

Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank
ANNUAL REPORT
2011/12



HOJO Timeline

- 1984 The CUSA Job Bank service was open only for the summer. Students could look at postings, or if a job needed to be filled the Job Bank contacted students. Opened as the Federal Student Employment Centre on Campus the service was often criticized as bureaucratic and unresponsive to the needs of the majority of students.
- 1988 CUSA Housing Service opened in collaboration with the already running Off-Campus Housing Service of the Dean of Student's Office. The service's focus was on finding affordable housing for students, offering apartment listings on a bulletin board and free phones to contact landlords.
- 1988 The CUSA Job Bank was computerized.
- 1989 The CUSA Housing Service expanded to include promoting tenant rights information and assistance to students.
- 1991 CUSA Housing Service offered its first Housing Handbook. The CUSA Housing Service and CUSA Job Bank were offered in the same room, H-637.

Even as far back as 1997, the CCSL provided some funding to our services.



The Concordia Student Union Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank (HOJO) works to empower, educate and support the Concordia community by providing reliable housing and employment information, resources and referrals. We encourage a proactive approach towards finding adequate housing, part-time and summer employment.

The CSU Off-Campus Housing & Job Bank is guided by the following core values:

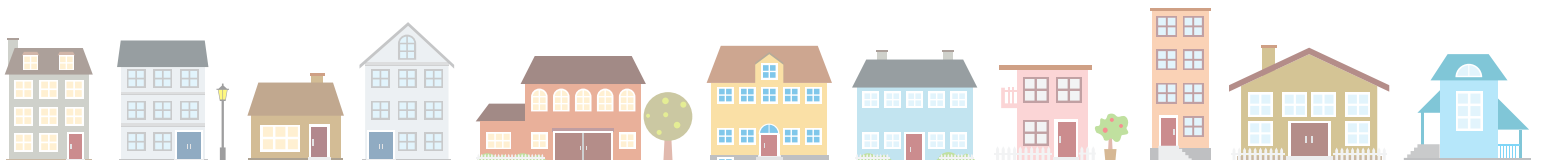
- ★ We respect the dignity and rights of all beneficiaries of HOJO services.
- ★ We recognize that students have unique needs with respect to their time and budgetary constraints.
- ★ The main means we use to achieve our objectives is our staff; the personalized interaction offered is a major strength in dealing with sometimes difficult situations.
- ★ The transparent exchange of information, ideas, knowledge and values is essential to the achievement of our mission.
- ★ The management of HOJO is done with openness and integrity; we are accountable to the undergraduate students of Concordia University.
- ★ We believe that continuous improvement enabled by client feedback is essential to maintaining the high quality of our services.
- ★ We ensure the right to confidentiality and privacy with respect to information provided to us by students.
- ★ We recognize that some governmental organizations may have limitations of scope with regards to meeting the unique needs of students in both official languages. Therefore we cater our services with this in mind.

HOJO is a service that is centered on students' needs. We strive to support students in learning about and exercising their rights as tenants and employees.

HOJO Team

The HOJO team for 2011-2012 was:

- ★ Alain Asafor
- ★ Datson Yan
- ★ Juwairia Awan
- ★ Michaela Holt
- ★ Nadia Prevost-Lowry
- ★ Leanne Ashworth



Letter to CCSL

Dear CCSL members,

We would like to thank the Concordia Council on Student Life for its many years of support to our service. This year we are continuing to react to several trends we see in needs related to housing and employment for students including:

- ★ A greater reliance on online sources for information.
- ★ A city-wide bed bug problem which leaves students especially vulnerable as they are mobile tenants with limited funds.
- ★ A large and diverse student population made up of international, out-of-province, Anglophone, allophone, parents and visible minorities, who have their unique challenges regarding employment and housing.
- ★ The increasing trend of housing discrimination that our students are facing based on ethnicity, country of origin, social condition, age, etc.
- ★ The continuing need for quality part-time or casual jobs, and internships

We believe that quality service is essential, so training for employees is an ongoing project. Trainings by government and community organizations and their accompanying documents are essential to our service.

This year HOJO has continued our campaigns around the difficult issue of housing discrimination students face as well as the student's right-to-privacy. We hope to continue to proactively address such problems in the future through widespread education and awareness raising, in our office, in our workshops and on our website.

Thanks again for your support. If you have questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to working with you for another year.

Nadine Attalah, CSU's VP Internal and Clubs
Leanne Ashworth, HOJO Coordinator



CAMPAIGN ON HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Our housing discrimination awareness campaign continued throughout 2011 and 2012. We regularly receive students who are dealing with issues that stem from discrimination for various reasons, but our message to them is consistent. We let them know that being treated differently due to citizenship, race, language or religion is not permitted. Landlords have to follow the provincial housing regulations for all students. We want students to be aware of the problem, particularly in the Ville-Marie area. We let them know how we are able to assist them and that they are not alone.

CASE STUDY

Lin moved into an apartment with a month-to month lease, and paid a deposit equal to the first month's rent in order to secure the apartment. Upon moving out, the landlord accused him of water damage, on the basis of a tiny stain on the carpet, and refused to give his deposit back. Lin wrote the landlord a registered letter, which caused the landlord to start negotiating, offering him a portion of the deposit back, on the basis that they were both Chinese. The student refused and wrote a second letter, to which the landlord finally relented to and returned the full deposit.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY CAMPAIGN

Each year HOJO discusses the importance of keeping confidential information safe when applying for apartments. We also provide ways to get private information returned after it has already been given. This campaign has grown as this information is disproportionately demanded of certain students in certain neighborhoods. The right to privacy ties into discrimination as well, since the more private information a landlord or employer may have, the more reason they may have to refuse the student.

CASE STUDY

Luis and Jorge, two Brazilian exchange students came to the HOJO office looking for help finding an apartment. They were staying in a hotel and hoped to rent as soon as possible. When the students learned about their privacy rights they decided against handing out their out private information. They returned to our office and discussed their experiences of landlords discriminating against them based on their international status and complained that their accents were working against them in proving their credibility as tenants. The students showed HOJO multiple application forms that included many illegal requests for information. Their search for housing took more than 2 weeks due to their reluctance to pay an illegal deposit or provide their banking information.



LANDLORD AND EMPLOYER COMPLAINT DATABASE

Our database is now up-to date with 192 different landlord and employer complaints files. This number increased from last year's 160 complaint files. These new complaint files do not take into account the numerous complaints added to already existing files. Interestingly, many of our housing complaints focus on a few buildings and companies within certain areas including Ville-Marie, the Plateau Mont-Royal and St-Henri. We use this database to inform students of others' experiences in order to prepare them for challenges that they too may face in renting an apartment from a specific landlord or working with a specific employer. As well, if we have received a complaint about a landlord or employer and they attempt to post an ad on our site, we inform them we have received a complaint about their practices and request they send us documentation that outlines how they manage their buildings including the lease form they use. We also now specifically request information on their bedbug protocol.

This database allows us to offer a higher quality service by filtering through students' bad experiences and allowing us to provide students with better quality housing and employment opportunities.

BED BUGS CAMPAIGN

The bedbug problem continues especially for tenants and travelers in Montreal. HOJO focuses on raising awareness and knowledge about bedbugs and how to deal with them. We provide resources and support to students on how to report the problem and how to ensure the correct protocol is followed.

CASE STUDY

Abby and Lisa came into the HOJO office complaining that there had been a sewage flood in their downtown apartment. Their landlord had taken over three days to clean up the mess. The students complained that there was a lingering smell and were worried about bacteria. As the janitor had mopped up the flood without a cleaning product. After sending a registered letter, the landlord agreed to clean the apartment properly and moved them temporarily upstairs to a different furnished apartment. Their first night in the temporary apartment they discovered that their beds were crawling with bedbugs. HOJO encouraged the students to write another urgent registered letter recording everything that happened should they need to seek legal recourse at the Regie du logement.



HEATING CAMPAIGN

We have created a new postcard informing students on how to deal with their heating issues. This problem is especially urgent and too many students spend Montreal Winters without adequate heating in their apartments. We provide the necessary information of how to record temperatures and help students in demanding necessary repairs.

CASE STUDY

Alexandra and Jacques were renting an apartment in Verdun and left the province over the Christmas holidays to visit family. During their absence their heat was suddenly shut off causing their pipes to freeze. When they returned they contacted their landlord who informed them that he would “look over things perhaps in the new year”. The students set up space heaters all around their kitchen and had to endure without heat for an extended period of time, until the landlord found the time to look into things. They wrote registered letters and eventually moved apartments.

INCREASED WEB PRESENCE

In an effort to provide services to people outside of our office hours we are continuing to look at ways to reach people online with reliable, well-researched resources. HOJO uses both Facebook and Twitter to inform people about on current housing and employment issues. There is more information on our Social Media use in the Outreach section. We have also noted that students are increasingly relying on online interactions to obtain housing and jobs. HOJO warns students to be wary of fraud – an online occurrence that happens all too frequently.



ACCOMPANIMENT

Due to a variety of factors HOJO has started accompanying students to other resources. The motivation for this is based on the severity of the situation, and different barriers the student may face including language, cultural, intimidation, and general vulnerability. Some accompaniments that we have made over the last year are to the Regie du logement, the police department, and to legal clinics. While we do not have any official role on these visits, providing support for these students is imperative.

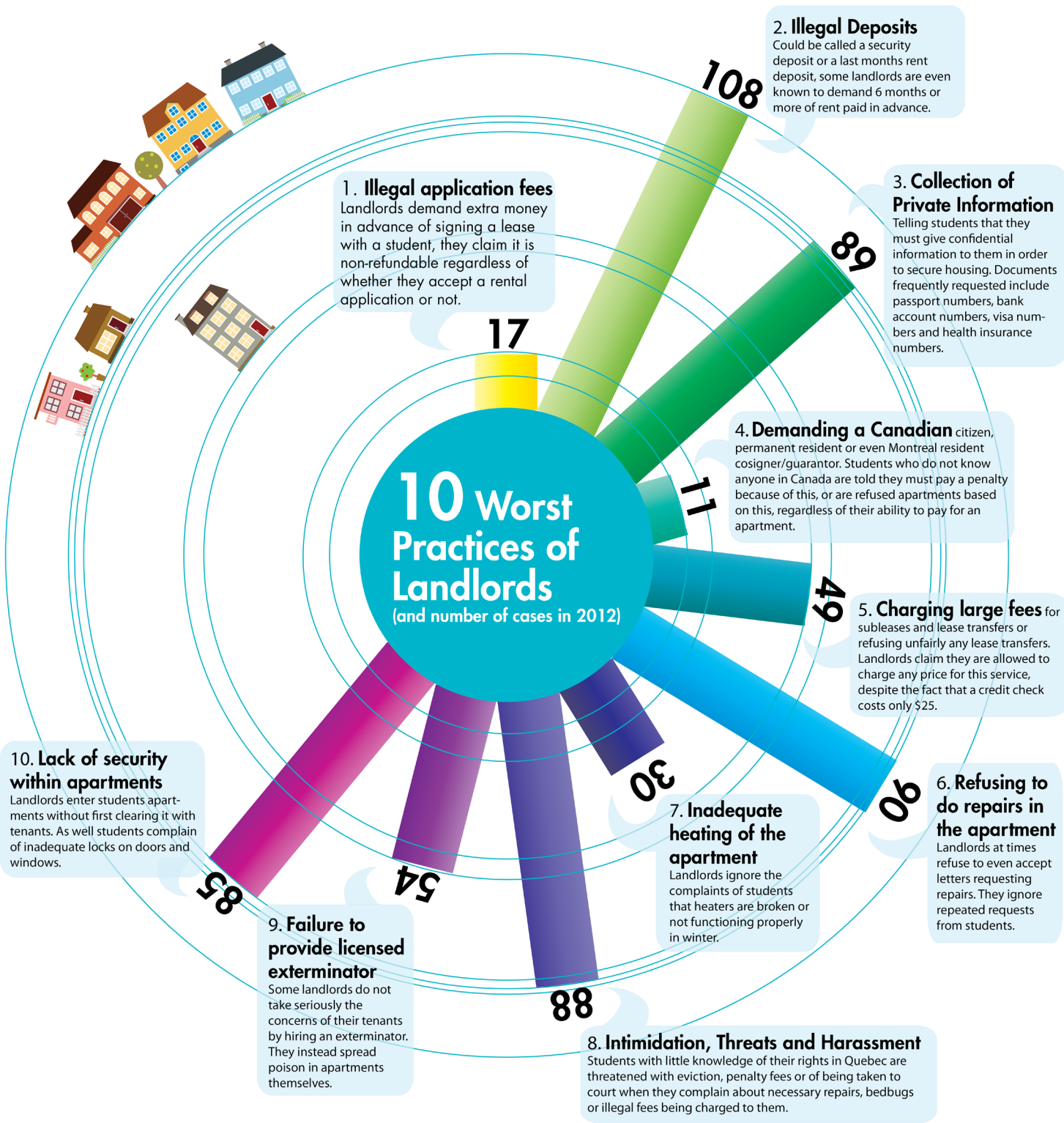
CASE STUDY

Hamid, an international student came to the HOJO asking for help with his upcoming case at the Regie de logement. He had rented an apartment downtown and lived with bedbugs for 6 months before moving out. He was in the process of suing his landlord for damages and a retroactive rent reduction. When the problem began the student noticed he had a rash and was having trouble sleeping. He did not clearly identify the problem for a few months and sought medical help. He was referred to numerous doctors and even a psychologist. His studies began to suffer as he grew more sleep-deprived. After a couple of months his neighbors informed him that the problem was bedbugs. He spoke to his landlord numerous times with no results. The landlord came in to the students' apartment on one occasion and sprayed an unidentified chemical over everything in the apartment, which didn't solve the problem and ended up destroying some of the student's things, including his prayer mat. When he came to the HOJO for assistance we encouraged the student to send a registered letter outlining the problem and asking for an accredited exterminator to be hired. Months later HOJO accompanied the student to his Regie hearing. There was a language barrier and the judge stated she "hoped the student spoke French" to which he replied that he didn't. The landlord communicated with the judge in French and HOJO was able to translate for the student. Over the course of the hearing the landlord attempted to change the focus by disparaging the tenant's behavior in his own apartment. The landlord argued he could not continue to exterminate as he had entered the tenants apartment unannounced one day and found the tenant naked. The tenant then explained he had been in the shower and found the landlord in his apartment one morning. Without assistance the tenant would never have known such accusations were being made due to the language of the hearing. The decision from the Regie is pending.



10 Worst Practices of Landlords

(and number of cases in 2012)



1. Illegal application fees

Landlords demand extra money in advance of signing a lease with a student, they claim it is non-refundable regardless of whether they accept a rental application or not.

2. Illegal Deposits

Could be called a security deposit or a last months rent deposit, some landlords are even known to demand 6 months or more of rent paid in advance.

3. Collection of Private Information

Telling students that they must give confidential information to them in order to secure housing. Documents frequently requested include passport numbers, bank account numbers, visa numbers and health insurance numbers.

4. Demanding a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or even Montreal resident cosigner/guarantor.

Students who do not know anyone in Canada are told they must pay a penalty because of this, or are refused apartments based on this, regardless of their ability to pay for an apartment.

5. Charging large fees for subleases and lease transfers or refusing unfairly any lease transfers.

Landlords claim they are allowed to charge any price for this service, despite the fact that a credit check costs only \$25.

6. Refusing to do repairs in the apartment

Landlords at times refuse to even accept letters requesting repairs. They ignore repeated requests from students.

7. Inadequate heating of the apartment

Landlords ignore the complaints of students that heaters are broken or not functioning properly in winter.

8. Intimidation, Threats and Harassment

Students with little knowledge of their rights in Quebec are threatened with eviction, penalty fees or of being taken to court when they complain about necessary repairs, bedbugs or illegal fees being charged to them.

9. Failure to provide licensed exterminator

Some landlords do not take seriously the concerns of their tenants by hiring an exterminator. They instead spread poison in apartments themselves.

10. Lack of security within apartments

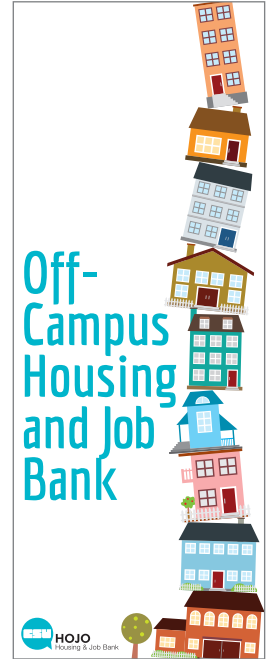
Landlords enter students apartments without first clearing it with tenants. As well students complain of inadequate locks on doors and windows.

Rebranding

HOJO OFFICE REDECORATION



HOJO REBRANDING





Off-Campus Housing & Job Bank

Service de logement et d'emploi hors campus

hojo.csu.qc.ca

CSU HOJO

382 likes · 3 talking about this · 0 were here

Like Message

Non-Profit Organization
The CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank offers tons of information regarding employee and tenant rights. We also offer a welcoming and confidential



About

Photos

Likes

Map

Events

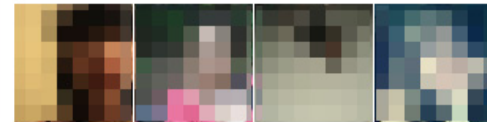
Highlights

Post Photo / Video

Write something...

CSU HOJO
16 minutes ago via Twitter

4 Friends
Like CSU HOJO



1 SOUTH-WEST MONTREAL & VERDUN

- + 1 1/2 - \$504
- + 3 1/2 - \$597
- + 4 1/2 - \$651
- + 5 1/2 - \$747

Metro Stations:
Charlevoix, de L'Église,
LaSalle, Verdun

2 CÔTE-DES-NEIGES, MONT-ROYAL & OUTREMONT

- + 1 1/2 - \$546
- + 3 1/2 - \$705
- + 4 1/2 - \$875
- + 5 1/2 - \$1142

Metro Stations:
Côte-des-Neiges, Plamondon
Côte-Sainte-Catherine, Snowdon
Université-de-Montréal, Namur

3 NOTRE-DAME-DE-GRÂCE, CÔTE-SAINT-LUC, HAMPSTEAD, WESTMOUNT & MONTREAL-WEST

- + 1 1/2 - \$548
- + 3 1/2 - \$738
- + 4 1/2 - \$916
- + 5 1/2 - \$1274

Metro Stations:
Côte-des-Neiges, Édouard-Monpetit
Outremont, Place Saint-Henri
Snowdon, Université-de-Montréal
Villa-Maria, Vendôme

Montreal Apartments: Average Rental Prices

(from least to most expensive)

4 PLATEAU MONT-ROYAL

- + 1 1/2 - \$601
- + 3 1/2 - \$732
- + 4 1/2 - \$818
- + 5 1/2 - \$1063

Metro Stations:
Sherbrooke, Mont-Royal
Laurier, Berri-Uqam

5 DOWNTOWN & NUN'S ISLAND

- + 1 1/2 - \$717
- + 3 1/2 - \$997
- + 4 1/2 - \$1414
- + 5 1/2 - \$1630

Metro Stations:
Atwater, Guy-Concordia
Lionel-Groulx, McGill, Peel,
Place-des-Arts, Saint-Laurent



All information is from www.cmbc-schl.gc.ca - rental average report 2011-12

CSU HOJO
@CSUHOJO
Your reliable source for employment and housing information and assistance.
1455 de Maisonneuve Pl. H-200 | http://hojo.csu.qc.ca

171 TWEETS
144 FOLLOWERS
208 FOLLOWING

Follow CSU HOJO

Full name
Email
Password
Sign up

Tweets

- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO The exam schedules are up @Concordia. From MyConcordia "The deadline to report conflicts is Thursday November 22, 2012 at noon" Expand
- Metro Montreal @gouvernementmtl Retour à l'heure normale de l'Est d'été - de l'été à l'été Expand
- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO All about this issue is not being swept under the rug! Concordia addresses homophobia issues - NOW - Concordia University. concordia.concordiauniversity. Expand
- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO No excuse for homophobic remarks in the workplace. "This is 2012, this is Concordia, this is Montreal" @newsweek @caribou3375 Expand
- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO On-line landlords in Montreal, how are you so bad? @globeandmail.com/video/2012/04/14/va-@globeandnews Expand
- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO #CSCSesBenevol "This isn't the first time this happens! Concordia student loses thousands to cheque scam @cbc @news117CM Expand
- CSU HOJO @CSUHOJO Bribes are old news for former city of Montreal building inspector @e950LR via @globeandnews Expand



CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank



Your reliable source for employment and housing information & assistance.



Just Say NO... To Your Rental Increase



Refuse your rent increase - it's your right



I Have Bedbugs! Now What?



Yikes! Don't panic, We can help.



How Much Is Too Much?



How To Deal With Privacy When Looking For Housing



Are You Getting Paid Minimum Wage?



\$9.90/h
\$8.55/h (if you make tips)



Are You Freezing In Your Apartment?



You shouldn't have to wear a tuque and mittens inside!



CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank

* Your reliable source for employment and housing information & assistance.

Visit HOJO for

- Help with general housing and work issues
- Legal information, handouts and referrals
- Workshops on tenants' and workers' rights
- To file and view complaints against landlords and employers
- Information on Quebec residency and leases Resources to conduct your search for housing and jobs

Visit Classifieds.csu.qc.ca for

- Part-time jobs
- Affordable housing
- Roommate profiles
- Buy or sell books, furniture and more



1455 de Maisonneuve West, H-260
Monday to Thursday 10-6 | Friday 11-4
514-848-7474 ext. 7935
hojo@csu.qc.ca | hojo.csu.qc.ca

Did you know that it is your RIGHT as a tenant to refuse your rental increase?

Here's what you need to do:

- Once you receive the notice of increase from your landlord, you have 30 days to make your decision.
- You can use the Regie du logement tools to determine if the increase is justified or not. You can choose to negotiate with the landlord for a lower increase.
- Once you make your decision, respond with an official "Tenant's Reply to a Notice of Increase" form sent by registered mail.

What happens after you respond?

- If the landlord doesn't agree to your refusal or negotiations, they can file at the RDL for a "Rent fixation hearing" within 30 days of receiving your official notice. You are not in danger of being evicted if you refuse a rental increase!
- Want to learn more about how landlords and the Regie du logement determine fair annual rental increases? Need the appropriate paperwork? Thinking of not renewing your lease? **Visit Us!**



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I have bedbugs! Now what?

* A bug's life: at each stage of life, bed bugs can survive for at least 5 days at -10 degrees.

Only -32 (for minimum 15 minutes) or 46 degrees (for more than 7 minutes) can kill them!

- **Don't panic!** You need to inform your landlord that your apartment has bedbugs ASAP. See a doctor or nurse to have your bites documented and treated. Follow up any discussion with an official demand letter. The letter must be delivered with proof of receipt (This includes a registered letter, which can be done through the post office or hand delivered with a copy signed and dated by the landlord.)

It is the landlord's responsibility to take care of extermination.

- Once the exterminator is booked, which should be within a very short delay, follow their instructions to prepare for their visit. You will likely need to seal your clothes and linens in bags, clean and de-clutter your space. If the exterminator suggests getting rid of any furniture due to infestation ask them to write down this demand on their company's letterhead. This may help you be reimbursed at a later date for lost furniture.
- The exterminator should visit at least twice. Be available for these exterminations. This problem is best solved when tenant, landlord and exterminator work together.

HOJO is here to help with your bed bug problems, come and speak to us to learn more.



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Are you giving too much information to your landlord?

The protection of your private information is really important. When renting an apartment, giving out too much private information can lead to problems. You might feel like you have to give a potential landlord any and all information they ask for. This is not the case and personal information can be used against you.

Why visit HOJO when your private information is requested?

- To find out what your rights are
- To learn about strategies to keep your private info to yourself
- If you are unsure about the private info being asked of you

Landlords:

Cannot demand

- Credit card numbers
- Social insurance numbers
- Driver's permits
- Passport numbers
- Bank account numbers
- Student Visa numbers
- Health insurance numbers

Can demand

- First and last name
- Current & previous full address
- Name and contact information of previous landlords
- Date of Birth

Documents that help when renting an apartment

- Reference letter from previous landlords, financial institutions
- Relevant excerpts from a credit report
- Other document attesting to an honoured financial obligation

**Being asked for too much info?
Visit the HOJO office, we can help you out.**



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Did you know?

- If you don't have to declare your tips, you should be paid \$9.90/hr.
- Every employee must be paid for training, statutory holidays and vacation.
- Employees have the right to breaks for shifts 5 hours or longer.
- You must receive notice if you are fired.
- Employees must receive compensation for uniforms.
- Workers can refuse tasks that seem unsafe.
- You can consult the Commission des normes du travail for complaints.

Come visit HOJO to learn more about your rights as an employee and discuss any work-related issues.



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How you address a heating problem depends on who controls the heating

* Your apartment temperature should be a comfortable 21 degrees according to the Régie du logement.

There is no specific date when the heating must be turned on. What is important is maintaining an adequate indoor temperature

If the landlord controls the heat:

- You need to record the temperature indoors and outdoors for a few days with a thermometer and inform the landlord with an official demand letter that there is a problem. The letter must be delivered with proof of receipt (this includes a registered letter, which is sent through the post office or hand-delivered with a copy signed and dated by the landlord.)

- If it is the middle of winter and your heating stops working you may have to carry out an urgent repair yourself, there is a specific process for this that must be followed. Your landlord may always provide electric heaters as a temporary solution. Your landlord may also be required to temporarily rehouse you in an emergency.

If the tenant controls the heat:

- Test all the heaters to see which ones are functioning. If some are not working, you will need to send an official demand letter to your landlord requesting repairs. (see above.)

- If all heaters are working but the apartment remains cold, you have a few options. Look for places where cold air may be entering the apartment. These will need to be fixed either by you or your landlord. You will need to inform your landlord of any issues with the building via an official demand letter (see above.) If the windows are the problem, you may choose to purchase plastic window insulation or make an appointment with Econologis, a government service that helps low-income households with energy efficiency.

Visit the HOJO office to discuss your apartment heating issues. We're here to help you solve your apartment problems.

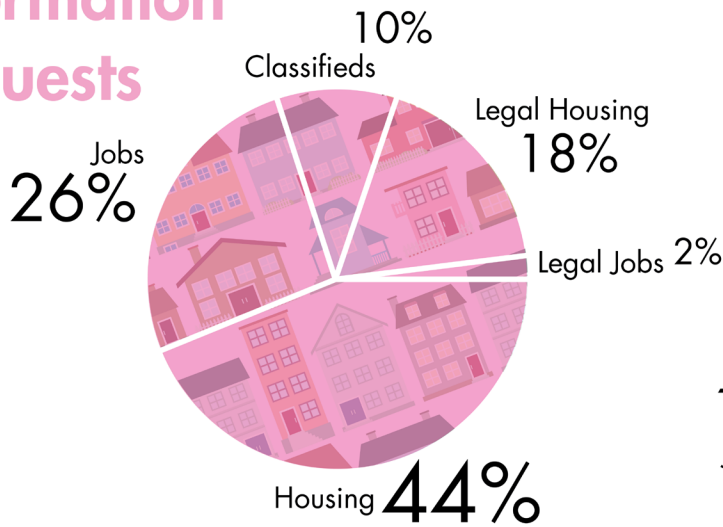


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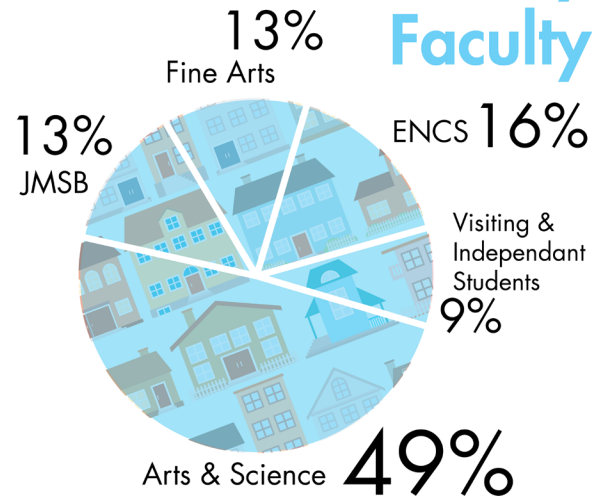


This chart shows the breakdown of the 5 types of information we discuss with students. The largest aspect of our service is providing general housing information to students. Next, 25% of inquiries that are focused on job search information. The third significant part of our service is that 1 out of 5 information requests we receive are regarding legal information around housing. Both classifieds and legal job information are smaller in numbers over the year.

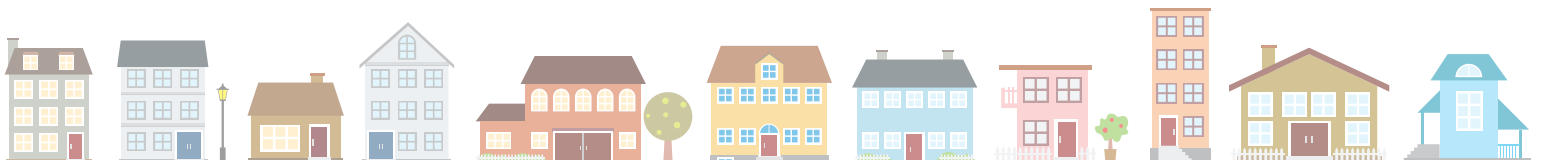
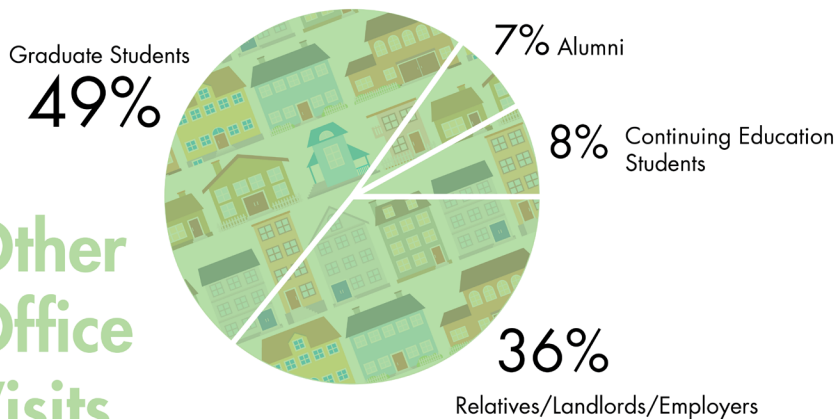
Types of Information Requests



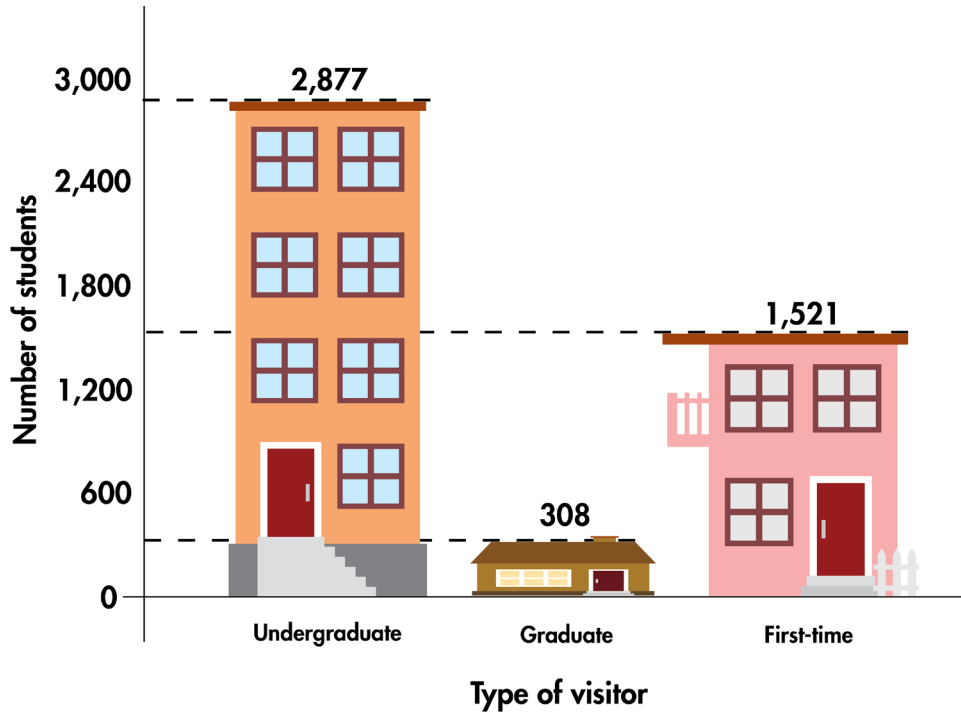
Undergrad Visits by Faculty



Other Office Visits

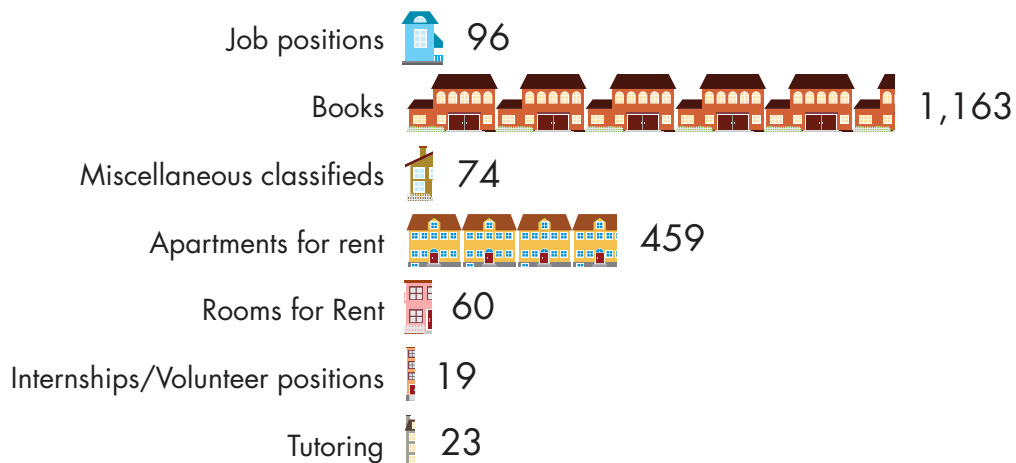


VISITS TO THE HOJO OFFICE

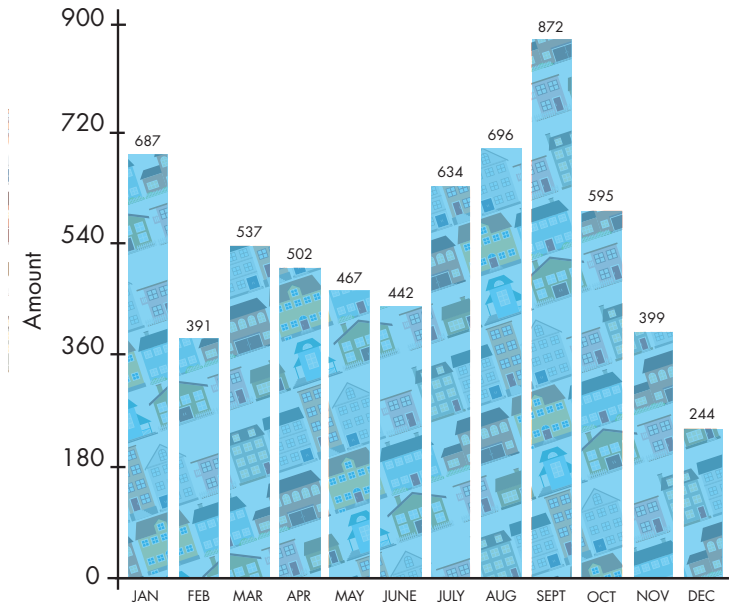


AVERAGE NUMBER OF CLASSIFIED ADS ON OUR WEBSITE

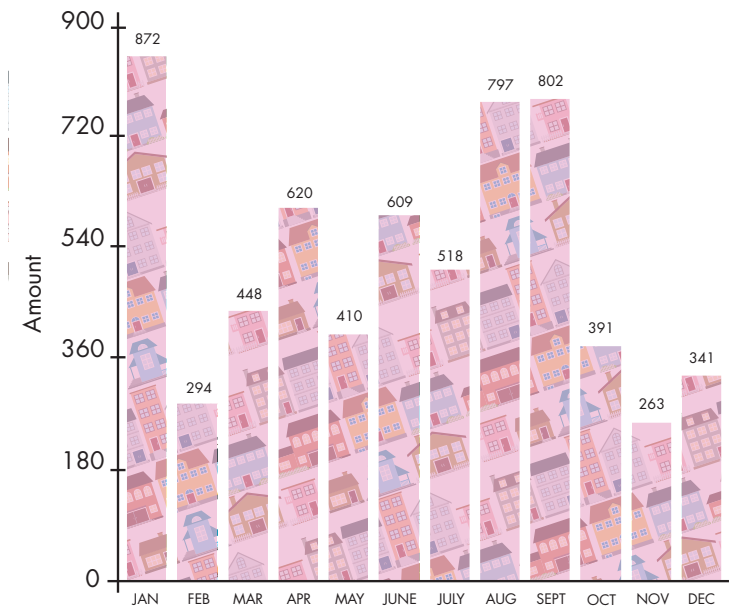
We continue to monitor the ads we post on our classifieds site in order to better track the work we do. As e-mails and online assistance becomes more and more popular we are working to use the internet to assist students. You can see the popularity of our classifieds site in the charts below.



VISITS, CALLS AND EMAILS



ADS REVIEWED FOR CLASSIFIEDS SITE



PROTECT YOUR PRIVATE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

This campaign works to sensitize students to the importance of not giving away their private information in order to complete rental applications. Many companies have very intrusive application forms and insist that private identification documents must be photocopied in order to process rental requests. Losing track of SIN card number, and birth certificate or passport numbers can lead to problems for students including fraud. The privacy campaign encourages students not to give out this information and also discusses what to do after the fact. We try to highlight the importance of privacy rights and how they apply to students.

RENTAL INCREASE AND LEASE RENEWAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

This ongoing campaign works to raise awareness amongst students that annual rent increase requests can be refused and that you can't be evicted for refusing a request. It is a common myth amongst students that you can't do anything if you receive a letter telling you that your rent is increasing and this is not the case. HOJO explains the refusal of rent increase process to students and hands out related documents. We disseminate the yearly averages that the RDL comes out with so that students can have an estimation of how much of an increase is reasonable. Furthermore many students are unaware of how to legally provide notice of non-renewal of the lease, and end up having to be responsible for the lease for an additional term. We try and circulate this information as well as provide documents of non-renewal.

CASE STUDY

Zahra came in to due to confusion regarding the appropriate way to inform her landlord that she didn't want to stay in her apartment past the end of her lease. The landlords gave her an unofficial letter of rental increase, to which she responded unofficially refusing. Because her refusal was not registered and therefore undocumented, the landlord then informed Zahra that she was legally obliged to stay on the lease for another term. We assisted the student in posting an ad and looking for another tenant herself in order to transfer her lease responsibility.



BASIC FACTS ABOUT RENTING IN QUEBEC

This is our most used resource that provides an overview to students of some of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. This document explains what the landlord can and cannot do, what information can be requested of an apartment hunter, the apartment sizes in Quebec, what tenants are required to do, time periods for giving lease non-renewal notice and other pertinent tips for student tenants.

LANDLORD/EMPLOYER COMPLAINT DATABASE

While HOJO has been collecting student complaints about landlords since the late 1990's, the use of a database called Predator in the summer of 2010 has facilitated the use of student complaints. In 2011 student complaints have been consistently added to this database. When a student comes in with particularly bad rental situation we ask them to file an anonymous complaint with us to prevent other students from having to deal with the same issues. The complaint includes information about the apartment and landlord, as well as the nature of the problems with the rental situation. When a student files an application a HOJO staff opens a file within the database and enters the information given by the student.. If the landlord eventually tries to post an ad with us then we would send an e-mail explaining that a complaint had been made in the past and what it was regarding. The landlord would then be asked to send relevant documentation like the application form, the lease and any other pertinent document so that we could ensure their legitimacy and legality. This is to ensure that the ads that we post on our website are safe so that students don't get stuck with an unresponsive or unscrupulous landlord. Another manner in which Predator is useful is that when students find apartments through other services of just walking around, they can tell us the address of the building in question and we can let them know whether there has been a complaint against the building and if there has, the nature of that complaint. These two uses for Predator have really strengthened our service when it comes to prevention of rental issues.

MONTREAL APARTMENTS AVERAGE RENTAL PRICES

In 2011 HOJO started providing students with rental averages for central neighbourhoods in Montreal. This resource provides students with the monthly rental average of apartments by size and neighbourhood and based on data released by the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation. This is useful for students – especially those new to Montreal – in budgeting for their living expenses. This knowledge also helps minimize the chance of students being taken advantage of by unscrupulous landlords who illegally increase their rents. This resource also helps us collect data, which can point to certain disturbing trends, such as illegal increases.

CMHC RESOURCES

HOJO distributes a selection of the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation's apartment comparison and inspection resources. These documents can help students who need to compare



a number of apartments in a short period of time. We suggest students inspect apartments when visiting them to be sure they are well-maintained and don't have any hidden problems. As well upon moving in, we suggest students inspect the empty apartment and make the landlord aware of any problems with their dwelling.

HOJO AND SOCIAL MEDIA

HOJO created a Facebook page in January 2011 to cement our online presence. We already had an online presence through our websites and Twitter account, but increased our regular use of these social media sites over the past year. Currently HOJO has 380 likes on its Facebook page and 205 followers on Twitter. We use these sites to stay connected to other community resources which could benefit our students, to find and share relevant news and job opportunities that are disseminated online, and to keep our followers updated on our events. Some examples of past social media "shares" are HOJO workshops, news articles relating to rental housing in Montreal, and Counseling and Development events. If you want to see more of what we do with our social media, like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter!

EDUCALOI SITE

HOJO employees are trained to use the Educaloï website. Educaloï is a nonprofit organization that distributes simply written legal information about housing, jobs and other topics to Quebecers in both French and English. This resource is used by employees to explain a number of housing issues and is often shown to students who come in to our office seeking legal information. Not only does the website have a plethora of text resources, but they also have video resources via a Youtube channel. A video that has been useful to students visiting HOJO is the "Demand Letter" video.

WORKSHOPS

We gave our Apartment Hunting Workshops in August/September and in January in a room attached to the International students office. Our Moving out of Residence workshops took place in February/March at SGW's Grey Nun's residence. This year the "Moving Out of Rez" workshop took place at dinnertime, where we provided attendees with a pizza dinner. This was at the RA's suggestion. The event was very successful with more than 30 in attendance. In the future we will work to not overlap midterm weeks with our events as we find students are just too busy to attend. We developed our first mini-workshop, a 20-minute long "Heating" workshop as well as a "How to refuse your rental increase" workshop.



MINIMUM WAGE CAMPAIGN

In May 2012 the minimum wage for most workers increased from \$9.65 per hour to \$9.90. The wage of workers receiving tips for table service, whose minimum hourly wage was \$8.35 the year before, increased to \$8.55. If a student visits us and they are not getting paid the minimum wage, we encourage them to visit the Normes du travail with their pay stubs and a record of logged hours. This process will enable them to receive the retroactive amount that is missing from their pay, as well as an increase to their wage to the legal minimum.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND EMPLOYMENT

HOJO continues to work with different groups such as the CSU Advocacy Center, the Legal Information Clinic and the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) to combat different sorts of civil rights abuses students face. Students may face discrimination relating to ethnicity, country of origin, marital status and social status by including too much private information on their resumes, or by completing job applications which demand private information. This new facet of our privacy campaign focuses on protecting students from discrimination by first informing students of their rights, and then encouraging them to protect their private information including their country of birth, age, gender and marital status when applying for jobs.



JOB SEARCH AND EMPLOYEES RIGHTS HANDOUT

HOJO's employment handout focuses on employment rights and resources as well as finding work. While many students are unaware about what minimum wage is, who pays for a uniform and whether or not they get a break over a five hour shift, this handout is an easy-access reference for them. The handout also includes a list of employment resources that may be of use such as the Normes du travail, CSST and Employment Insurance.

This handout also has a job search guide that outlines different possibilities for students. The top section provides resources for on-campus work. For many international and out-of-province students this option is the most favorable. The section includes the link to the myconcordia portal where students can apply for the work-study permit, the financial aid and awards website as well as links to occasional or temporary work within specific departments of Concordia. We also encourage students who have the time and may be lacking work-experience to volunteer or do an internship, which they can find through our links on our website or the LIVE Center.

Further for those students who need to improve their French the document refers students to Counselling and Development's Oui Can Help services. We also include a list of other off-campus job banks, including a new employment initiative called "Emplois Centreville". If a student wants a full-time job or help with their CV or interview skills. CAPS and JMSB's CMS' contact information is on the handout, as well as Counseling and Development for their resource library, and the Concordia Mentor Program for career guidance.

COMMISSION DES NORMES DU TRAVAIL

HOJO most often refers its visitors enquiring about employment to the Commission des normes du travail (CNT) because it is the institutions mandate to enforce employment rights. While we do not directly refer students out to the CNT, we frequently refer to their documentation and website. A particularly handy document is their booklet Labor Standards in Quebec which includes the employment standards and who is covered by them. The document also contains stipulations regarding the standards and provides examples, which are always useful where the law is concerned. Labor Standards also includes what recourse an employee or ex-employee has if their employment rights have not been respected. If a student comes in and they have a complaint against their employer, after consulting this document, we generally either refer them to the CNT or another service for non-unionized workers called Au bas de l'échelle.

Other documentation that HOJO has been using from CNT are the booklets for registering hours worked and the tip-sharing arrangement document. These two documents help students keep track of their hours and tips so they can get what they rightfully earned.



STUDENTS AND EMPLOYMENT

HOJO developed a fact sheet, which is available on hojo.csu.qc.ca, about the current circumstances of students who are working. The fact sheet was developed by using Statistics Canada's data, as well as Sources et modes de financement des étudiants de premier cycle by the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec. The goal of our document is to inform students as to what the norm is for students who are working in Quebec so that they know what to expect. Students and Employment outlines what kind of jobs students have access to during their studies, the average hours they work and how much they make. The document concludes with different resources to help students find that job they are looking for.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

This year HOJO developed a summer jobs handout that was e-mailed to students who visited our office or expressed interest online. The list included numerous camp jobs and other seasonal opportunities. We endeavour to develop this resource in the coming year.

FAQ'S ON EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

HOJO has created 3 large Frequently Asked Questions documents pertaining to the job searching, apartment hunting and apartment problems sections of our resource website.



PROMOTIONS

In 2011 we partnered up with the other CSU services and created a modern new advertisement. This ad features the services that HOJO, the LIC and Advocacy can provide to students. It has been our principal advertisement in student media, including The Concodian and The Link. The ad was also featured in CSU documentation such as the yearly agenda and the clubs booklet.

For our "Heating Workshop" series we also used CJLO to help publicize the event. We had sent a small blurb which was read out on the radio for a few weeks prior to and during the workshop series. This is a promotional strategy that we will be using again this year.

TABLING

In order to reach as many students as possible HOJO is committed to going to students to help them learn about our service and our website. Besides distributing our information via e-mail to our on-campus partners, we also distribute large quantities of our postcards to student service offices in order to be included in their mail outs.

SALON CARRIERES & NATIONAL CAREER FAIRS- PALAIS DES CONGRES

We provided outreach to employers and voluntary organizations in order to increase the number of positions available on our website.

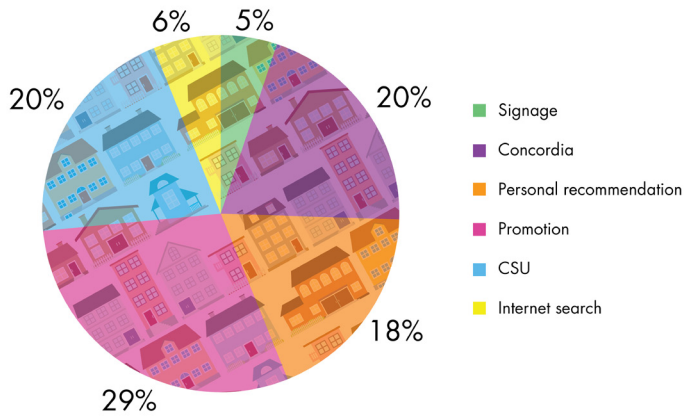
EVENTS ATTENDED/ CONFERENCES

We provided outreach at the following events and locations:

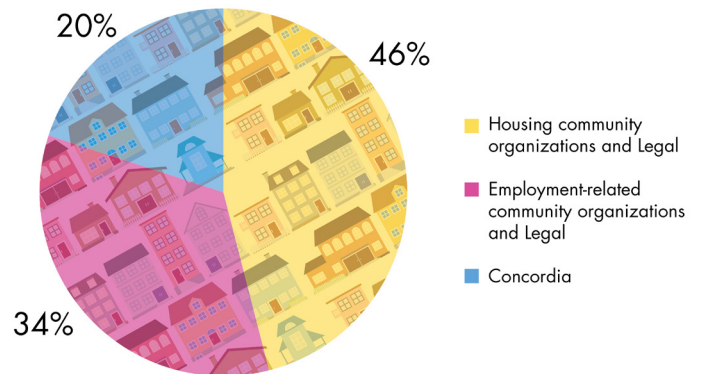
- CSU Orientation—Downtown
- CSU Orientation—Information Day
- CSU Orientation—Clubs Fair
- CSU Orientation—Many Tastes of Concordia
- QPIRG Orientation—Community Day
- Concordia Open House 2011—Downtown & Loyola
- Volunteer Fair 2011—Downtown
- CSU Winter Orientation—Downtown
- Tabling at CSU Loyola Luncheon
- Monthly tabling on the Hall building mezzanine



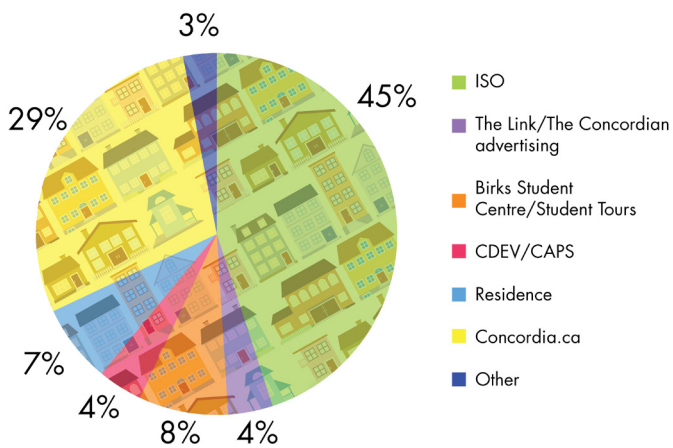
FIRST-TIME VISITORS HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT OUR OFFICE?



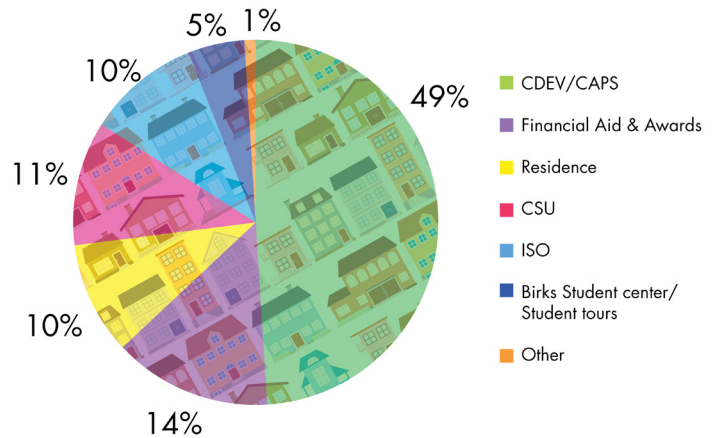
WHERE DID HOJO REFER STUDENTS?



WHERE WITHIN CONCORDIA DID 1ST TIME VISITORS HEAR ABOUT HOJO?

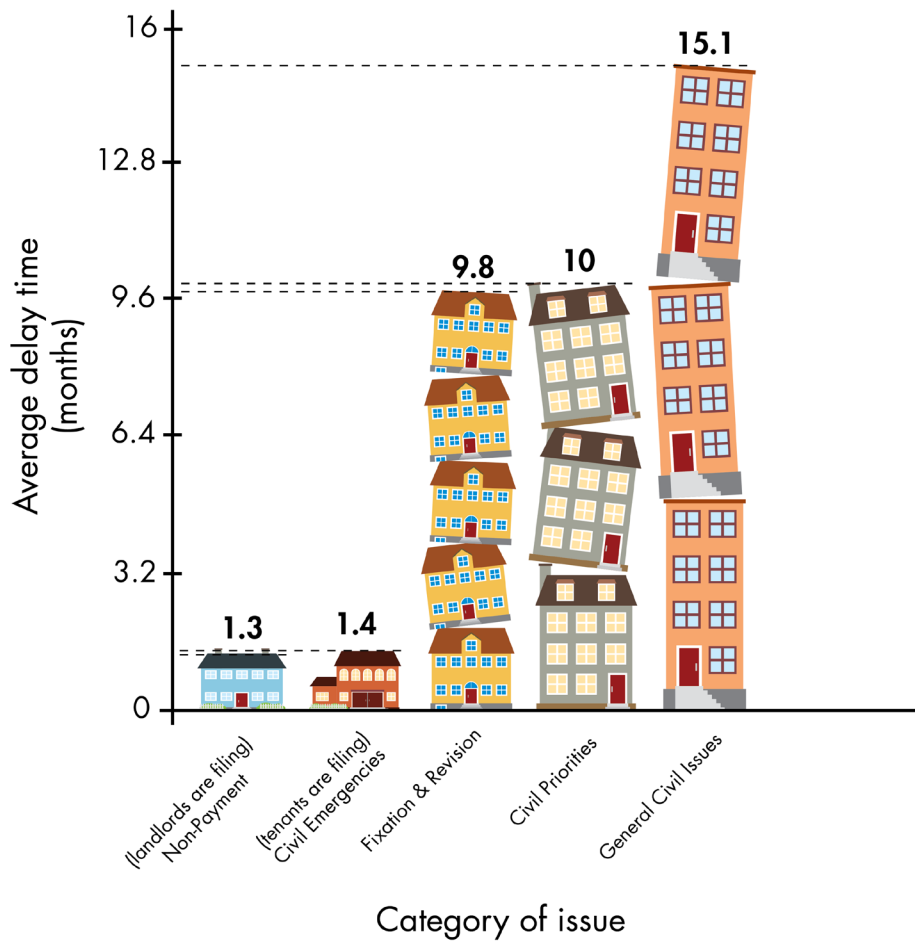


WHERE, WITHIN CONCORDIA DID HOJO REFER STUDENTS TO?



LIMITATIONS OF THE RÉGIE DU LOGEMENT

In 2010-2011, the Régie du Logement reported a delay of 1.3 months for obtaining hearings (related to non-payment of rent filed by landlords) compared to a delay of 1.4 months for obtaining a hearing for an civil emergency (filed by Tenants). An emergency is classified as a housing issue related to furnace breakdowns during the winter, major leaks in the pipe or roof, rotten stairs that give way etc. However, if the housing issue is not an immediate emergency the average wait time for a Régie hearing is 15.1 months.



These numbers indicate that the Régie du Logement is disproportionately favorable towards landlords over tenants as it is always landlords who file for non-payment of rent and they have the shortest delay time before obtaining a hearing. What the Régie classifies as “rental emergencies” in which the tenant is probably suffering incredible housing difficulties indicate a longer delay period, which seems problematic. Rental problems which are not necessarily immediate emergencies but affect the tenant’s enjoyment of the dwelling can take an average



of 15 months to obtain a hearing. The Régie du Logement is more concerned with ensuring that landlords are paid their monthly rent, over the interests and needs of tenants who inhabit the dwelling.

For students, having to wait for such extended periods of time to have their issues resolved can be detrimental to quality of life and fulfillment of academic responsibilities. We have seen a great number of students become hopelessly overwhelmed with housing issues and the feeling that the Régie du Logement is an insufficient resource in helping them access their rights.

The annual report also indicates that there is only one anglophone employee at the Régie du Logement, and we have experienced many international and anglophone students who have had difficulties during their hearings or simply obtaining proper information from the Régie due to their inability to speak French.



CULT #MTL

Home » News » Requests for urgent repairs to Westmount lofts go unheard



REQUESTS FOR URGENT REPAIRS TO WESTMOUNT LOFTS GO UNHEARD

BY ELIZABETH FRASER ON JUL 18, 2012 IN NEWS | [View comments](#)

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Getting hired after semester's end Tips for landing the summer job best suited for you

By The Concordian / April 5, 2011 / Life

0 Comments

With summer just around the corner (yay!) you are probably thinking of taking it nice and easy, relaxing by the pool, basking in the sun and just wasting the days away in a wonderful, lazy bliss. Sounds perfect, doesn't it? But who is going to pay for the gas you use up while cruising with your windows down? Or those summer nights out? And certainly, someone has to pay for that new short-short and bikini filled wardrobe.



TheConcordian

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Canadian Youth Converge in Ottawa for Environmental Conference
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CURRENT ISSUE

Where Are the Resources ?

JULIAN WARD — PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 6, 2011 | NO COMMENTS

Concordia security services :

Call 514-848-3717 for 24-hour safe-walk services anywhere on both campuses. CSS also hosts ConU's lost and found. Go to [security.concordia.ca](#) for a list of lost and found locations and for all other services provided by CSS.

Concordia's digital stores :

For all your printing, copying, scanning, etc. needs, visit [digitalstore.concordia.ca/](#), or the digital stores at Loyola in room CJ-1.422 and at SGW in room LB-115.

Concordia computer stores :

For all your computer, computer accessories, and computer repair needs, visit [ccs.concordia.ca/](#) or the computer stores at Loyola in room CJ-1.422 or at SGW in room H-224.

Concordia university bookstores :

The place to find all textbooks, course packs, Concordia swag, pens, pencils and piles of paper. The Bookstore will also buy your used books from you. Visit the Bookstore at Loyola in room CJ-1.422 or at SGW in LB-103. Visit [web2.concordia.ca/Bookstore](#) to order your books online.



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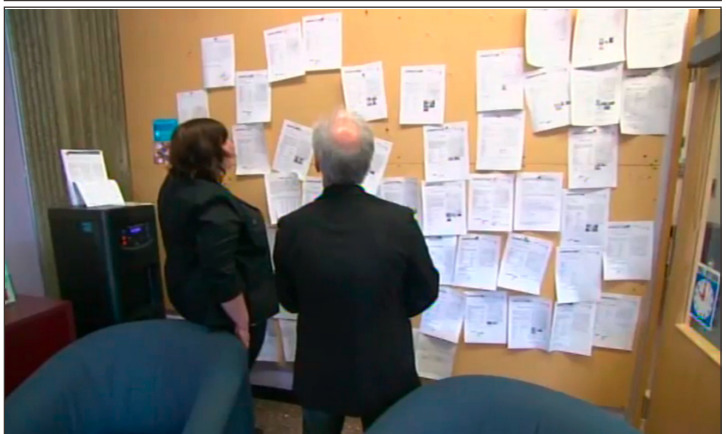
Reportages

Tour infernale

14 septembre 2012



JE Leanne Ashworth, coordonnatrice logement hors campus Université Concordia



CHALLENGES

- ★ Student-priced buildings and more generally buildings downtown are often run by landlords with an overwhelming disregard for housing regulations
- ★ Bedbugs continue to be a serious issue in Montreal and many landlords are unaware of or unwilling to follow proper protocols to solve the problem
- ★ Requests for private information on job and housing applications are common
- ★ High youth unemployment rate persists; Anglophones and International Students often have difficulties finding work both while studying and in the summer
- ★ There is consistently a high demand and low availability of on-campus jobs for students who cannot work off campus.
- ★ Wait times at the Régie du logement are too long for students with apartment issues who need to obtain a hearing (moved)
- ★ There are often limits to the Régie du Logement's jurisdiction and students are unprepared or unsatisfied with their hearings.
- ★ The lack of maintenance of buildings in Montreal lead to unsafe and unsanitary living conditions
- ★ Assistance for students with disabilities in finding both housing and jobs
- ★ Reaching a diverse student population requires many different communication methods

PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR

- ★ Increased promotion of HOJO services on-campus (tabeling and flyers), online (through the creation of a hojo blog) and through campus media,
- ★ Continuing to promote student awareness of Quebec Housing Rules and Regulations with a special focus on the unique needs of International students
- ★ Continuing to provide workshops to students on issues related to housing and employment in Quebec
- ★ Outreach to potential employers for student summer jobs starting in March.
- ★ Working towards a more efficient data-management system so we can better keep track of students and their housing and employment issues
- ★ Increased training of HOJO staff, including repossession and Eviction training from the Mile End Legal Clinic
- ★ Advocating for students and putting pressure on the Régie du Logement for shorter wait times in obtaining a hearing



LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

- ★ Increasing resources for students from community organizations
- ★ Increasing the number of quality jobs available on the website
- ★ Having a bilingual website and resources
- ★ Working with other organizations on and off-campus to help students find jobs through workshops or other programming or services
- ★ Collaborating with on and off-campus groups with similar interests and values around housing and employment issues



Arnold Bennett Housing Clinic
Au Bas de l'Échelle
Advocacy and Support Services – Angela Ghadban and Brigitte St-Laurent
Birks Student Center
Career and Placement Services
Center for Research Action on Race Relations
Centre Generation Emploi
Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
Concordia International – Paulina Rouleau
Concordia's Librarians
Counseling and Development
Counseling and Development's Oui Can Help
Counseling and Development's New Student Program – Lynda Guy
CSU Student Advocacy Center
CSU Legal Information Clinic – Walter Tom & Volunteers
CSU Designers – Katie Brioux and Sheena McInnes
CSU IT Consultant – Eric
CSU Executive Assistant – Yu-Hui
Enrolment & Student Services – Pina Greco
Enrolment's Services' amazing Facebook and Twitter team
Financial Aid and Awards Office
International Students Office – Kelly Collins, Benoit Fontaine, Delfine Lambert
Welcome Centre - Joanne Spinelli
Campus Tours – all of the smart tour guides
Career Management Services
CJLO
Legal Aid
Mile End Legal Clinic
Multifaith Chaplaincy
Commission des normes du travail
Paper Scissors Design – Larissa Dutil
Student Academic Services, Arts and Science – Cindy Parkinson
Residence Life – Residence Assistants
Ted Wright Housing Clinic
The Dean of Students Office
Ville de Montréal -- Public Health Division
Youth Employment Services

