

FAQ's – Frequently Asked Questions

What is the distance from Highlands Plantation to MSU?

It is approximately 1 mile from the entrance to Highlands Plantation to the MSU campus. This is the shortest distance to the MSU campus. Highlands Plantation west property boundary borders MSU agricultural acreage. Highlands Plantation has a 1 mile paved entrance road bordered by white fencing. You can also enter the south entrance of MSU by using the rear entrance of Highlands Plantation on Blackjack Road.

I would like to live at Highlands Plantation. How much are the houses and duplexes?

First we will need to know how many residents will live in the property, when you want your lease to start and end. We need to know if any residents are planning on having a pet. What size unit do you want to rent. Also, do you have a budget you would like to stay within so we can help you with that also.

What is "included" in the monthly rent?

Included in your rent is full grounds maintenance, HVAC filter replacement as needed, smoke detector battery replacement, normal repairs and maintenance due to malfunction, parking decals and in most properties deluxe TV cable and high-speed wireless internet including maintenance of routers and modems.

What is "not included" in the monthly rent?

Cost that are not covered in your monthly rent are utilities, trash pickup, telephone, pest control service, cleaning up your porch and patio area after parties and grilling out and maintenance due to negligence not limited to residents tampering with plumbing, cable routers and modems, etc. The golf course, and swimming pool privileges must be arranged with the Highlands Plantation Golf Resort.

What steps need to be followed to secure a unit at the Garden Homes of Highlands Plantation?

First, fill out a "Rental Application and "Lease Guarantor" and return to our management office at 1518-B St. Andrews Lane or fax to us at (662) 323-9848. These forms can be picked up at our management office or you can print it from our website www.hpgardenhomes.com.

Second, choose a floor plan and location, schedule an appointment to sign a lease and leasing documents, pay your application fee and holding fee. We cannot hold any garden home or duplex; so until all paperwork is signed and notarized and returned to the Garden Homes management office, the rental unit of your choice will still be on the market for rent.

When can we move in?

Your lease clearly identifies a lease beginning date. This is the date you can get a key and move anything into or on the property. That is the date you agreed to take responsibility for the property. No personal belongings can be put in the house or duplex, garage or patio prior to your lease start date.

When do we have to move out?

Your lease clearly identifies the date your lease ends. This is the date you and your roommates have to be out and all personal property belonging to those who have been living at the leased property removed. All keys issued plus any additional keys made plus the garage door opener(s) must have been returned to management by 5:00pm on the lease end date. No pro-rations of rent or lease extension will be given.

What is the move out procedure?

A move out inspection must be scheduled by resident, the guarantor, or someone they asked to represent them (with prior notice to management). Move out inspection appointments have to be scheduled with management and a time and date set with management at least one week prior to move out. All move out inspections are done by management, damage inspectors and professional cleaning crews. Digital pictures are taken and all findings from different inspection agents reviewed to determine what amount is to be retained and/or refunded to resident(s) forwarding address given to management at the time of the move out inspection. Residents must turn in all keys issued at move in, any keys made during occupancy and garage door openers, if applicable. Resident(s) must leave utilities on (electricity and water) for the move out inspection and floor care once all have moved out and all personal property has been removed from the property. One move out inspection will be done for the complete property once all students are out. If residents do not schedule an appointment with management by 5:00pm of the lease end date, management and move out agents will go to the property and retake possession at that time and begin move out clean up and removal of anything left by residents (no matter what the value). No storage is provided after 5:00pm of the lease end date. Management or their agents cannot be held responsible for anything left after 5:00pm of move out date as stated in the lease or damage to such. If utilities are not on for move out inspection, the turn on cost and usage will be charged backed against residents holding fee plus a management fee of \$100.00 to handle this for resident. (See copy of move out letter provided to residents)

How long is the lease for?

Our normal lease term is from August 1-7 through July 23rd each year. You sign and pay for a 1 year lease and you are able to move in between August 1st thru 7th and you must move out no later than July 23rd of the following year unless you renew your lease. Management must prepare the vacated units for the new residents each year and during this time period between July 23rd and August 7th management paints, cleans, repairs and replaces any damage as deemed necessary by management. All leases signed after August each year will terminate July 23rd of the following year. Many residents leasing a unit for the second semester in January sign a 19 month lease that end on July 23rd of the following year.

How soon do I start the rent process?

We lease our garden homes and duplexes on a first come, first serve basis. Many residents lease as early as November and December for the following school year with most of our housing being full by April and May of the following year. The lowest rent rates are in November and December and increase monthly beginning in January based on supply and demand. It is recommended that you lease early to assure you get the desired floor plan.

Are all properties owned by the same company?

No. Every garden home or duplex is owned by a different investor from all over the country.

Where is the rental/management office located?

Our rental office is located at 1518-B St. Andrews Lane on the Highlands Plantation Golf Course. When you come past the guard house, our office is the 2nd garden home on the left. We are "The Garden Homes of Highlands Plantation and our sign on the roof I says "Garden Homes Leasing Office".

How much does a 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedrooms unit rent for?

It varies as there are different floor plans, different sizes and different amenities but generally speaking, a one bedroom unit rents for the highest amount per month and a 4 bedroom garden home rents for the lowest bedroom rent rate per month.

What is my liability when I sign a lease with other residents?

Each roommate and lease guarantor is individually liable for his or her share of the bedroom rent and late payment penalties if applicable, cable and internet service if not furnished in rent, utilities, furniture rental if applicable, holding fee or damage to their own private room or private bathroom. No Roommate shall be liable for another roommates bedroom rent, cable and internet service, furniture rental, holding fee, late fee if applicable etc. Occupancy is limited to two adults per bedroom per garden home or duplex. There is a surcharge for two occupants per bedrooms and both occupants would be required to pay their own separate holding fees.

As pointed out above, each roommate and lease guarantor are individually liable and are obligated for their share of bedroom rent, late penalties if applicable, cable and internet if not furnished in rent, and utilities. All common areas such as the kitchen, den, ½ bath, laundry, stairs, halls, garage, storage room, porch, patio and exterior of dwelling, grounds and fencing shall become joint liability. Any damage to these common areas becomes a joint liability issue and LESSOR shall look to all residents and guarantors jointly for payment of any cost involved in replacing or making the necessary repairs that occur or are accessed in these areas.

How can I come see a property?

Our properties are 100% leased and occupied most of the time so we have no vacant units to show you. Our office is a model home for you to preview. We can show occupied units by appointment only. We always have available floor plans to give out with room sizes. This is also provided on our website.

Where do I pay my rent each month?

Your rent can be paid at the Garden Homes of Highlands Plantation management office located at 1518-B St. Andrews Lane, dropped in our door slot after hours or mailed to Garden Homes, P.O. Box 9120, Columbus, MS 39705.

What are acceptable forms of payment?

We accept checks, money orders, bank cashier's checks for rent or holding fees or any cost resident owes management company. We do not accept cash or any credit cards, however we do accept VISA and MASTERCARD debit cards for all payments.

Can I "Sublet"?

Yes, with managements approval. You need to advise management that you are seeking to sublet. The person subletting will sign a "Sublet Lease" which adds them to the lease agreement. Subletting does not relieve you from the terms and conditions of the original lease agreement so one must be careful when subletting as you can be held accountable for their failure to pay or damages.

How are utilities split up and paid?

How you split the utilities up is between you and your roommate(s). Most roommates split utility cost equally among all. The utility companies will only bill one resident and accept one deposit. This means one of the residents must collect from each of the other roommates their share of the deposit and monthly bill. The roommate's name that the utilities service is going to be in and billed each month must collect from the other roommates each month their share of the utility cost and pay the utility bill each month.

What is the estimated utility cost”?

We cannot give a utility cost range for electricity and water usage as there are many variables. Utility cost can vary based on square feet, ceiling height, temperature setting, light use, frequency of water usage etc. The utility cost for identical houses or duplexes can vary significantly simply due to the residents and their guest living habits.

Can males and females rent the same house?

Yes, there is no restriction on what sex shares a house or duplex. This decision is the resident's and their guarantors.

I don't like my roommates. Is there a lease cancellation policy?

Roommate selection is very important. There is no provision for breaking your lease agreement should you and your roommates not get along. You do have the right to "Sublet" with written permission from management..

What are my responsibilities for trash pickup”?

Trash is picked up each Tuesday at no certain time. It is each resident's responsibility to roll the trash can out to the street early that morning and roll the trash can back in the storage area late that afternoon. Resident(s) who leave trash cans out after late afternoon on the day of pickup can be fined by security.

Can I be fined for parking violations?

Yes, the security officers can fine you for parking violations. Parking violations include but not limited to parking on the road in front of the Sports Grill and on yard grass areas.

Is pest control services provided in rent?

On most homes pest service is not provided. You can contract for this service for approximately \$20-25.00 per month with a company of your choice.

Can I grill out with friends at my residence?

Yes, all residents are free to grill out on their patios and deck. One word of caution, most all garden homes exterior siding is vinyl and will melt or warp if the grill is close to it. Be sure your grill is at least 5' away from any exterior wall and no charcoal can be deposited on the yards or golf course.

What if I am short on money and can't pay my rent on time?

There are many times that resident's encounter financial problems that prevent them from paying their rent on time. Just remember there are late fees and penalties that accrue and must be paid. These late fees and penalties are outlined in your lease agreement.

Can I Renew My Lease At The Same Monthly Rent Rate?

Yes, all leases can be renewed. There is no guarantee that you can renew at the same monthly rate. It is more likely little or no increase in rent will occur if you renew early and before December 31st before your lease expires the following July. Rental rates are adjusted in January to increase with inflation.

What Is The Last Date I Can Renew My Lease To Guarantee I Have The Same Home Or Duplex For Next Year?

Students start looking and leasing in November and December each year with major renting traffic from January 2nd through April. Most of our leases expire on July 23rd each year and you must renew on or before February 15th to guarantee you are able to extend your lease. Most of our garden homes and duplexes are leased before April each year. Our leasing office is leasing everyday beginning in November and all students that do not renew on or before February 15th stand the chance that the unit they occupy will be leased to someone else. Be sure to advise management of your intentions to renew or not to renew as soon as you can.

Do you have any garden homes for sale that are finished or will be finished by August?

Yes, we have garden homes and duplexes for sale. Please contact Tommy Vice at our Columbus office at (662) 328-0236 or his cell at (662) 574-2700.