

## **Making it a home: Checklist and considerations**

This tip sheet covers the things you should consider when you move into a new home. This includes moving, utilities, telephone, furnishings, informing others of your change of address, transferring prescriptions, cleaning, and learning about your new neighbourhood.

### **Moving Services, Prescriptions and Belongings**

Find a moving method:

- This may include truck rental or hiring movers.
- Ask if a friend or family member is available to help.
- Utilize the Housing Stability Program through Community Development Council Durham for financial assistance for moving costs.

### **Arrange to have utilities disconnected and transferred to new address**

This may include water, hydroelectricity, gas (heat), sewage, cable, Internet, and telephone. Here are some quick tips:

- Confirm with your landlord which utilities you are responsible for and which companies service the unit.
- To ensure you are billed correctly, contact utility provider and let them know that you need to start a new account.
- If you don't have enough money for the full deposit, ask if you can have the deposit deferred over a longer period.
- Ask about budgeting options or equal billing to spread payments out over the year. This may make it easier to budget during colder months when heating costs rise.
- If you receive social assistance, consider asking to arrange for direct payment to the utility company.



- If you are paying hydro in your new unit and are low-income, you may be eligible to apply for the [Ontario Electricity Support Program](#) to reduce your monthly hydro costs
- Be mindful that setting up new accounts may mean start up fees.

### **Telephone and Internet – landline and/or cellular service**

- Explore service options and opportunities to reduce your monthly spending.
- If you are open to trying a new provider, be sure to get rates from multiple companies to get the best deal.
- Check out this [information on low-cost internet](#) for low-income families.

### **Update service providers on your move-in date, new address, and contact details**

Update your address for:

- People/organizations such as friends, relatives, and/or religious groups.
- Professional services such as a doctor or dentist.
- Government services:
  - For Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program select [Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services](#) and search “address change” in quotation marks. Also, contact your case worker and submit the required address change documents.
  - For Canada Revenue Agency, Canada Pension Plan and/or Old Age Security, go to [Service Canada](#) and search “Changing your address.”
  - For identity documents: (e.g., Driver’s Licence, Ontario Photo Card) and Health card, go to [Service Ontario](#) and search “change your address.”
- If you are concerned you may forget to contact someone, arrange to have your mail forwarded; change your address through Canada Post; go to your local Canada Post office and pick up a “Change of Address” booklet (free). For Canada Post’s mail forwarding service, visit [Canada Post](#).



## Transfer prescriptions - contact your local pharmacy

For a list of local pharmacies visit [The Health Line](#) or the [Community Care Access Centre \(CCAC\)](#).

## Clean and Organize your Home

- Before you unpack, take steps to wash and sanitize surfaces and consider how you will organize and store your items.
- Take stock - consider if you'll need the following:
  - Broom and dustpan, vacuum, mop and bucket, wash cloths and sponges;
  - Bins or tubs of various sizes to organize and store loose items; and
  - Nails or hooks to hang items such as pictures, a clock, etc.
- It's often best to clean your new place before you unpack. (wipe down counters, cupboards, walls, and appliances with disinfectant; sweep and mop floors; vacuum and steam clean carpets, etc.)
- Here's a list of resources to help you keep your unit in good condition and make your house feel like a home:
  - [How to clean your home before you move in](#)
  - [How to clean a house](#)
  - [Sample daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning schedules](#)

## Learn more about your new neighbourhood

- This may include grocery stores, walk-in clinics, community centres, or places of worship.
- Use [Google Maps](#) - Type in your new address and then search by category, e.g., grocery store, bank, medical, church, etc.
- Take a walk around your neighbourhood, making note of local points of interest.



## Locate low-cost sources of food in your neighbourhood

There are many low-cost and free food options available in Durham Region, including food banks/hampers, drop-in meal programs, and community gardens.

- For a summary of Drop-in and Meal Programs in Durham Region, please visit [Durham Food Banks](#).
- For tips on how to eat healthy on a budget contact the dietitians at [Dietitians of Canada](#). For free information and resources call [Telehealth](#) 1-866-797-0000 to speak with a free dietitian, or visit [Unlock Food](#).

