Student Rental Tips: Your Rights as a Tenant:

The Ontario Residential Tenancies Act outlines the legal rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords in the provinces. Renting an apartment, as a student can be a stressful experience – protect yourself by becoming familiar with your rights!

Tip I: Landlords can only increase the rent once every 12 months and according to the legal maximum guideline published by the provincial government. A landlord must give you written notice at least 90 days before they intend to increase rent.

Tip II: You are not required to give your landlord post-dated cheques. At the beginning of the lease, the landlord can ask for the first month's rent and a rent deposit (often referred to as last month's rent).

Tip III: Other charges like a key deposit, commission, penalty, "finder's fee" or any other charges are illegal.

Tip IV: Landlords cannot keep you from having a pet or having your partner move in.

Tip V: A landlord can't enter your home without notice unless it is an emergency or you have given permission to enter at a particular time. If your landlord wants to enter your home for repair work, a health/safety inspection or any other reasonable purpose, they must give you written notice at least 24 hours before the time of entry.

Tip VI: Landlords are permitted to use income information, credit checks, credit references, rental history or guarantees when selecting a prospective tenant.

Tip VII: If you plan to move out, you must inform your landlord at least 60 days in advance if you signed a yearly lease.

Tip VIII: You are entitled to a receipt for any payments given to your landlord. These will be useful when you file your in- come tax return.

Tip IX: You are entitled to have the land- lord pay interest annually on the amount of the rent deposit (last month's rent). The guideline for the interest rate reflects the Consumer Price Index for the year published by the government.

Tip X: If you end up having any issues with your landlord, there is a Land- lord and Tenant Board that resolves disputes between landlords and tenants.