

WORK CENTRAL AB

Finding Housing

Renting or Buying Your Next Home in Central Alberta

A Career Resource from Work Central AB

Finding Housing in Central Alberta

Whether you're renting or buying, Central Alberta offers more attainable housing than most major Canadian cities. This guide walks through the process of finding a place that fits your budget and lifestyle.

1. Renting in Central Alberta

- Search rental listing sites, local Facebook rental groups, and property management company websites for current listings.
- Have documents ready before you apply: photo ID, proof of income or employment, and references from previous landlords.
- Rental markets can be competitive for well-priced units, so be prepared to view and apply quickly.
- Understand standard lease terms in Alberta, including damage deposit limits (typically capped at one month's rent) and notice periods for ending a tenancy.

2. Buying a Home

- Get pre-approved for a mortgage before house hunting, so you know your realistic budget.
- Work with a local real estate agent familiar with Central Alberta communities and neighbourhoods.
- Factor in closing costs beyond the purchase price: legal fees, home inspection, and property transfer costs.
- Compare home prices across communities - Red Deer, Lacombe, Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake, and Olds each offer different price points and lifestyles.

3. Temporary Accommodation

If you're relocating before securing permanent housing, consider short-term options while you search:

- Extended-stay hotels and furnished short-term rentals.
- Short-term leases or month-to-month arrangements, where available.
- Staying with contacts or through community/newcomer networks while you search locally, which also helps you get a feel for different neighbourhoods.

4. Choosing the Right Community

Community Snapshot

Red Deer - the region's largest centre, with the broadest range of housing, amenities, and employers.

Sylvan Lake - a lake community popular for lifestyle and recreation, with a summer tourism economy.

Lacombe & Blackfalds - smaller, growing communities with a strong sense of community and shorter commutes to Red Deer.

Olds - known for its post-secondary institution and agricultural ties, with a small-town feel.

5. Red Flags to Watch For

- Listings that ask for payment or a deposit before you've viewed the unit in person or via a verified virtual tour.
- Landlords unwilling to provide a written lease agreement.
- Prices significantly below market rate for the area, which can be a sign of a scam listing.

6. Working With a Realtor or Property Manager

- A local real estate agent can help buyers navigate offers, inspections, and closing timelines specific to Central Alberta's market.
- Property management companies often list and manage a large share of rental units in Red Deer and surrounding communities - worth checking directly, in addition to individual landlord listings.
- Ask any agent or property manager about their familiarity with newcomer or relocation situations, since some are more experienced supporting out-of-province or international movers.

7. Common Housing Questions

Frequently Asked Questions

How much notice do I need to give to end a lease in Alberta? Notice periods depend on your lease type (month-to-month vs. fixed-term); review your lease agreement and Alberta's Residential Tenancies Act for specifics.

Is a damage deposit required? Most landlords require a damage deposit, which in Alberta is capped at one month's rent.

Can I view listings remotely before moving? Many landlords and agents offer virtual tours or video walkthroughs - a helpful option if you're relocating from outside the region.

Housing Search Checklist

- ✓ Determined a realistic housing budget
- ✓ Gathered rental application documents or mortgage pre-approval
- ✓ Researched communities that fit your lifestyle and commute needs
- ✓ Arranged temporary accommodation if needed
- ✓ Reviewed lease terms or purchase costs before committing

Keep Planning Your Move With Work Central AB

Explore our Housing Affordability Calculator and community guides at workcentralab.ca/resources to compare options across the region.