

What is a Basic Business License?

The law requires that all landlords renting property in the District of Columbia have a Basic Business License (BBL). It is required by the Department of Consumer Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) with the renter in mind. The BBL is obtained once a landlord's property has been inspected for such things as egress, electrical systems, smoke detectors, etc. This license helps to make sure that landlords are keeping their properties in a livable and safe condition for those that are renting the property. It is important to make sure that landlords are in accordance with local laws.

The Off Campus Housing Resource Services will not list any applicable properties that do not have a Basis Business License. As a student you should ask to see their BBL and to make sure that it is displayed in the house. Make note of how long it has been since the BBL has been issued and the date of expiration. A BBL is valid for two years before it expires. Also, check to see if the basement has been certified by the BBL, especially if someone plans to sleep there.

This is not something to worry about, but being an informed renter is to your advantage and will assist in helping your rental work out well.