complex, please check with your TRL/RPM. Any old furniture or large pieces of garbage are NOT to be put in the garbage container. Please contact a pick-up service to dispose of these items at your cost.

If you are unsure if there is a recycling program at your development, contact your local office. Christmas trees are not to be put in the garbage bins, call Municipality office (in your area) for disposal information. If additional hauling is required, please contact your local office.

### **Noise & Disturbances**

*Respect the privacy of every person. Never intrude in a person's quiet moments or personal space.*

You and your neighbors are entitled to privacy and quiet enjoyment of their homes. Please ensure that you, your household members and guests live in a manner that does not have a negative impact on your neighbors. Please note that excessive noise and disturbances may lead to action. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.) If you have a complaint about noise, contact your local office, if after hours and a disturbance occurs contact your local police.



### **Moving Out**

When you decide to move out, you need to give your TRL or RPM written notice. Hand in your notice no later than the last day of the month, one month before you plan to move, for example, by 4:30 p.m. on March 31st for an April 30th move-out. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.)

Your TRL/RPM will make an appointment with you to inspect your unit before you leave and will give you a list of the cleaning you have to do before moving out. You must leave the unit as clean as it was when you moved in. Except for normal wear and tear, any damage to your unit is your responsibility. Repairs may be charged to you. (Refer to your Tenancy Agreement.)

You must be moved out by 1:00 p.m. on the last day of the month. It is your responsibility to return all keys and sign the move-out inspection form.

## **MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS**

### **Making a Request for Maintenance & Repairs**

Please inform your Office Coordinator (Maintenance Coordinator - Victoria only), about maintenance problems, such as, plumbing, electrical problems, power or heat system failure, broken window, leaking roof, hauling, pest control and other types of repairs. You will be provided with a 24hour notice to enter with the day and approximate time of entry. If the time is not suitable, please inform the office asap.

If you have a serious problem after hours, phone the Emergency Number (listed on page 5). This number is only for emergencies such as a flood or fire. Otherwise, call your local office the next business day.

### **Preventative Maintenance**

M'akola is committed to providing safe housing for its tenants. Therefore, M'akola staff from time-to-time may need to conduct repairs and preventative maintenance in your suite to ensure it remains healthy and safe. M'akola will make every effort to minimize the disruption while repairs and preventative maintenance are underway. We plan ahead for this type of work, and will let you know well in advance of any renovations planned for your building. M'akola in compliance with WorkSafeBC requirements and other workplace safety practices, takes precautionary measures to protect persons in and around the work site while maintenance or repair activities occur. These could include high-level work, floor/railing repairs, mould management, and the removal of airborne dust particles, low-levels of asbestos, insects, rodents and lead products. You may see M'akola staff or contractors utilize tools and wear special clothing to protect themselves from workplace hazards they may encounter as part of their work activities. You may also see the posting of warning or caution signs. For your safety and the safety of others, please respect



these signs. We may need to ask you to be absent from your suite while repairs are underway. Please be assured that M'akola staff will clean up all their materials and ensure the suite is safe before you return.

### **What To Do If You Have Maintenance Issues**

First, talk with your Office Coordinator or Maintenance Coordinator for Victoria, if you have a problem with your home or a repair is required. If there has been property damage or an injury, an Incident Report will need to be completed and may require specific details from you. Second, if necessary, contact your RPM. The RPM is the person to speak to if you have a complaint about an ongoing maintenance issue or an on-site staff member.

*Be truthful at all times and under all conditions.*

## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors is made up of First Nations people who represent the Vancouver Island and who hold the holistic vision. This vision is to improve living conditions for First Nations people while encouraging and reinforcing traditional practices and cultural beliefs. To provide the social and emotional support that some families need in making the transition to urban living and to build well designed housing sites that promote community spirit. This vision includes hiring and training as many staff of First Nations ancestry as possible to provide necessary services to the tenants, and to manage and maintain the sites. With this original vision in mind, M'akola has expanded to include and welcome non-Aboriginal families as well. The Board of Directors consists of six elected members, four members appointed from the Friendship Centres on Vancouver Island and one Elder.

## **IMPORTANT COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Insert by local office.



## FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

Use the grid on the following page to draw a fire escape plan for your home and post it in a visible location in your home. Note where the walls, windows and doors are and indicate all the possible escape routes. You should also indicate a meeting place outside near a tree or other landmark. When your plan is complete, practice it with every member of the household.

