

## Words of Wisdom for Tenants

**A GOOD PRACTICE: ALWAYS CHECK AND VERIFY.** Know what you are required to do and what you are not required to do. -- Any **time you are told** something, sent something, **asked to** provide something, ALWAYS check it out with a reputable third party.

**KNOW WHICH OF OUR CITY AND STATE LEGISLATORS TO CONTACT FOR HELP.**

**They and their staff members** are accomplished, smart, and work hard 24/7 on behalf of constituents -- Let them know you appreciate all they do. -- Let them know you are a rent regulated tenant. -- When contacting them, **give details, names, dates, descriptions**. -- Take pictures and videos if you can. -- Reach them by email, phone, stop in the office.

**IF YOU ARE EVER THREATENED by any person in any way at any time, call 911 immediately.** If you can, get a picture of the person's **FACE. Their FACE. Very important.** **Also make** a follow up report in person to the **NYPD police station**. -- Let them know you are a **rent regulated tenant**. -- Let them know you **were threatened**. -- Let them know you are there to report a **CRIME**. Do not leave until you do. -- Give them the details of what happened. **DO NOT SELF EDIT. TELL THEM EVERYTHING.** -- Show them your photo of the **person's FACE who threatened you** if you were able to get it. -- **MAKE** sure they give you an official **NYPD COMPLAINT NUMBER**.

**PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY.** If someone ever tells you they are a police officer, ICE, DEA, FBI agent, Housing Court Officer, or any other official sounding officer of some kind, insist they show you their ID Badge. **MAKE SURE THEY HOLD THE ID BADGE OUT FOR YOU TO LOOK AT FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.**

**NOTE: if they simply "flash" an ID Badge at you and then quickly put it back in their pocket, they are NOT real law enforcement officials.** -- Call 911 immediately and get a picture of their **FACE** if you can. Their **FACE**. **Do not** let them in your apartment, do not accompany them **anywhere**.

**REPEAT: A real Police Officer or other law enforcement official will be willing to hold their ID Badge up for you to inspect and read for several minutes.** -- If they won't do that, they are imposters committing a felony. **Get away** from them quickly, and call 911.

**If someone unexpectedly knocks on your door and says they are from**

**HOUSING COURT and wants to enter** your apartment, do NOT let them in. They are fakes.

If someone unexpectedly knocks on your door and **says they are from DOB (New York City Dept of Buildings) and wants to enter** your apartment, do NOT let them in. They are fakes.

**NEVER LET ANYONE IN YOUR BUILDING YOU DO NOT KNOW.** -- Legitimate FEDEX, US Mail, and other delivery services have legitimate ways to enter the building.

**KEEP WRITTEN RECORDS OF ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU. TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS. SEE IF THE SAME THING HAS HAPPENED TO THEM.** -- Take dated pictures or video walk-throughs of your apartment periodically to show that you keep it clean, organized, in good condition and that there are no leaking pipes, radiators, or faucets, no damages to appliances, ceilings, walls, floors, windows, doors. -- **Keep a copy of your lease stored in a secure place.** -- NEVER open email from an unknown sender. -- Use caller ID on your phone. Only answer calls from people you know.

**BEWARE OF PHONE SCAMS with pre-recorded voices claiming you owe the IRS money. You don't.** -- NEVER press 1 as they instruct. -- The only goal of having you press 1 is so the computer that called you will "know" your number is real. Then your real number will be sold to telemarketers and other scammers. -- Real officials from the IRS, ICE, FBI, DEA, etc **never contact** people like this.

**BEWARE OF PHONE SCAMS with pre-recorded voices claiming to have urgent information about your banking, credit card, taxes, healthcare, etc. They don't.** -- NEVER press 1 as they instruct.

**ARE YOU RECEIVING VOICEMAIL MESSAGES FROM REAL ESTATE BROKERS** who act as if they are returning **YOUR** call to **THEM** about a "hot" new property you were interested in? -- NEVER call them back. This is a scam. -- **Keep a written log of these calls, with names, numbers, dates, etc.**

**MANY RENT REGULATED TENANTS IN NEW YORK CITY discover their names and phone numbers have been given to slimy real estate brokers.** -- The goal is to get you to call back and **leave them a voicemail.**

-- Then your phone call, voicemail, name and ID can be "documented" and used to "prove" you want to move out of your apartment. -- Next you will be buried in buyout offers and barraged at all hours with phone calls from **real estate brokers**. -- **NEVER trust any real estate broker in New York City.**

**NEVER HIRE A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR IN NEW YORK CITY.** -- Because you will be double **crossed**. -- **EVERY** Private Investigator in New York City knows that Landlords will **pay them generously to rat out** what their tenants may be thinking of doing. -- **Before you ever** do anything, always check with a tenant advocacy group, a local elected official, the Legal Aid Society, an attorney who represents tenants, or law enforcement.

**NEVER USE REGULAR GARBAGE CANS TO DISPOSE OF PAPERS WITH YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THEM.** -- Any piece of paper, document, certificate, receipt that lists your name, address, phone number, social security number, credit card number, bank records, paycheck stubs, wills, tax records, pharmacy receipts, cancelled checks, club membership cards, expired driver's license, expired passport, etc **SHOULD BE SHREDDED.**

**SHREDDING IS YOUR FRIEND.** -- Collect papers to be shredded in an envelope or paper bag. -- Once a month take the envelope/bag to Staples and **have it SHREDDED.**

**DO YOU HAVE AN ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE? Then be aware that your personal information is NOT safe. Period. Case Closed. Elvis has left the building. Don't have any doubts about this.**

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Apple are **businesses that exist for one reason and one reason only:** to sell your personal information to **advertisers**. -- They make billions in profits doing this. You think they give you "**free**" email because they are nice guys? Wrong. -- All social media platforms/accounts can be hacked into with little effort by any 14 year old.

**DO YOU MAKE ONLINE PURCHASES? Be aware that your credit card information is NOT safe. Do not have any illusions about this,** -- This doesn't mean criminals will use your card number to buy things. -- **Criminals use credit card information** in a variety of ways. -- **They can learn your address, prior addresses, names of family members, what time of day food is delivered to your apartment, where Uber cars take you, what airport you use, where you shop, where/when you vacation, credit**

history, mom's maiden name, **where you drive, where you park your car, where you work, where/how/to whom you pay bills, taxes, insurance premiums, property you own, assets you control.**

**ONLINE RETAILERS ALSO SELL YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION to third party entities.** -- Ones that **have far less sophisticated security systems and are much easier to hack into.**

**COMPUTER HACKING/IDENTITY THEFT is a problem that will never go away.** -- **There are landlords in New York City KNOWN by law enforcement to have hired shady characters who specialize in hacking into tenant desktops, laptops, tablets, phones, email, and social media accounts.**

**MAKE SURE YOU DO WHAT IS NEEDED TO KEEP HACKERS AND IDENTITY THIEVES AWAY. MAKE SURE YOUR DEVICES ARE PROTECTED FROM MALWARE.**