



### **Partnering to Increase Successful Tenancies**

RentSmart believes in the transformative power of education to help individuals and families to find and maintain their housing, increase successful tenancies and prevent housing instability and homelessness.

Since 2009, RentSmart has delivered education to over 2000 people. Community Partners have an opportunity to certify staff to become Community Educators of RentSmart.

**What is RentSmart?** RentSmart provides education and support to tenants, landlords and community champions with one goal: Successful Tenancies. Successful tenancies are key to building strong communities, increasing housing stability and preventing homelessness.

**The RentSmart model has three main goals:**

1. Assist people to find and/or maintain good housing;
2. Reduce conflict, damages and evictions, and;
3. Increase housing stability.

**What is a Community Partner?** Organizations and systems that want to integrate RentSmart into their services to clients.

**Who is a Community Educator?** Individuals who are trained to deliver RentSmart education. Community Educators tend to be staff of organizations, government and housing providers (community partners) who are helping people to find and stay in appropriate housing.

RentSmart education includes three distinct courses: RentSmart Certificate course (12 hours), RentSmart Basics (3 hours) and RentSmart Landlord.

**1. RentSmart Certificate** 12 hour Certificate Course covers:

- tenant rights and responsibilities
- landlord expectations and responsibilities
- effective communication skills
- budgeting and planning for housing expenses
- maintenance do's and don'ts
- safety and pests

And it is working. In a recent 3<sup>rd</sup> party-conducted evaluation:

- 100% of respondents said their knowledge about renting increased as a result of taking the course
- 92% indicated their confidence around renting was greatly increased
- 86% said that keeping their housing was easier as a result
- 72% said finding a place was easier
- 66% used the RentSmart certificate when applying for housing, and 70% of those said it helped them

2. **RentSmart Basics** is a 3-hour course that focuses on the ‘three keys to housing success’. The curriculum has specific adaptations to meet the needs of:
  - youth
  - immigrants and refugees
  - people experiencing mental health and addictions
  - seniors
3. **RentSmart Landlord** provides information to housing providers and landlords to learn about RentSmart tenants, and to utilize common communication and problem solving strategies for successful tenancies.

### **How to Become a Community Partner and Community Educator**

RentSmart staff and provincial partners are happy to answer any questions you have about the RentSmart model and program.

#### **Step 1: Interested Community Educators Attend RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer)**

- Register online cost includes lunch and session materials
- Attend the 4-day training that covers the following:
  - Best practices in housing stability and homelessness prevention
  - Adult education and facilitation principles and skills
  - Prevention of homelessness and increasing housing stability
  - Curriculum for RentSmart Basics and Certificate courses
  - Measuring impact
  - Conditions for successful delivery of RentSmart model

Upon completion, trainees can become certified Community Educators and are able to deliver the courses. A licensing agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of community partners, educators and Ready to Rent.

#### **Step 2: Deliver the RentSmart education for Successful Tenancies**

- Community Partners agree to Ready to Rent standards and support Community Educators to teach courses
- RentSmart partners provide coaching to first time Community Educators
- Community Partners purchase manuals and certificates from R2R
- Community Educators use RentSmart evaluation and impact measurement systems

#### **Step 3: Be a Community Educator in Good Standing**

- Community educator license is valid for three years at which point recertification education is available through RentSmart.

#### **Community Partners and Educators receive the following benefits:**

- Professional development that includes facilitation skills, group management and capacity building around housing rights, responsibilities and financial literacy
- License to deliver a program proven to help youth, individuals and families achieve housing stability



- Regularly updated curriculum that is focused on building the knowledge, skills and confidence specific to help people find and keep their housing
- Curriculum, PowerPoints, handouts and manuals are provided
- Marketing and communications materials and course promotions pre-developed and available for co-branding
- Connection to a growing network of community partners and educators
- Bi-monthly Community Educator newsletters and webinars
- Support to organize and deliver your first course
- Regularly updated data that can be shared with funders and community
- Part of a growing movement for the prevention of homelessness

### **Role of RentSmart**

- Only RentSmart will train and certify Community Educators
- RentSmart will provide curriculum and materials to educators
- RentSmart will offer an annual recertification/updates day that all educators are encouraged to attend
- RentSmart will provide ongoing evaluation and impact measurement systems, and incorporate participant feedback for the ongoing improvement of the curriculum and educational experience
- RentSmart will provide telephone support to educators and participants who require housing support
- RentSmart fulfills manual orders in a timely manner
- RentSmart maintains a database of all RentSmart graduates in order to confirm certificate status and act as a reference
- RentSmart provides ongoing professional development opportunities in the form of webinars, training and publications

### **Role of Community Partners**

- Agree to RentSmart principles and best practices
- Adhere to the Community Educator licensing agreement
- Ensure that courses will be taught by Community Educators only
- Agree that the RentSmart material is the property of RentSmart and cannot be used for other purposes without written approval.
- Community partners can co-brand RentSmart marketing materials
- Purchase manuals and certificates through RentSmart

### **Role of Community Educators**

- Deliver RentSmart model courses.
- Ensure that required curriculum is taught.
- Engage with learners through adult education principles
- Provide RentSmart with an accurate list of course graduates with contact information.
- Participate in the collection and sharing of evaluation and impact measurement data
- Certification is valid for three years. Recertification is available through RentSmart.

**Program Costs**

RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer)	\$650 + taxes per Community Educator
Manuals and Certificates	\$25 per RentSmart Certificate participant* \$10 per RentSmart Basics participant
RentSmart Landlord	Downloadable manual included in the cost of the RentSmart Educator training.

*\*Community Partners tend to deliver 2-3 RentSmart courses annually. The average per course RentSmart budget is \$250 for manuals and certificates.*

**For more information, contact Ready to Rent BC at [www.readytorentbc.org](http://www.readytorentbc.org) or 250-388-7171**