

# RENTAL GUIDE *for* Durham, NC

Updated – February 2010

A publication of the Durham Affordable Housing Coalition (DAHC)

Phone: 919-683-1185

Website: [www.dahc.org](http://www.dahc.org)

## Starting your Search

Your search for a home will be easier if you know what you need. Consider these things:

- How much can you pay per month in rent? (Don't forget to budget for utilities!)
- How many bedrooms do you need?
- Do you have any special needs?
- Do you need to be near a bus route?

Look for lists of rentals in:

- This Rental Guide;
- [www.NCHousingSearch.org](http://www.NCHousingSearch.org), 877-428-8844, NC Housing Finance Agency free service;
- Phone Books;
- [www.heraldsun.com/adseek](http://www.heraldsun.com/adseek) daily classified ads & Saturday Real Estate section;
- REALTORS:  
<http://durhamrealtors.org/findhome.htm>
- University websites.
- [www.gosection8.com](http://www.gosection8.com)
- [www.socialserve.com](http://www.socialserve.com)

## Look before you Rent

**Never rent a home without looking at it.**

Examine the house or apartment very carefully. Ask how much monthly utility bills cost. Note anything that might be a problem when you move in. Does it need paint? Repairs?

Before you rent the apartment, make sure you understand what repairs the landlord will make and when they will be completed. **It is a good idea to get the landlord to do repairs before you move in.** If any repairs are not done, take pictures, write down the problems and have the landlord sign it, so you won't be charged for damage you didn't do.

**If you feel discrimination in the rental process, see the Fair Housing section of this guide for information on your rights.**

## Application and Credit Check

Once you find a home to rent, the landlord may ask you to fill out an application and pay an application fee. **The application fee is usually used for a credit check.** A Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number may be needed to check your credit.

## The Lease

Before moving in, you sign a lease. Make sure you read and understand the lease. If there is something in the lease you don't understand, ask the landlord. **Keep a copy of the lease, receipts, & all rental documents.**

The lease states the amount of rent, when rent must be paid, and the amount of any late fees. **Late fees cannot be more than \$15 or 5% of the rental payment.**

The lease says how much notice must be given to end the lease--**usually 30 days notice for a 1-year lease.** If you do not have a written lease and pay rent monthly, **7 days notice is required to end the lease or change the rent.**

## Security Deposit

When you sign a lease, you usually pay a security deposit. The security deposit often equals one month's rent, however it is not rent.

The security deposit is held by the landlord to ensure that you live up to your lease. Landlords are allowed to use the security deposit at the end of the lease to pay for any amount owed for rent, late fees, court costs, and damage you cause to the property **beyond normal wear and tear.** If you break your lease early, the landlord can use it for an actual amount of rent lost while finding a new tenant.

**Landlords are required by law to return the full deposit by mail within 30 days after the lease ends or provide a full explanation of how it was used.** Give the landlord an address to mail your security deposit when you return the key.



[www.dahc.org](http://www.dahc.org)

919-683-1185

400 W. Main St., #408, Durham, NC 27701

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## Legal Responsibilities & Rights of Landlords & Tenants

### **Some of the Landlord's responsibilities:**

- Make all repairs and do what is necessary to keep the property in a livable condition.
- Comply with building and housing codes.
- Keep in good and safe working order all the appliances and facilities that come with the apartment: electricity, plumbing, heating, air conditioning, refrigerator, stove, etc.

### **Some of the Tenant's responsibilities:**

- Pay rent on time.
- Keep the home and yard clean and safe; do not deliberately damage the property or allow a guest to do so.
- **Notify your landlord of needed repairs in writing** and keep a copy for your records. **In an emergency, call immediately**, then write a note as soon as possible.

## City Housing Code

### **What is the City Housing Code?**

The Housing Code is the law that requires all homes and yards in the City of Durham to be safe, healthy and livable. Homes means all housing, including single-family houses, apartments, mobile homes, and boarding houses. The Housing Code protects every city resident regardless of citizenship or immigration status. The Code is enforced by **City Housing Inspectors, 560-1647**.

### **What is required by the Housing Code?**

The Housing Code requires good maintenance of the home, including: heating, plumbing, electrical, smoke detectors, locks, etc. Some of the requirements are listed below.

**Appliances:** Any appliances provided with the home must be kept in good repair.

**Bathrooms:** Bathrooms must have a working toilet, sink, and tub or shower. Bathrooms must have a window or ventilation.

**Electrical:** The house must have at least 100Amp service. Wiring must be enclosed.

Outlets and switches must be safe. Rooms must have at least 2 working duplex outlets.

**Heat:** Permanent central or space heating units must safely heat all rooms to at least 68°F, and the temperature may not vary more than 10° between rooms. Portable kerosene or electric space heaters are not adequate as the primary heating source.

**Hot Water:** Homes must have water and a water heater.

**Kitchen:** Kitchens must have adequate counter space & enclosed cabinets.

**Locks:** All exterior doors must have locks that can be operated from inside and outside the home, like dead bolts or night latches. (Barrel bolts and padlocks are not adequate.)

**Paint:** Paint must not be flaking or peeling.

**Plumbing:** Safe water must be supplied. Plumbing and fixtures must work and not leak.

**Roof:** The roof must not leak.

**Smoke Detectors:** All sleeping areas must have a working battery or electric smoke detector within 15 feet of each room. Residents must replace the batteries.

**Screens or Central Air Conditioning:** Homes must have screens in good repair on all operable doors and windows from May 1 through November 1, or the home must have central air conditioning in good repair.

**Security Bars:** Security bars must be able to be opened without tools from the inside of bedrooms or other sleeping areas.

**Windows:** Windows must be easy to open, close and lock. Windows must not be broken or boarded. All rooms must have a window that opens to the outside.

**Yards:** Yards must be clean with no trash, junk, or abandoned cars.

**To learn more, call City Neighborhood Improvement Services 560-1647**

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## Small Claims Court

If your landlord does not make repairs after you have given written notice, you have the right to take your landlord to court. If your home is not livable, your landlord has violated the lease. This also gives you the right to move out without further rent payment, after giving proper notice to your landlord, even if you still have time on your lease. **If you stay in the home, you do NOT have the right to stop paying rent. You can sue for rent abatement from Small Claims Court.** The court may award you a refund of all or part of the rent you paid during the time your landlord was in violation of the lease.

To file a claim in Small Claims Court, go to the **Civil Filing Division on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Judicial Building, 201 E. Main St.** They can help you fill out the forms. The filing fee can be waived if you cannot afford it. For more information, call the **Clerk of the Civil Court at 564-7050** or the **Civil Magistrate at 564-7250**.

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## Eviction

A landlord must go to court before evicting a tenant for not paying rent, or for violating any other terms of the lease. **You should get a notice of your court date.** These rules apply:

- Your landlord must win a court judgement before evicting you from your home.
- You cannot be locked out of the home before the court makes a decision.
- You must be informed that action is being taken against you and for what reason.
- If you pay what you owe plus court costs before or on the court date, the landlord cannot evict you, but you must bring the receipt to the court hearing.
- After the magistrate makes a judgement, you have 10 days to appeal, but you may have to pay a bond (usually the amount of the judgement) and future rent to the court.
- If you do not appeal, the landlord can get an order to have the Sheriff evict you within about 15 days of the hearing date.
- If you are evicted by the court process and your belongings are padlocked inside, the landlord must give you 10 days to get them.

**Your landlord may not evict you in retaliation for filing a Housing Code complaint for 12 months or the end of your lease, but you must continue to pay rent.** If your landlord threatens a retaliatory eviction, call **City Housing Inspections, 560-1647**, or **Legal Aid, 688-6396**. If you are threatened with an illegal eviction, **call the Sheriff's Civil Process Office at 560-0901**.

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## Legal Aid

Free legal advice and representation in civil cases is provided to low-income people by the **Legal Aid of NC, 201 W. Main St., Suite 400 688-6396**. Call first to find out if you qualify and to make an appointment.

The **N.C. Lawyer Referral Service at 800-662-7660** can help you find a low cost lawyer.

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## Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning can cause permanent learning disabilities, brain damage, and other health problems. Children under age 6 are most at risk for lead poisoning. A child with lead poisoning does not appear sick. The only way to find out if your child has lead poisoning is to get all children under age 6 tested.

To get your child tested, ask your doctor or **get a free test at the Durham County Health Department, 560-7700**.

Homes built before 1978 may have lead-based paint that could be dangerous to your family. If a child under six has a high lead level, the Health Department will test homes where the child lives or stays.

The City has grants to remove lead from homes, for more information, call the **City Community Development Dept., 560-4570**.

Homes built before 1986 may have lead solder in pipes. **To test your water for lead, call City Water, 560-4386**.

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## Fair Housing

You have the right to live anywhere you want, regardless of who you are or where you are from. Fair Housing Law prohibits discrimination in rental or sale of homes. It is **illegal for a landlord to discriminate against you based on race, religion, sex, color,**

**national origin, handicap** (physical or mental disability or illness, including HIV/AIDS), or **familial status** (for example, if you have children or are pregnant).

Housing discrimination can take many forms. The law prohibits these practices:

- refusal to sell, rent, or lease,
- refusal to make reasonable accommodation or modification for the disabled,
- refusal to accommodate families with children,
- discriminatory advertising,
- discriminatory financing,
- steering (such as directing minorities only to predominantly minority areas).

Discrimination can be indirect as well as obvious. For example, if you are told over the telephone that a home is available but are then informed it has been rented when you arrive in person to inspect it, discrimination may have occurred.

**The Fair Housing Act of 1988 requires that apartment buildings with 4 or more units built after March 1991 are accessible to disabled persons.** All units in buildings with elevators and all ground-floor units in buildings without elevators must be accessible.

In all apartments, a landlord must make reasonable accommodations and allow reasonable modifications to meet the needs of a disabled tenant. For example, a landlord should make common areas accessible to all tenants and should permit a tenant to install grab bars and other modifications to the home.

If you have any suspicions or complaints about the treatment you receive when renting or buying a home in Durham, contact the **City of Durham Human Relations Department at 560-4107**, on the first floor of City Hall, Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm.

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## Connecting Utilities

After you sign the lease and pay the security deposit, you can move in, but you may need to connect utilities. Some apartments include utilities in the rent, but in most cases you will have to pay to connect utilities as well as monthly bills. If you have no credit or bad

credit you may be required to pay a security deposit or have a co-signor or credit reference.

### Electricity

Duke Power Company 382-3200

**Connection:** Free. Requests can be made by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Security deposit (if required):** \$175

Duke Power accepts Master Card and Visa.

### Gas

PSNC Energy 877-776-2427 (toll free)

**Installation:** \$30-200 (depends on location)

**Security deposit (if required):** \$125

### Water

City of Durham Customer & Billing Service  
560-4411 ext. 2

**Connection:** \$30

You will need to bring a copy of your lease when you request a connection.

**If you have a high water bill due to a leak that was repaired, contact customer service for information about bill reduction.**

### Telephone

Verizon 800-483-4000

Northgate Mall – 286-7336

**Connection:** Starts at \$43, increases with additional services. **A 50% reduction in the basic rate is available for recipients of SSI, TANF, or food stamps.**

**Security deposit (if required):** \$105 or more

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## Public Housing & Section 8 (Housing Choice Voucher)

Public Housing and Section 8 are programs offered by the government to help people with very low income. Public Housing residents pay up to 30% of their income each month for rent and utilities for apartments owned by the Durham Housing Authority. People in the Section 8 program live in privately owned apartments and pay at least 30% of their monthly income for rent and utilities.

**Applications are accepted when funding is available for the Section 8 (HCV) Program.**

**Applications for Public Housing are accepted from 9 am to 3 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The office is closed to the**

public on Wednesdays. The application is online for your convenience. Inquiries are submitted in writing via the Durham Housing Authority website, at [www.durhamhousingauthority.org](http://www.durhamhousingauthority.org), or in person at the central office. If you are awaiting available housing, you must keep your address up to date by informing DHA in writing each time you move. Update forms are available at the central office. DHA has adopted selection preferences to confirm placement of those families with the greatest need before others. Your application may be selected and approved before others (if your are 62 or older, disabled, a homeless veteran, living at a shelter, or have been involuntarily displaced.)

To apply for Public Housing: go to the Durham Housing Authority, 330 East Main Street, 9am-3pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

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### If You Can't Pay Your Rent...

The following public, private, and religious organizations provide rental assistance and other services. Eligibility and funds are limited, so call first to see what is available. You may also try contacting individual churches.

**Department of Social Services 560-8000**  
[www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/dssv](http://www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/dssv)

**Family w/ children Emergency Services:**  
300 N. Duke Street 560-8301

**Elderly & Disabled Emergency Services:**  
220 E. Main Street 560-8600

DSS administers programs such as TANF, Food Stamps and Medicaid. DSS also offers emergency assistance with rent, utilities, heat, food, and medical bills.

**Operation Breakthrough 688-8111**  
800 N. Mangum St. 8:00am - 5:00pm

**FEATSS Services 688-8111 ext. 228**  
(Family Empowerment Action to Self Sufficiency).

**Utility Assistance 688-8111 ext. 228**  
Limited to when funds available from DSS.

**Presbyterian Urban Ministries 220-8757**  
2504 N Roxboro Rd. Call for appointment.  
(Housed in Northgate Presbyterian Church, but not part of the church.)

Serves senior citizens, disabled adults, and families with young children. Limited assistance for utility bills, rent and medication. Must provide wage stubs and receipts for the past 30 days that show at least 85% was spent for basic necessities. Average assistance \$50.

**Catholic Charities 286-1964**  
902 Broad Street (call for appointment)

Small amounts of emergency assistance for rent and utilities. Offers family and individual counseling for a sliding fee.

**Second Mile Ministry 286-3596**  
**Grey Stone Baptist Church**  
2601 Hillsborough Rd. (Wednesdays 9:00am-12:00)

Line up early. Food, emergency rent & utility assistance.

**Women In Action 680-4575**  
634 Foster Street (call for appointment)

Serves disabled adults, senior citizens and families with children. May not have funds.

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### Help for Special Populations

**AIDS Community Residence Association (ACRA) 956-7901**

Housing assistance for people with HIV/AIDS.

**Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) 493-8141**

Support for adults with developmental disabilities to live independently.

**Council for Senior Citizens 688-8247**  
406 Rigsbee Ave. Suite 202  
(in the Senior Center)

Services for seniors age 60 and over.  
[www.councilseniorcitizens.org](http://www.councilseniorcitizens.org)

**Department of Social Services      560-8000**

Long-term care and housing assistance for disabled & elderly.

<http://longtermcare.durhamcountync.info/>

**Independent Living                      560-6815**

Housing information, placement and modifications for people with severe physical disabilities.

**The Durham Center                      560-7200**

**24-hour service                      560-7100**

[www.durhamcenter.org/index.php/citizen/services/housing](http://www.durhamcenter.org/index.php/citizen/services/housing)

Mental health services and housing assistance for people with mental illness, development disabilities, and substance abuse treatment needs.

**Salvation Army                          688-7306**

**909 Liberty Street**

Call office at 8 am. for an appointment. Clients must be in emergency situation or demonstrate need for help to stay in the home. Some utility assistance.

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## Emergency Housing (short-term)

### Urban Ministries Community Shelter

410 Liberty St. 682-0538 ext. 21

Kitchen: M-F 8:15-9am, 11-12:30, 7-7:45pm

S-S: 9:30-10:30am, 12:30-1:15, 7-7:45pm

### Durham Rescue Mission Men's Shelter

1201 E. Main St. 688-9641

Women & Family Shelter 688-4909

### Interfaith Hospitality Network 682-2846

Shelter for families with children.

### Durham Crisis Response Center 403-6562

24 hour crisis line for victims of domestic or sexual violence.

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## Transitional Housing (longer term)

### Genesis Home 683-5878

(Homeless families)

### Phoenix House (Men) 680-0371

### Dove House (Women) 682-3777

### CAARE, Inc. (HIV/AIDS) 683-5300

### Housing for New Hope 489-6282

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## Project Based Vouchers

### Life House of Durham (Disabled) 477-0427

### Maple Court Apts. 477-0571 (Homeless veterans)

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## Home Ownership & Rental Homes

### Durham Housing Authority Residents and other interested parties may call Resident Services at 683-8596

### Rebuild Durham 680-8805 Rental homes.

### Durham Community Land Trust 490-0063 Homeownership, lease-to-buy & rental homes.

### Durham Habitat for Humanity 682-0516 Homeownership.

### Rebuild Durham 680-8805 Rental homes.

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## Home Repairs

### City Community Development Department HOMEOWNERS ONLY. 560-4570

### Operation Breakthrough 688-8111 x270

800 N. Mangum St. 8:00am - 5:00pm

Free weatherization and related repairs for qualified renters and homeowners.

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## Credit Problems

### Durham Regional Financial Center 688-3381 315 E. Chapel Hill Street

Offers credit and budget counseling and debt management. An appointment is necessary.

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## Home Ownership Information

Are you tired of renting? Do you spend \$500 a month in rent? Owning a home may not be out of your reach.

For free classes, counseling and information on buying a home, contact the:

### Durham Affordable Housing Coalition 683-1185 400 W. Main St., #408

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## Rooming establishments (weekly hotels)

### Econ Plaza (men only) 682-8058 3115 Fayetteville Street

### Durham Residential Hall 680-2261 (women only) 425 Pilot Street

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## Assisted Living For Seniors

### Council for Senior Citizens 688-8247 Durham County Senior Resource Directory [www.councilseniorcitizens.org](http://www.councilseniorcitizens.org)

### Department of Social Services 560-8000 Long-term care and housing listings. <http://longtermcare.durhamcountync.info/>

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## Citizen Resources

Emergencies (Police, Fire, Ambulance) 911

United Way 211 Website

<http://cg.servicept.com/nc211/>

City of Durham One Call 560-1200

[www.ci.durham.nc.us/departments/onecall](http://www.ci.durham.nc.us/departments/onecall)

County of Durham Social Services 560-8000

[www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/dssv](http://www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/dssv)

NC Citizen Help Line

800-662-7952

**RENTAL HOUSING REALTORS AND LANDLORDS (\* = participates in Section 8 for some units)**

Aintree Properties (James Holiday)	477-4274		
* Alexander, Robert 611 Old Barn Avenue	477-8082		
Allenton Management 3500 Westgate Dr., Suite 901	490-9050		
Apartment Book <a href="http://www.apartmentfinder.com">www.apartmentfinder.com</a>	1-800-365-5755		
Apartment Finder	<a href="http://www.apartmentfinder.com">www.apartmentfinder.com</a>		
Apple Realty 2911 Guess Road	<a href="http://www.applerealty.org">http://www.applerealty.org/</a>	471-2007	
* Associates Realty Co. 1215 Fayetteville Street	683-8711		
* Azzu, Joseph	933-7792		
* BECCO Investment Company 3006 Guess Road	477-9116		
Bergman Rentals 2814 Chapel Hill Road	493-3559		
* Bhotika, Santosh <a href="mailto:scbhotika@verizon.net">scbhotika@verizon.net</a>	361-5011		
Booth Real Estate, Inc. 1106 West Cornwallis Road #205	403-1886		
* Builders of Hope 410 Market Street, Suite 330 Chapel Hill, NC 27516 <a href="http://www.buildersofhope.org">www.buildersofhope.org</a>	800-277-6138		
* Cherry Realty 3300 Guess Road, Suite 8	477-9659		
* DSK, Inc. (Davinder Virk)	345-5429		
* Durham Community Land Trustees 1208 West Chapel Hill Street	490-0063		
* Durham Housing Authority 330 E. Main St.	683-1551		
			* Edgewood Props. (Eleanor Bergman) 1811 Chapel Hill Rd. 403-0774
			* Eno Realty, LLC 957-9404
			* Equity Group (Ron Cooper) 225-4889
			* Hamlett Properties 493-3983 or 489-8349
			* Haskell Properties (James White) 2900 E. Pettigrew St. 596-2771
			* Haynie, Angela 423-3624
			* Heritage Rental 411 Andrews Road Suite 110 383-8518
			* Joe Hicks Real Estate 3315 Guess Road 471-0100
			* J. W. Jackson Jeffrey & Co. 596-6254 3200 Croasdaile Dr., Suite 601 383-3115
			* Jim Lilly Properties 930 Martin Luther King Blvd. 967-9992
			* Living Space Company PO Box 71122 824-0235 824-0230
			* L. S. Properties PO Box 14331 806-8259
			* MoGeo 260-4051
			* Service Plus Realty 508 Simmons Street 688-3981
			* Owen and Associates 688-3981
			* Sharon Cooper 730-4859
			Dick Patton Real Estate 3115 Guess Road 620-8681
			* Perry, Robert 683-8685

**RENTAL HOUSING REALTORS AND LANDLORDS (\* = participates in Section 8 for some units)**

* Quality Realty 1218 Shady Lane	471-3557	Sunshine Senior Lodging	688-7446
* Real Estate Associates 3633 Durham Chapel Hill Boulevard	489-1777	*Thomas, Herman	620-1700
* Realty Ventures 3201 Yorktown Ave., Suite 103	544-3211	* Thorpe, Robert	490-8641
Rent Man Research Triangle Park	544-1896	* Timlic, Vivian	477-8472
* Robert Rentals 411 Andrews Road	383-8518	Trinity Properties (Guy Solie) 2723 Campus Walk Ave	309-9765
* Robert & Joyce Rental Properties (handicap accessible house)	477-8472 632-6475	* Tucker, Cora	479-6000
* Bob Schmitz Properties 1222 Broad Street, Suite A	416-0393	* Underwood Properties	489-0579
* Rick Soles Property Management 1423 Broad St.	286-2040	* Virk, Raj	599-6615
* Service Plus Realty 508 Simmons Street (Ivan K. Owens)/cell <a href="http://www.serviceplusrealty.com">www.serviceplusrealty.com</a>	688-7388 614-6264	*VLBP Construction & Realty 311 Feldspar Way (Vincent Shaw)	358-1829
* Southeast Real Estate Management Co. 3709 University Drive, Suite A	419-1200	* VS Rich Properties Service 1409 Broad Street	286-9333
* Southern Real Estate Management 2721 Durham Chapel Hill Blvd., Suite C	493-4523	* Weichert Realtors 3901 University Drive	403-5315
* Spivey, Douglas	828-3857	* Williams, James	682-4207
		* Woodland Properties (Jim Pou) 1150-2 Executive Circle, Cary, NC	469-0260
		* Wooten, Debra P. O. Box 15183 Durham, NC 27704	599-4716

To download a copy of the Rental Guide or for more information on  
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# Apartment Search Guide

Landlord	Location	Cost	Size	Questions

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(4<sup>th</sup> floor of the South Bank Building)  
400 W. Main Street, Suite 408  
Durham, NC 27701