

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



RENTAL HOUSING

*Common Concerns
Community Solutions*

1004 Melrose Avenue
University Heights, IA 52246
Phone: (319) 337-6900

www.university-heights.org
City Clerk: uhclerk@yahoo.com

Introduction



The past decade has seen a great increase in the number of rental properties in University Heights. Parents are buying homes for children attending The University of Iowa, often renting to other students as well. Investors attracted by stable and/or increasing property values are purchasing income properties to lease. Hawkeye fans interested in a place to park and tailgate for football games have acquired homes. In all, approximately 20% of the households are rentals.

Whatever the cause, the increasing number of rental properties has brought change to our community. Homeowners who live and work here may have interests and values that differ from those who purchase homes as investments. To preserve the historical values of our community, and in response to a large number of consistent complaints, the University Heights City Council has enacted ordinances over the past 10 years regulating rental properties and restricting undesirable conduct sometimes associated with such properties.

Enforcement is a different issue. The City cannot take action to address problems unless the City knows about them. Over the years, the Mayor and Council have heard from many citizens who did not make complaints at the time and were surprised to learn that the City has ordinances in place to address certain recurring problems. The City stands ready to enforce its ordinances but can only do so if alerted to the problem.

This brochure seeks to inform all citizens of University Heights ordinances regarding rental housing and other matters, encourage cooperation and compliance, and describe enforcement mechanisms.

Property Regulations



Rental Permits

The Rental Housing Code defines “rent” as occupancy by anyone other than the property owner, whether or not money is actually paid. So, if out-of-state parents buy a home for a child to live in while attending college, it is considered a rental property unless the child is also a property owner.

Rental properties must have rental permits and are subject to inspection for compliance with health and safety provisions. The permit application form requires disclosure of the names of all tenants so the City may confirm compliance with occupancy restrictions. Owners who do not live in Johnson County must designate a local agent responsible for Rental Housing Code compliance. Violations of the Rental Housing Code may result in monetary penalties and refusal to issue or revocation of a rental permit.

If you want to know whether a property has a rental permit, check the City’s website (www.university-heights.org – click on “Rental Housing Information”). If a valid permit does not exist and you believe one is required, please contact the City Clerk, Chris Anderson, at (319) 337-6900 or uhclerk@yahoo.com. Leave a message as to why you believe the property is a rental and the City will follow up.

Occupancy Restrictions

The Zoning Ordinance restricts occupancy of dwelling units to a family plus one person not a member of the family. So, two unrelated people may occupy a home, but a third may not. The restrictions apply to all residential property in the City. If you observe a violation, please contact the City Clerk, Chris Anderson, at (319) 337-6900 or uhclerk@yahoo.com.

Prohibited Conduct

The University Heights Mayor and City Council encourage all citizens to be good neighbors by being respectful of others and their property. Citizens are encouraged to speak with neighbors if a problem arises, unless circumstances would make such contact unsafe. Reports of violations to the City or Police Department will be kept confidential to the extent permitted; if you desire to remain anonymous, please say so when you call. City ordinances are available for review online at www.university-heights.org; you may search ordinances by number or by topic.

Alcohol-Related Offenses

Being intoxicated in public is illegal. Persons under 21 may not purchase, consume, or possess alcohol. It is illegal to urinate in public. If you observe violations, call police dispatch at (319) 356-5275.



Prohibited Conduct



Disorderly Conduct

Fighting, using abusive language, threatening gestures, and obstructing streets and sidewalks are all illegal. If you observe a violation, call police dispatch at (319) 356-5275.

Noise

University Heights prohibits music, yelling, chanting, screaming, and other such activities that are plainly audible across property lines to the disturbance of others. If you have a noise complaint, call police dispatch at (319) 356-5275.

Disorderly House

University Heights prohibits fighting, quarreling, or loud, disagreeable noises that disturb the neighborhood. Citations may be given to the owners or tenants of property, not just those engaged in the offending conduct. If you have a complaint, call police dispatch at (319) 356-5275.

Hawkeye Games

Parking

Parking on lawns is permitted only on Hawkeye home football game days. If any part of a car is parked on grass, it is considered as being parked on the lawn. If a car is parked on a lawn on a non-game day (even with the property owner's consent), it will be ticketed (\$25) and is subject to towing. The fine for a second violation is \$50, and a third is \$100. If you see a car parked illegally, call police dispatch at (319) 356-5275.

Portable Toilets

Homeowners who park 15 or more cars on Hawkeye home football game days may place portable toilets on their property. Toilets must be placed so they will not be seen from the street and must be cleaned by 5:00 p.m. the Sunday immediately after each home game. Toilets may not be placed before 8:00 a.m. the Friday before the first home game and must be removed by 5:00 p.m. the Monday after the last home game. If you have a portable toilet complaint, call the University Heights Police Department, (319) 887-6800, and leave a message.



Property Upkeep



Yard Maintenance

Grass, weeds, vines, and brush must be trimmed to a height not more than 12". If you observe a violation, leave a message with the City Clerk, Chris Anderson, at (319) 337-6900 or uhclerk@yahoo.com. The City will ask that the lawn be mowed. If a property owner does not comply, the City will have someone mow the lawn and tax the cost to the owner. A fine may also be assessed.

Plant growth should never obstruct streets or sidewalks regardless of height. Trees should be trimmed to 8 feet over sidewalks and 13 feet over all streets. Property owners are responsible for maintaining the space between the street curb and sidewalk, including trees. If owners do not properly maintain the trees and shrubs, the City may have work performed and charge the property owner for the expense.

Snow Removal

Sidewalks may not have natural accumulations of snow or ice for more than 24 hours. If owners do not clear sidewalks as required, leave a message with the City Clerk, Chris Anderson, at (319) 337-6900 or uhclerk@yahoo.com. The City will notify the property owner and, if necessary, may have someone clear the sidewalk at the owner's expense. A fine may also be assessed.

Garbage & Recycling

Johnson County Refuse collects garbage and recycling in University Heights every Tuesday. Garbage and yard waste stickers may be purchased at Fareway off Mormon Trek Boulevard. Trash and recycling containers are to be placed on the curb no earlier than 3 p.m. Monday and no later than 6:30 a.m. Tuesday. If containers are put out after 6:30 a.m., garbage may not be picked up. Containers should be removed from the curb by the end of the day Tuesday.

Contact Information



Mayor and City Council

Louise From, Mayor

354-1433 louise-from@university-heights.org

Stan Laverman, Mayor Pro Tem, Finance Committee

351-5893 stan-laverman@university-heights.org

Brennan McGrath, Community Protection Chair

339-1176 brennan-mcgrath@university-heights.org

Andrew Dudler Webmaster, Community Protection Committee

351-6075 andy-dudler@university-heights.org

David Giese, Streets & Sidewalks Committee

338-8720 david-giese@university-heights.org

Amy Moore, Building, Zoning & Sanitation Committee

341-5926 amy-moore@university-heights.org

City Staff

City Clerk: Chris Anderson, 337-6900 uhclerk@yahoo.com

Police Chief: Ron Fort, 887-6800 ron.fort@uhpolice.org

Treasurer: Lori Kimura, 466-1702 city-treasurer@university-heights.org

Engineer: Josiah Bilskemper, 354-3040 jbilskemper@shive-hattery.com

Attorney: Steve Ballard, 338-7551 ballard@lefflaw.com

Fire Chief: David Stannard, 248-1835 dstannard@ci.coralville.ia.us

Building Inspectors: Terry Goerdt, 330-9806 goerdt@netins.net

Norm Cate, 621-4731 norm.cate@gmail.com

Rental Inspector: Dawn Stoddard, 248-1720 dstoddard@ci.coralville.ia.us

Johnson County Refuse: Steve or Kandy Smith, 665-4498

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