



Things you should know before renting a place

It is important for everyone to understand that owners association rules exist

By Nima Khanpour
Special to Properties

In buildings run by owners associations, there are parts that are jointly owned called “common property” which you share with other residents and include things like lobbies, lifts, gardens, driveways, parking spaces, a gymnasium, etc.

In Dubai, the Association Constitution Regulation governs how owners associations operate, and it requires every owner to contribute to the cost of maintaining a building’s common property by paying a set amount of money quarterly in advance called a service charge.

The service charge includes amounts that are set aside for current expenses (general fund) such as insurance, cleaning, security, repair and maintenance of the common property, and future expenses (reserve fund) which involve major capital works.

If the owner of the apartment has not paid the service charges, the tenants may be locked out by the owners association from using key common property or facilities such as the driveway, parking space, gymnasium, pool, etc.

The regulation also requires each owners association to have its own set of community rules. The community rules stipulate how you can renovate your unit, where you can park your car, where you can dry your laundry, and if you are allowed to keep pets, etc. It is important that anyone considering renting in an owners association building understand that these rules exist and must be followed.

As a tenant, it is essential that you check ownership by requesting to see the title deed; check to see if the owner has paid all outstanding service charges by requesting a current statement of account confirming payment so you can be confident that the owners association will not restrict your entitlement to use the common property and services; negotiate to pay your rent quarterly on the basis that the owner pays their service charge to avoid inconveniencing you; register your lease with the Dubai Land Department (DLD) through Ejari; familiarize yourself with the community rules for your particular building.

The writer is Chief Operating Officer, Stratum Owners Association Management Services

Handy Hints

- Every owner is required to contribute to the cost of building maintenance
- If the owner hasn't paid service charges, tenants can't use common facilities
- Tenants must ensure to check ownership by requesting to see the title deed

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

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