YOUR FIRST STEPS
IN APARTMENT MANAGEMENT

The Essential Guide for New Professionals in Multifamily Housing at Royal American Management





WELCOME!

Welcome to the wonderful world of multifamily and rental housing! Starting a job in the apartment industry can be exciting, but it also requires specific knowledge and skills to navigate the role effectively.

While every company is different, this guide will help you understand the bigger picture of what the rental housing industry includes.

This guide is intended for educational purposes only and provides a general overview of the multifamily rental housing industry. It is not legal advice, nor does it replace specific company policies or procedures.

TYPES OF HOUSING

Apartment management involves overseeing various types of residential properties, each with unique characteristics and management needs. Here are the main types of properties in the apartment management industry:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Refers to residential units priced to be affordable for low- to moderate-income households, often with rent limits tied to income. These units are typically part of government-subsidized programs or income-restricted developments, aiming to ensure housing costs do not exceed 30% of a resident's income.

MIXED-USE HOUSING

Developments that combine residential units with commercial or retail spaces, such as shops, restaurants, or offices, in one building or community. These properties are typically located in urban or high-density areas, offering a convenient live-work-play environment.

STUDENT HOUSING

Multifamily properties designed specifically for college or university students. They often feature amenities like study areas, communal spaces, and furnished units, and may offer flexible leasing options aligned with academic terms. Student housing can be on-campus or off-campus, with a focus on proximity to educational institutions.

CONVENTIONAL HOUSING

Refers to market-rate residential units that are not subject to income restrictions. Rent is determined by market demand, and these properties offer more flexibility in pricing and amenities, catering to renters who can afford to pay full market rates without assistance.

SENIOR HOUSING

Multifamily housing that serves older adults, typically 55+, with a focus on accessibility, safety, and community. It may include independent living units or more assisted options for those needing medical and daily care support. Senior housing often includes amenities like social programs, health services, and age-friendly features.

TYPES OF OWNERS

INDEPENDENT RENTAL OWNER

Individuals or groups who purchase a rental property as an investment to generate rental income and potential appreciation. They may manage themselves or outsource to a third-party firm.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Third-party firms that manage day-to-day operations, such as leasing, maintenance, and resident relations, on behalf of owners or investors. Some firms both own and manage multifamily properties, while others strictly manage only.

GOVERNMENT OR NONPROFITS

Some properties, particularly affordable housing, are owned or managed by government agencies or nonprofit organizations focused on providing housing for specific communities, like low-income families or seniors.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES

Companies that specialize in developing and managing multifamily housing.

REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS (REITS):

Public or private companies that own and operate income-producing real estate, including multifamily properties, offering investors a share of the income.

TYPES OF ROLES

LEASING

Responsible for marketing rental properties, attracting residents, managing leasing agreements, and ensuring a smooth move-in process for each new resident.

PROPERTY MANAGER

Oversees day-to-day operations of properties, including resident relations, financial management, compliance, and coordination of maintenance and leasing activities.

MAINTENANCE

Responsible for ensuring that all aspects of a property are in optimal working condition. They conduct regular maintenance, address emergency repairs, and implement preventative measures to minimize future issues, ensuring resident satisfaction and property longevity.

CORPORATE ROLES

These include leadership, accounting, contracting, marketing, IT, HR, and other company departments that support the strategic and administrative functions of the company and properties.

SUPPLIER PARTNER

Provides essential goods and services to support and enhance rental housing living.





FAIR HOUSING LAWS

Fair housing laws are regulations that prohibit discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.

These laws ensure equal access to housing opportunities, fostering diverse and inclusive communities. They apply to all aspects of housing, including advertising, leasing, and property management practices, to ensure fair treatment of all individuals.

LEASE AGREEMENTS

Lease agreements are crucial legal documents that define the terms and conditions between a landlord and a resident.

It is important to use the most current version of a lease agreement to ensure compliance with relevant state laws and regulations.

EVICTION

The eviction process typically begins when a property owner or manager issues a written **Notice to Vacate**, which provides a specified period for the resident to move out. The timeframe depends on the reason for eviction and the terms of the lease. If the resident does not move out within the notice period, the landlord may file a lawsuit for eviction. If the court rules in the landlord's favor and the resident still does not vacate, the landlord may request a writ of possession for law enforcement to remove the resident.

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

At its core, the multifamily industry is a people-focused business. These skills can help you be successful in your role and in the multifamily industry:

- COMMUNICATION
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- TIME MANAGEMENT
- ETHICS & INTEGRITY



ABCs OF MULTIFAMILY

Common industry terminology



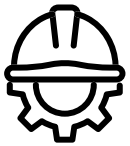
Property & Leasing



Financial
& Operational



Resident Relations
& Communication



Maintenance
& Safety



& More!

Property & Leasing Terms

RESIDENT

Someone who legally occupies the unit, typically under a lease agreement. A resident is the leaseholder and is responsible for rent and following the lease terms, while a resident may also include other authorized occupants.

UNIT TURN OR TURNOVER

The process of preparing a vacated unit for a new resident, including cleaning, repairs, and updating.

MOVE-IN/MOVE-OUT (MIMO)

The processes and checklists associated with a resident moving into or out of a unit.

WORK ORDER (WO)

A request for maintenance or repairs submitted by a resident or identified by staff. May also be called a **Service Request**.

OCCUPANCY RATE

The percentage of occupied units in a property compared to the total number of units.

VACANCY RATE

The percentage of unoccupied units in a property.

MARKET RENT

The current rental rate for similar units in the area, often used to set competitive pricing.

LEASE-UP

The initial period when a new property is actively renting out its units to reach stable occupancy.

AMENITY

Features or services offered to residents, such as a pool, gym, or community center.

Financial & Operational Terms

DELIQUENCY

Late or missed rental payments by residents.

RENT

A tenant's (resident's) regular payment to a landlord for residing at the property.

RENT ROLL

A detailed list of all units, their residents, lease terms, and current rent amounts.

BUDGET VARIANCE

The difference between the budgeted amounts and the actual financial figures, indicating over or underperformance.

PROFORMA

A financial projection for the property, often used in budgeting and planning.

Maintenance & Safety Terms

SAFETY DATA SHEET (SDS)

Documents providing information on the safe handling and potential hazards of chemicals used on the property.

HVAC (HEATING, VENTILATION, & AIR CONDITIONING)

Systems used to regulate temperature and air quality in buildings.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE (PM)

Regularly scheduled maintenance tasks aimed at preventing equipment failures and extending the lifespan of property assets.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (CapEx)

Major expenses for property improvements or large-scale repairs, such as roof replacement or HVAC system upgrades.

Legal & Compliance Terms

FAIR HOUSING ACT (FHA)

Federal law that prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Law requiring properties to be accessible to individuals with disabilities and to make reasonable accommodations.

Other Important Terms

SUPPLIER PARTNER

A company or individual that provides goods or services to support the operations, maintenance, or management of multifamily properties. This can include providers of landscaping, maintenance supplies, property management software, marketing services, or other resources essential to property upkeep and resident satisfaction.

SMART HOME TECHNOLOGY

Devices and systems that automate home functions, such as smart thermostats, lighting, and security systems.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ROYAL AMERICAN MANAGEMENT SHAREPOINT

Royal American Management's central hub. Contains quick links to the Procedures Manual, department SharePoints, Training Calendar, resources, forms, and more!

Each property has its own SharePoint folder where corporate departments will share property-specific files with you (marketing materials, compliance documents, and more). Please be sure to check your folders and make sure the info contained within them is up-to-date!

RA TRAINING SHAREPOINT

Main hub for the Training Department. Includes the Training Calendar, training quick links, Maintenance Minutes video library, links to external learning opportunities, information regarding obtaining certifications, and the following Resource Centers:

- Maintenance Resource Center
- Fair Housing Resource Center
- Technical Resource Center (Kinsley, Microsoft, and more)
- Corporate Support Resource Center
- New Hire Resource Center
- IT Resource Center

THE DISPATCH

Royal American Companies' blog. Please be sure to check out https://thedispatch.us/ for company news, reminders, learning opportunities, and to stay up to date on what's going on throughout the company!