

Keeping Good Rental Records

Lack of knowledge regarding leases or other rental agreements can cause a variety of problems. By keeping records of rental repair requests, security deposit disputes, and other important issues related to rental agreements, you can alleviate many of these types of problems. The most frustrating problems occur when the tenant cannot document their grievances. To prevent this, start a rental file as soon as you sign the lease and add to it throughout your lease term. A rental file is easy to keep, considering the money you may recover through rental modification or qualifying for full return on your security deposit. If a rental problem arises, it is easier to negotiate a solution with the landlord when you have written records that show the extent of the problem, what you asked the landlord to do about it, and how the landlord responded.

Your Rental File Should Hold:

A Rental Log

Use a simple notebook to write all dates and times you contacted or tried to contact your landlord; make a note of any discussion. Logs are a useful permanent record of how the landlord did or did not respond to problems.

Apartment Condition Checklist

This is proof of the condition of the apartment when you move in and out. Keep a copy and send the original to the landlord by certified mail and return receipt.

Correspondence With Your Landlord

Make any complaints or concerns in writing and keep copies on file. All verbal requests should be followed up in writing with copies in your file.

Reports

Keep copies of the Certificate of Suitability, building inspection reports, police reports, and any other reports from other agencies.

Photographs

Photos may be the evidence you need to document a repair or security deposit problem. Photos should be dated and signed by a witness.