

# A CO-LIVING AGREEMENT: PART TWO.



The second part of our co-living agreement looks at the actual items , or clauses you may want to include in your agreement. These suggestions can be modified and changed to meet the needs of your group and may vary depending on the style of property you live in, how many people you live with and how long you plan to live together.

As with all our Information Sheets these are guides, and are not exhaustive of the options you have available to you and your co-owners.

(If you are co-investing with your Mate, you may choose to implement the co-living agreement with your tenants, helping to create a positive and harmonious living environment from day one.)

## **Potential clauses or inclusions to consider:**

**Communication:** If you have read our **part one** on co-living agreements you will know that we see communication as a really important tool in the co-living/co-ownership process, and offer some ideas on how to do it respectfully and responsibly. One option at the beginning of the relationship, is to find out from your co-owners how they best like to communicate, and receive feedback from others, this is to avoid issues in the future and may support the way you come together to discuss any questions or queries you have.

**Visitors:** How many visitors are acceptable on weeknights / weekends? Does this depend on who the visitor is (for example priority is given to partners or family members being able to attend more frequently) or is it based on the day or time of the visit? Do you mind how many or how often visitors are at the home or is this not an issue? Perhaps you will pre-agree to just be respectful of others privacy and time and not set parameters on who can visit or when.

Do you have a set agreement for holding a party (e.g. weekends only) or does this fall under the same part of the agreement as one/a few visitors. Whilst you may not want to specify this information in the agreement, another tip is to clarify what each person means when talking about a 'party', for one it may mean hosting a dinner party on a Sunday evening and for the other it may mean playing beer pong on a Thursday afternoon!

**Noise or Social Time:** More generally than just visitors and parties, what is acceptable when it comes to socialising in the common areas. Is there an expectation that each member will just be respectful of each other when it comes to sharing the TV or setting the volume? Again you may not set the information in the agreement, but may come to the decision that on work days, everyone will be mindful of noise after 10pm as an example.

**Use of Common Areas (bathroom, kitchen, lounges, etc.):** How will the common areas be used and managed, how will they be cleaned and will the items located there be shared or not? Setting clear boundaries in these areas will help create a happy household!

Personal items may be left in communal areas - such as ipads, books or nicknacks, are these available for everyone to use or would these be for the single use of the owner? You may think you don't mind who uses them, but what if you go to use your ipad afterwards and it hasn't been recharged since the last person used it. Would these kinds of issues caused difficulties later on? If so include them in the agreement from the beginning.

**Cleaning:** Define standards for cleanliness. Just like the definition of a party, the definition of cleaning can vary from person to person. Work out how clean, is clean and what is included in making things tidy. How often are people expected to wash laundry, clean dishes, remove the rubbish etc and what is the consequence if this isn't completed or not done correctly. Is it easier to pay a cleaner to manage these tasks and keep the house hold tidy- and happy!

**Pets** Are they allowed, and if so, can this be any animal or only specifically agreed pets. Will one of you be responsible for their well being or will you work together to take care of the animal? What happens when you move out or live with other people in the future?

**Anything else?** Is there anything specific to you, that needs to be included? The agreement can be as detailed or basic as works best for you and your co-owner, our advice would be start early, have open communication and enjoy getting to know your fellow housemate! We may be able to offer some additional tips and tricks in the not too distant future.... Stay tuned!