

Resident Handbook



**GREATER VICTORIA
HOUSING SOCIETY**

Since 1956



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Welcome Home

Welcome to your new home with GVHS. This handbook is your guide during your tenancy. While it does not provide specific details related to each GVHS building, it will provide you with a good understanding of GVHS, how we operate, and what is required of our residents. It is not intended to take the place of the Residential Tenancy Act or your Residential Tenancy Agreement.



Indigenous Acknowledgement

GVHS operates and provides homes on the territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən People represented by the Songhees and x̱w̱sepsəm (Esquimalt), WSÁNEĆ People represented by the W̱ JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), S̱TÁUTW̱ (Tsawout), W̱ SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nations, and T'Sou-ke and Scia'new Nations, all of whom have a long-standing relationship with the land and waters from time immemorial that continues to this day.

About GVHS

Founded in 1956, the Greater Victoria Housing Society provides affordable rental homes to seniors, adults with diverse abilities, families, and working couples and singles with low to moderate incomes.

We currently provide housing for more than 1,300 people in 18 buildings across the Greater Victoria region, and growing!

Along with our growth, it is our priority to ensure that our buildings are resilient and sustainable for the long term, and above all that our buildings are great places to live.



Our Mission

Mission

Greater Victoria Housing Society (GVHS) provides affordable, secure rental housing to low-to-moderate income households, contributing to healthy, thriving, and livable communities.

Our Goals

To provide high quality, safe, affordable rental housing.

To maintain our existing housing to the highest standard.

To respond to the need for affordable housing by improving, growing, and expanding to meet the housing needs we see in our region.

Our Team



Housing Department

Our Housing Team is your first point of contact when applying to GVHS: you met them when they showed you your new home and walked you through your tenancy start paperwork!

This team also conducts subsidized unit rent reviews and internal subsidies to fulfil our operating requirement with BC Housing on subsidized buildings.

Tenant Relations Department

Addresses Incident Reports

Inter-Tenant Conflict

Works with residents to connect them with resources to better support their needs and/or help maintain tenancies on a case-by-case basis

Provides community engagement opportunities for residents



Operations Department

Maintenance Request management

Parking and storage

Preventative Maintenance for all buildings

Building improvement projects

Field Staff

Building Caretakers:

- Meet new tenants for Move-in inspections to new homes
- Perform regular walk-throughs of buildings
- Clean building common areas
- Collect Maintenance Request Forms, Incident Report Forms, and other paperwork left in the locked Caretaker's Office mailbox
- Perform minor unit repairs as directed by GVHS Head Office
- Direct tenant queries to GVHS Head Office
- Please direct all Maintenance Requests and Incident Reports in writing to Head Office, instead of verbally to your Building Caretaker



Maintenance Technicians:

- Perform repairs and maintenance as directed by the Operations Department
- Please direct all Maintenance Requests and Incident Reports in writing to Head Office, instead of verbally to a Maintenance Technician



Your Home



Being A Good Neighbour

All residents have the right to peaceful and quiet enjoyment of their home. Extra care should be taken to minimize noise between building quiet hours of 10 pm and 9 am. Please check your local municipality for any additional quiet time bylaws. You are responsible for making sure that your household members and guests do not create too much noise and disturbance, especially during quiet hours. Not following these rules can lead to the end of your tenancy. This includes ensuring that children are not playing in the parking lot, hallway, or laundry room.

For complaints or conflict with your neighbours, try to talk to your neighbours in a polite and courteous manner to sort out the problem first. If that does not work, please provide a written Incident Report to the GVHS Head Office. You will be responsible for working with GVHS Tenant Relations and your neighbours in the building to address the issue and follow recommended actions.

Part of being a good neighbour is accepting that everyone is different. Please make an effort to get along with your neighbours and ensure that your activities are not disturbing others. Your guests' actions reflect on your tenancy. Do not allow your guests to act or behave in any way that would cause harm to your neighbours. Make sure that your suite is clean and tidy and free of household clutter. It's important to respect the work that is done by staff, residents, or contractors in the building.



Your Building, Safety, and Security

Keys, Locks, & Security

When you move into your home, you will meet the Caretaker and receive a key to your new unit, front door, parkade, and mailbox (if applicable to your building). The lock will be rekeyed before you move in.

Lost keys or fobs? Immediately let the Operations Department know. They will take measures to protect the safety and security of you and your neighbours. Replacement keys will be provided. You will be responsible for the cost to replace them. The fee amount is set by GVHS.

Require extra keys for someone not listed on the tenancy agreement? Submit a written request to the Operations Department, and, if approved, they will be provided. The fee amount is set by GVHS.

Want to change your locks? You will be responsible for the cost for GVHS to replace them. **Do not change any locks or add security devices without permission from GVHS.**

Although inconvenient, forgetting your keys is not considered an emergency. The Caretaker can let you into your unit during normal business hours if they are available. All other costs (if you obtain the services of a locksmith or call our emergency service line) will be at your cost.

Please lock your suite whenever you are out. Do not LOAN keys/fobs for your suite or the building to anyone you do not know. Do not let strangers follow you into the building.

Notice of Entry: GVHS, as the landlord, is required by law to give a minimum of 24 hours written notice before entering your suite. You will be notified in writing when we need access to your suite, and the reason for entry. If you have a repair needing completion sooner, verbal permission will be obtained through conversation with the Operations Department.

Safety Is Everyone's Responsibility

- For buildings that have fobs and garage remotes: do not leave these items in your vehicle.
- Be mindful of your surroundings, do not let strangers into the building as you enter or exit.
- Stop and wait for the gates or doors to close completely behind you when entering or exiting.
- Report lost keys or fobs to the Operations Department right away.

Tenant Insurance

You are responsible for having sufficient tenant's insurance to protect your property against loss, theft, or damage. It is mandatory that tenants obtain and carry their own insurance for third party liability, and cover loss or damage to their property from any cause. All tenants must provide proof of their insurance policy around the time of move in or shortly thereafter.

GVHS is responsible for restoring the building and its units, but is not responsible for your personal belongings. It is important that you obtain coverage for your possessions for causes such as theft, fire, water leaks, earthquake, etc. In the event of an incident that requires you to move from the building temporarily (for example, a fire or flood in your unit), GVHS will not be responsible for your personal property and out-of-pocket expenses.

Smoking, Vaping, and Open Alcohol

If your tenancy agreement has a “no-smoking” clause, then smoking or vaping of any substance is not permitted **anywhere on GVHS property including:**

- your unit
- any common areas including patios, balconies, hallways, parking garages, electrical or mechanical rooms, stairs, storage lockers, and/or outdoor areas of the property,
- within seven (7) metres of entrances, windows, or air intakes.

All government bylaws and regulations also apply.

It is a material term* of your tenancy agreement that smoking of any combustible material, including vaping, in the rental unit or on the residential property is prohibited. This includes guests.

Exceptions may apply for tenants who are exempt due to a pre-existing clause. All new GVHS tenancies are non-smoking.

Open alcohol is not permitted in any of the interior or exterior common areas.

*Material term: a term that both parties (landlord and tenant) agree is so important that the most trivial breach of that term gives the other party the right to end the agreement.

Your Unit



Decoration & Alteration

You need permission from the Operations Department before you make any modifications to your unit. All modification requests must be submitted in writing and approved prior to any work being done.

Structural changes to your unit or exterior of the building are not allowed. No painting, plumbing, or electrical modifications are to be made to the unit by any resident. GVHS has the right to remove any structure or additions that were not approved, and any costs involved to remove these items will be your responsibility.

If you're not sure about what's allowed, please contact the Operations Department.

Suite doors must always be kept closed as per fire regulations and should always be locked for personal safety. For safety reasons, doormats and any other items are not to be left in the common hallways.

Pet Policy

GVHS has a no pet policy. Application, in writing, may be made to keep a caged small animal or bird, or a fish in a small aquarium. GVHS has a support animal policy. Contact us if you think this might apply to you.

If you bring pets into your building or unit without prior written approval from GVHS, you will be in violation of your legal tenancy agreement, and will be held responsible for any damage caused to the building or your unit. Please note that failure to obtain the Landlord's permission is a breach of the material terms of your Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Pests & Pest Control

If you detect any infestations in your unit (for example: bed bugs, fleas, cockroaches, mice, etc.) please notify the Operations Department immediately, so that the unit can be treated as soon as possible.

Please avoid storing excessive items in your unit as this makes it easier for pests to proliferate.

Please avoid bringing in old mattresses or used furniture into the suite as they could be infested with bedbugs without your knowledge.

Feeding birds or animals in or around the property can lead to pest infestation. You may hang a hummingbird feeder if desired.

Guests

Please refer to your Residential Tenancy Agreement. If a guest stays longer than 30 cumulative days in a 12-month period (not calendar year) without the Landlord's permission, they will in most cases be doing so contrary to the tenancy agreement.

Additional Occupants

You are required to apply in writing to the Landlord for a person to be added to your tenancy agreement as an additional occupant. Please note that failure to obtain the Landlord's permission is a breach of the material terms of your Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Damages

If you or your guests damage your suite or the common areas beyond normal wear and tear, you will be responsible for the costs of having the damage repaired. Please make arrangements with GVHS Operations Department to have the repairs done. You will be invoiced for the work.

Fire Safety

Never disconnect your smoke detector. Contact Operations 24/7 (see Who Do I Contact? on page 31) if the smoke detector is not working properly.

Do not store flammable materials or liquids in your unit or storage areas. This includes gasoline, paint thinners or solvents.

Recycle your old newspapers. They could be a fire hazard if too many accumulate.

Please ensure that your unit is free of clutter and excess items. See Minimum Unit Standards (addendum page).

Hallways and stairwells are to be kept free of debris, and not to be used for storage of any kind.

Fire inspections of the building systems and in-suite devices are done on an annual basis. Each tenant is required to provide access for the inspectors. You are not required to be present when inspections are conducted.

Scooters

If the use of a mobility scooter is required, please contact the Operations Department in advance and the Scooter Use Policy will be discussed with you in detail.

When You Are Away

If you will be on vacation, please advise the Operations Department and provide an emergency contact number. This is to ensure that, in an emergency, all residents are accounted for.

Any tenant whose rent is geared to income (BC Housing-subsidized unit) cannot stay away from their unit for more than 3 months in a 12-month period, cumulatively. If you are going to be away for more than 2 weeks, you are required to let GVHS know in writing.

Television Sets

Television sets that are mounted must be done so by a qualified contractor to the specifications required for the size of the TV. Damage caused by having a TV mounted or dismounted will be charged back to the tenant upon move-out.

Barbeques

Barbeques, or any type of outdoor cooking devices, are not permitted.

Christmas Trees

Due to potential fire hazard and safety reasons, live trees are not permitted for use during Christmas.

GVHS recommends alternatives such as artificial trees, or decoration of a potted plant.



Facilities

Bicycle Storage

Bicycles must be stored in designated or approved areas only. They must not be stored or kept in the hallways. Any damage to the building/common property caused by a bicycle will be the responsibility of the tenant.

Laundry

Common laundry facilities are available for residents only. Please be considerate to your neighbours by removing lint from the dryer screen after each use, pre-washing excessively soiled clothing and promptly removing your laundry when it is done.

One (1) laundry card is issued per household. Any additional or replacement cards can be purchased at the building's Card Loader.

Laundry Soap: Please use soap specifically meant for the type of washing machines in your building (see posted signage). As this region has soft water, please use only half the recommended quantity of soap.

In consideration of the health of all tenants and GVHS staff, no items having been used by any animal, bird, or reptile is permitted to be laundered in GVHS washing machines and dryers. These items will need to be laundered off site. Thank you for your consideration.

Any problem with your laundry card, loss of card, or malfunctioning of the laundry machines should be reported to the Operations Department at 250-384-3434 ext. 24 or 33.

Storage And Storage Areas

Some of our buildings have storage lockers. They can be assigned, if available, at a cost set by GVHS.

Parking/Vehicles

You may only park in your assigned parking space. Parking elsewhere will be subject to towing without notice.

Visitor parking is strictly for visitors or GVHS staff/contractors. An overnight pass can be obtained from the office. Cars parked overnight in visitor's parking, without approval from the Landlord, are subject to towing without notice.

Parking spaces are not to be used for storage of any sort, at any time.

One (1) remote is issued per parking spot. Any additional or replacement remote costs are charged to the tenant. Tenants are also responsible for remote battery costs.

Change in your vehicle type or license plate number must be notified to GVHS in writing right away. Failure to do so may result in towing of the unlisted vehicle.

Elevators

If you are trapped in an elevator, use the help phone, and follow instructions. If there is no answer, press and hold the alarm bell until someone responds.

Maintenance



Appliances: Repairs and Maintenance

Please call the Operations Department at 250-383-3434 ext. 24 or 33 to request repairs or maintenance of appliances.

Alterations

Tenants may hang pictures on the walls. Wall damage is assessed and charged back at tenancy end.

Painting is not permitted within units except with the landlord's written consent. Any alteration to the suite requires prior written consent from the landlord.

Garbage

Whether your building has a newer Molok bin system or conventional waste bins, please follow these guidelines. Garbage bins are designated for normal household garbage only. Please bag your garbage securely so it does not leak or spill. Take bagged garbage promptly to the garbage bin. Do not leave it outside your unit door, or on the ground by the garbage bin. Do not allow small children to take the garbage out if they cannot reach the lid. Lids on garbage bins must always remain closed according to municipal bylaws.

Disposing of furniture, mattresses, and other large items in or beside the bins, or anywhere on the property at all, is strictly prohibited. All large items being discarded must be taken to the dump personally or removed by a waste removal company at your own expense.

Recycling

Recycling bins are provided at your building. You can recycle:

- Glass
- Newspaper
- Clean paper
- Cardboard
- Cans

Do not dispose of cardboard or paper in the garbage bins.

If you would like to learn more about recycling, garbage, and compost, you may call the BC Recycling Hotline at 1-800-6678-4321 or the CRD Recycling hotline at 250-360-3030.



Rent & Notices

Annual Rent Review

If you pay rent based on your income (BC Housing subsidized unit), each year you must complete an Income Review. You are required to report any changes in family size and income.

The GVHS Housing Department will send you a rent subsidy application form with instructions 4 months prior to your review date. You must return all the documentation requested on time to avoid no longer qualifying for a subsidized unit.

Rent Increases

All non-subsidized units are subject to annual rent increases based on provincially-set percentages. You will receive notification from the Housing Department by mail 4 months in advance of the rent increase date.

Payment Of Rent

Please refer to the complete Rent Payment Procedures on page 33.

Rent payments are the responsibility of each tenant. Rent payments are accepted at the Greater Victoria Housing Society's Head Office at 2326 Government St. and must be received, in full, on or before the first day of the month.

Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) is the preferred payment method. Alternative options are accepted in the form of cheque or money order/bank draft. Cash payments are not preferred. E-transfers may be accepted under certain circumstances with special permission from GVHS, but will be subject to an administration fee of \$25.

After the first business day of the month, cheques will not be accepted, and payment must then be made by money order or bank draft at GVHS Head Office.

A late fee of \$25 will be added to any rent paid after the first day of the month.

Cheques or PAD withdrawals returned or not completed by the bank (NSF or otherwise) will be subject to a \$25 administration fee.

Fees will be considered outstanding rent and must be paid with the next month's rent payment.

Failure to pay all outstanding fees/rent within the legal timeframes will be grounds for GVHS to issue a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for failure to pay rent.

Rent payments are due in full on or before the first (1st) of each month per your tenancy agreement and the Residential Tenancy Act.

Notice To End Residential Tenancy

Why are they issued?

10 Day Notice for Unpaid Rent Or Utilities: If you do not pay your rent on or before the first day of the month, it is the Society's policy to serve a 10-Day Notice to End a Residential Tenancy showing the outstanding balance of the unpaid rent.

One Month Notice For Cause: The cause(s) for issue will be checked off, with details provided in the 'Description' field.

Two Month Notice For No Longer Qualifying For A Subsidized Unit: issued when requirements for living in a BC Housing subsidized unit are not being met. This may mean you have not provided required rent review documentation, or do not meet the requirements in another way.

How are they served to me?

As a landlord, we must use the forms and procedures specified in the Residential Tenancy Act and we must follow the guidelines of the Act to serve documents. This may be done in the following ways:

- Mail: It is extremely important to regularly check your mailbox and attend to any Registered Mail notifications. GVHS may send time-sensitive documentation related to tenancy continuance through Canada Post Registered Mail.
- In Person / Door Post: Sometimes this means the documents will be posted to your unit door. The front door is the most conspicuous place of the home, with the most chance that the notice will be seen. All items posted to tenant doors will be in sealed envelopes with no identifying information on the exterior, save the unit number. It may seem unfair or embarrassing, but landlords are required by legislation to serve notices this way if you are not home to accept personal delivery.

What should I do if I receive a 10 Day Notice to End a Residential Tenancy?

If you pay your rent within five days of receiving the notice, your tenancy will be reinstated.

However, if you pay your rent late repeatedly, you will be issued a One Month Notice to End a Residential Tenancy for repeated late rent payment, as this is a breach of your Tenancy Agreement.

Notice To Vacate

In accordance with your tenancy agreement, you must give one month's signed written notice to the Landlord when you intend to move. This must be received by the Landlord on or before the last day of the month, to take effect on the last day of the following month. For example, if you will be moving out on June 30, you must deliver your written notice to the Landlord on or before May 31st.

The caretaker will provide you with a form outlining what is to be done before you move out.

Showing The Suite

Once you have given notice to vacate, we will need to show your suite to potential tenants. Housing Department staff will contact you by phone to make arrangements, or post a Notice To Enter on your unit door, with appropriate legal interval between posting and entry.

Transfers For Change In Family Size

You are required to advise the office as soon as possible when your family changes in size because of birth, adoption, a child leaving home, or any other circumstance. Housing programs guide how many children at certain ages may share a bedroom. If you receive a housing subsidy and your home no longer fits your family size according to the guidelines, a transfer will be arranged to the appropriate size suite, if available, for you.

Move-Ins/ Move-Outs



Enterphone/Intercom

Dial out must be connected to a local number.

Suite Conditions - Move In And Move Out

Your caretaker will inspect and record the condition of your suite on a Condition Inspection Form. You will be asked to sign the inspection form once completed.

Suite Inspections

As part of GVHS' program to maintain our buildings to good standards, we conduct periodic suite inspections. Every year, staff from the Operations Department will arrange an Annual Inspection of your unit to ensure that building and health standards are being maintained. You will receive written notification when this is to occur. We undertake these inspections between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm. There may be other inspections from time to time. You are not required to be present for these inspections.

Short Term Rentals

Short-term rentals or subletting of any kind are not permitted. It is a breach of the material terms of your tenancy agreement, and this will be strictly enforced with no exceptions.



Rights & Responsibilities

Residential Tenancy Act

The Residential Tenancy Act explains the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and landlords. For more information on your rights and responsibilities as a resident, you can contact the Residential Tenancy Branch at 1.800.665.8779 or visit <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/residential-tenancies>

Noise and Disturbances

You and your neighbors are entitled to privacy and quiet enjoyment of your homes. Please ensure that you, your household members, and guests conduct yourselves in a manner that does not have a negative effect on your neighbors. All multi-unit buildings will have noises of daily living sometimes heard between units, but please note that excessive noise and disturbances may lead to action against your tenancy.

Complaints and Incident Reporting

Online Reports: <https://greatervichousing.org/tenants/current-tenants/> - scroll down to 'Report An Incident'

Paper Reports: available outside caretaker's office at each building.

Complaints and incident reporting are directed to the Tenant Relations Department. All complaints and concerns must be in writing to be actionable. All written complaints will be acknowledged within 3 business days of being received at Head Office.

Written complaints should contain the following information:

- Your name
- Your building and unit number
- Your phone number
- Your email (if applicable)
- Date of incident
- Time of incident
- Description of incident
- Identify any witnesses (if applicable)
- Description of how you handled the incident or concern
- Your signature (paper copy only)
- The date you are signing the report (paper copy only)

Once GVHS has received your report, we will review and evaluate the situation for actionable concerns. If any additional information is required, we will contact you. While all complaints will be acknowledged and investigated, not all complaints will be resolved in a standardized time frame. Complaints are triaged in order of priority. Issues of significant health and safety are assigned higher priority than all other issues. For privacy reasons, you may not be advised of what specific actions are being taken with regards to other tenancies involved in the complaint.

Tenant Expectations

What can tenants expect from GVHS?

Any inquiry made to GVHS' office will be placed in priority sequence and responded to at the earliest possible opportunity.

Issues relating to building safety and tenant security take highest priority.

All incidents reported in writing will be acknowledged within 3 business days of being received at Head Office.

In the event of snowfall, GVHS property will have driveways and walkways cleared as soon as possible in compliance with local bylaws and travel advisories.

In the event of extreme heat, GVHS will have tips and suggestions for tenants posted in building common areas, including a guide to local cooling stations

Utilities



BC Hydro

It is your responsibility to contact BC Hydro to set up service for your unit. Please advise BC Hydro of the date your tenancy begins.

The BC Hydro contact number is 1.800.224.9376.

You are required to maintain hydro throughout your tenancy.

Cable/Internet Services

If these services are not included in your rent, it is your responsibility to arrange for the connection of cable and/or internet for your unit. Please contact your caretaker if you need to arrange access to the phone room for your cable/internet installation.



Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD)

Items of note

A PAD Agreement remains in effect until a cancellation request is received in writing from the tenant. PAD cancellation requests require written notice of thirty (30) days; dated and signed.

Payment amount debited from your bank account will not exceed your monthly total fees: rent, cable, utilities, parking and/or storage (if applicable).

Additional withdrawal amounts may be authorized with your consent (examples: charge of invoices, arrears balances on account, repayment plans, etc.).

You must contact the Finance Coordinator at 250.384.3434 ext. 38 to make this arrangement and provide consent for each request, prior to the last five (5) business days of the following month.

If you believe you may incur issue (be unable to pay your monthly total fees on time and in full for any reason) on a monthly PAD payment, please contact the Finance Coordinator at 250-384-3434 ext. 38 to advise.

If your message is received before the last five (5) business days of the following month, GVHS may be able to stop the payment from within our office.

If your message is received after the last five (5) business days of the following month, you will need to place a **“One Time” stop payment through your bank.** GVHS is not responsible for any banking costs associated with this request. It is important to ensure the correct stop payment type is requested to eliminate future payment issues. If you do not specify a “One Time” stop payment with your bank, it may result in subsequent months of your rent not being paid.

Severe Weather



In case of severe weather events

Tenants are advised to be prepared in case of severe weather and/or area-wide disasters.

While Greater Victoria Housing Society will endeavour to attend to our buildings, there may be delays at providing service. In cases where public authorities (i.e.: local police) advise people not to travel, GVHS will not be sending staff to the buildings until the advice is changed and it is safe to do so.

Emergency preparedness guidelines recommend that you and your family should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least seven (7) days after such an emergency. The Government of BC has Emergency Preparedness information on their website to help you prepare for this type of situation. The more prepared you are, the more you will be able to help your family and neighbours.

Any medical or emergency requirements you have should be directed to the proper authorities.

While we always hope these types of events will not happen, using this information and following emergency preparedness guidelines will allow our tenants to stay safe and be prepared to shelter comfortably until we can get operations up and running again.

Extreme heat

How to cool a space

- Close blinds or drapes during the day
- Keep windows closed during the day and open at night when it is cooler
- Use a fan at night to pull in cooler air if the temperature is below 35°C
- Avoid using fans when the temperature is above 35°C as this may increase the temperature
- Use your range hood fan when cooking to remove heat and humidity
- Limit heat from appliances like stoves, ovens, dryers, and dishwashers

Air Conditioning

Please contact the GVHS Operations Department for permission to install an air conditioner in your unit.

Many building common rooms are equipped with cooling systems.

For more information

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/more/health-features/beat-heat>



Education & Support for Residents

Rent Smart

Becoming a good tenant is a learning experience. Rent Smart believes that education about how to be a good tenant can change lives. This innovative organization helps renters like you develop the tools and knowledge to have a successful tenancy and maintain secure housing.

Rent Smart provides online classes that teach vital skills such as: legal rights and responsibilities, financial management, communication, and maintenance skills.

The courses have specific adaptations to meet the needs of:

- Youth
- Immigrants and refugees
- People experiencing challenges with mental health or substance use
- Seniors

Call 250.388.7171 or visit rentsmarteducation.org

BC Rent Bank

What is a rent bank?

Rent banks offer interest-free loans to help low-to-moderate income renters who require a short-term micro-loan to support a temporary shortfall of rent and/or essential utilities. Repayment terms are often flexible.

For more information, visit bcrentbank.ca

Resources

Important Phone Numbers	Contact
Emergency	9-1-1
GVHS After Hours Emergency Line	1-866-654-8273
Health Link BC	8-1-1
BC 211: free, confidential service connecting you to vital services nearby	Call or text 2-1-1 www.bc.211.ca
BC Hydro	1-800-224-2710
Kid's Help Phone (24/7 support)	1-800-668-6868
Vancouver Island Crisis Line (24/7)	1-888-494-3888
Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (24/7)	250-383-3232
Victoria Women's Transition Housing Crisis Line (24/7)	250-385-6611
Together Against Poverty Society (legal advocacy)	250-381-3521
Residential Tenancy Branch	1-800-665-8779
Capital Region Food Share Network (food security resources)	foodsharenetwork.com/resources Or call 211 for support to access
KUU-US Crisis Line Society (24/7 support for First Nations, by First Nations, anywhere in BC)	1-800-588-8717



Head Office Contact Information

WHEN TO CONTACT THE HEAD OFFICE:

We are here to assist with all inquiries related to your tenancy and/or your building!

Please contact GVHS' Head Office for anything related to:

- Rent Payment
- Parking & Storage
- Building Maintenance
- Tenancy Matters
- Incident Reporting
- Complaints & Concerns
- Change of Contact Information
- Extended absence from your unit

If you believe at any time that the actions of another tenant or individual on building property are dangerous, threatening, involve child endangerment, or appear to be of a criminal nature, first call 911, then report the matter to GVHS.

You can assist us in providing efficient service! Please provide your name, address, contact information (phone or email), and complete details of your inquiry.

When you change your contact information (phone number or email address), please advise the Head Office promptly so that you don't miss any communications from us.

Head Office Contact Information

MAINTENANCE REQUESTS & INCIDENT REPORTS

Do you have a maintenance issue or need to report an incident? Please fill out a **Maintenance Request** or **Incident Report Form**:

- Paper form: available outside the caretaker's office
- Online form: visit greatervichousing.org/tenants/current-tenants/ and scroll down to 'Maintenance Request' or 'Incident Report'
- Not sure? Contact our office by email or phone and leave a message with your name, unit number, phone number, and a brief description of the issue.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Phone: 250.384.3434

General Inquiries Email: info@greatervichousing.org

After Hours Emergency Line: 1.866.654.8273

Website: www.greatervichousing.org

Fax: 250.386.3434

Office Hours:

- Monday to Thursday: 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
- Friday: 8:30am – 12noon
- Closed on weekends and statutory holidays

Office Visits:

Need to see us in person? We recommend booking an appointment so we can best serve your needs. Call or email to book your time.

Head Office Contact Information (250) 384-3434

Department	Extension	Email
Maintenance & Operations	24/33	info@greatervichousing.org
Finance & Rent Payments	38	info@greatervichousing.org
Tenant & Community Relations	7	tenantrelations@greatervichousing.org
Housing & Rent Reviews	5	rentals@greatervichousing.org

GVHS Unit Standards

Minimum Standards

Biohazards:

The entire unit must be kept free of biohazards

Biological hazards, also known as **biohazards**, refer to biological substances that pose a threat to the health of living organisms, primarily that of humans. This can include samples of a microorganism, virus or toxin (from a biological source) that can affect human health.

Cleanliness:

Kitchen All food properly stored in the fridge, freezer or cupboards
Stovetop and oven cleaned regularly of oils, grease and food
Stovetop is free from clutter and storage
No moldy or rotting food anywhere in kitchen

Bathroom Entire bathroom cleaned regularly
Any surface with potential biohazards cleaned thoroughly with appropriate cleaners

Living areas Walls cleaned of any substances (ex. nicotine, oil/grease, food etc.)

Floors Carpets vacuumed regularly and cleaned annually
Linoleum swept and mopped regularly
Vinyl plank flooring swept and wiped/mopped with water regularly

Access:

Kitchen Minimum 30% of countertop empty
Bathroom Minimum 60% floor space available
Living areas Minimum 40% floor space available
Bedroom(s) Minimum 30% floor space available
Hallways 3 feet clear of all items
Heaters 1 foot clear of all items
Ceilings 18 inches clearance from highest item to sprinkler heads

GVHS Building Muster Stations

For all GVHS buildings, both townhouses and apartment complexes, if required to evacuate your unit for emergency purposes, muster stations (the place where you assemble in an emergency) are considered to be 15-20 feet from the front door of your building or townhome.

In the event of an emergency, assemble at your building's muster station and cooperate fully with all emergency personnel.