

# Complaints and Problems related to International Students Housing.

*Please be advised that recently the below complaints and problems related to housing have been reported to the Student Exchange Division. Please take care to avoid such problems.*

## < Case 1 > Problems related to fines for breach of contract and fees for restoring rooms to their original state when moving out.

Students are not able to pay fines for being in breach of their contracts, or cannot pay cleaning and repair costs when moving out. Or they are dissatisfied with the fact that they must pay.

- ✚ When signing your contract, confirm whether or not there will be fines for breach of contract (Early Cancellation of Contract) and any costs incurred when moving out.

## < Case2 > Negotiation regarding rent, deposit and gratuity (key money) when moving into apartments.

Students try to contact the owner of the apartment directly. Students visit the owner's house in order to negotiate over the rent, deposit and gratuity. They persistently ask the real estate agent and owner for a discount. This gives international students in general a negative image.

- ✚ You can ask for a discount on your rent. However, you should contact the real estate agent through which you are renting your apartment. Please do not contact the owner directly. Understand that the Japanese system is different from that of your home country.

## < Case 3 > Problems related to payment of rent

After paying initial costs, such as the deposit, first month's rent and gratuity, students sometimes do not know how to pay monthly rent. Please make sure you know your apartment owner's bank account information and how to transfer rent money to them. Additionally, in Japan rent is always paid in advance. For example, you pay the rent for November in October (one month early).

- ✚ Please make sure that the balance of your bank account is sufficient to make the transfer when you pay the rent. If your balance is insufficient, the money will not be transferred. Confirm how to pay rent with your owner or real estate agent. You must pay rent on time.

#### < Case 4 > Problems related to garbage

Students cannot separate garbage properly and do not use the designated plastic bags. Students do not follow the regulations and do not throw away garbage at the designated area for their apartment building.

- ✚ If you do not comply with the regulations on garbage disposal, you will be punished under Japanese law. Please read the section in the guidebook on throwing away garbage. (Reference: Sendai City guide to separating garbage and recyclables [http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyoku/haikibutsu/garbage/wake\\_01.html](http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyoku/haikibutsu/garbage/wake_01.html))

#### < Case 5 > Problems related to noise

Using washing machines really late at night, and watching TV or listening to music at high volumes disturbs other tenants. Also, if you have children, do not allow them to run inside your apartment, as this creates noise that may disturb your neighbors.

- ✚ Please consider your neighbors, especially in the early morning and late night. Noise travels more easily than you think, particularly in apartments with thin walls.

#### < Case 6 > Problems related to leaving behind personal belongings when moving out.

Due to a lack of planning, students sometimes move out leaving their personal belongings behind in their apartment. (Tenants are responsible for paying all disposal costs)

- ✚ Please plan in advance to clean up your room and dispose of all garbage completely prior to your moving date. You must pay a disposal fee for bulky trash (electrical appliances etc). See the Sendai City guide to garbage disposal regarding what items can and cannot be picked up by the city: [http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyoku/haikibutsu/garbage/wake\\_01.html](http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyoku/haikibutsu/garbage/wake_01.html))

### < Case 7 > Water leakage

When students buy a used washing machine from a friend or at a secondhand shop and install it themselves, the connection between the hose and tap is sometimes not sealed properly causing water leakage. Allowing a drainpipe in the kitchen or bathroom to remain clogged also causes water leakage. In these cases, you are liable for repair expenses, not only for your own apartment, but also for damage to surrounding rooms.

- ✚ Please make sure to place and install your washing machine properly. Do not leave drain pipes clogged since this leads to water leakage. Please note that drain pipes have to be cleaned periodically.

### < Case 8 > Freezing breakage in winter

If you live in an old, wooden apartment building, you should drain water from pipes etc., especially, if the temperature gets low. If you fail to do this, water pipes and the bathtub balance flue will burst. (You will be charged for repair costs.)

- ✚ If you plan to leave your apartment for long periods during winter, we recommend that you drain all water from the pipes.

### < Case 9 > Problems related to mold

Due to Japan's high humidity, mold grows easily in the hot summer months. To prevent mold from growing in your room, we suggest you leave a window open for ventilation. If you do not take steps to prevent condensation, mold will grow on the walls, and you will be charged for the cleaning costs.

- ✚ Please be sure to open a window for ventilation and wipe up condensation frequently to prevent mold.

