

Moving out of your home

I am frequently asked by my Residents what they need to do to receive a full refund of their refundable security deposit. I decided to prepare this document to help with that, but please feel free to call me if you have further questions.

1. Proper Notice: Most likely your rent is due on the first of the month. That means in Washington, if your lease term is up, you need to give your **written & signed** 20 day notice by around the 10th of the month or you will owe rent for the following month as well. (Notice in WA is 20 days prior to the new calendar month). You cannot end a month to month agreement in Washington mid-month, UNLESS, there is a mutual agreement about that. If you want a few days into the new month please talk to me, that often works well for me too.

2. Surrendering the Property: You do not surrender the property simply by moving. You need to remove your belongings and return the keys to us to complete the move out. For example, if you don't return the keys to me until the 2nd of the month we will likely charge you for two days of rent. Another example, one roommate moves out but the other stays. **All Residents on the lease will continue to be responsible until the home is vacated and the keys are returned.** I can't emphasize this enough to my Residents sharing a home. The only way to remove one Resident's liability from the home is if all parties to the original lease agreement agree to it in writing.

3. Forwarding Address: If you do not provide us a new mailing address we will send your deposit refund and final statement to the last known address for you (likely the home you leased from us). The refund check will have all the Residents who signed on the lease listed as the Payee on the check. Washington State gives us 21 days after you surrender the property to send out the check and statement. If there is substantial work to be done from damages it frequently takes longer than the 21 days to get exact figures. In that case you will get an estimated refund and statement based off of bids and cost estimates. (Note: your lease may say 14 days to return the deposit. The state law just changed it to 21 days recently. Whenever our lease conflicts with state law it says that the state law will override.)

4. Utilities: Some of the utilities will place a lien on the home if the Resident does not pay their bill for services. These are usually also the utility companies that also refuse to prorate bills between tenants. Our practice is to call the applicable utility company around the 10th and inquire as to any unpaid bills and also any bills that haven't been assessed yet due to their billing dates (water bills are usually issued bi-monthly). We will estimate a per diem charge for the services and pay the Resident's estimated balance out of the deposit.

5. Showing The Residence: I don't expect you to show the home to perspective new Residents, but I do have the right to show the home myself once you have given your notice to vacate. I will give you a 24 hour notice prior to doing that, and in actuality I really don't do this much. I usually don't start advertising a home until around a week before your move out. Then I can usually line up showings for

the day after you return keys. The exception to this might be if you live in a home that takes longer than usual to lease. In that case I may feel that I need to start marketing ASAP.

6. Cleaning: The house needs to be ready for the next incoming tenant to occupy the home without additional cleaning. Keep this in mind when you are evaluating the cleanliness of the home. You may hire a cleaning service, but you are still responsible for the standard that they perform to. Soap scum build up on tubs & showers, hairs in bathrooms, cabinet drawers with crumbs, and refrigerator with food debris are some of the obvious deficiencies that will result in a cleaning bill. I'll follow this up further down with a more detailed checklist. Carpet cleaning is usually required if you've had a pet in the house, and the lease will usually have an amount set aside for this bill. If that is the case you need not clean the carpets prior to move out. Any questions about this, just ask me.

7. Personal Items: Remove all personal items and trash in and around the house prior surrendering the keys. It needs to be hauled away too. If you decide to leave something behind there is a procedure in the state law for handling the item that involves storing it and charging you an ongoing storage bill. The best solution to this if you can't get rid of it yourself is to leave me a signed note identifying the item as trash and giving me permission to have it thrown away. At least your bill will stop with a simple disposal of the item.

8. Yard Work: The yard needs to be mowed, edged, and the flower beds and gravel areas weeded. Any pet waste needs to be removed and pet damaged areas restored.

9. Paint Touch Ups & Wall Patching: Be careful with this area! I've seen many tenants do this job very poorly and result in a higher cost than if they just left it undone. The hazards are that a poorly done patch job will show up nearly as bad as the hole you were trying to fix. And, a badly matched paint color can force me to repaint a whole wall. As a rule of thumb, if I can send someone through and have your nail holes filled within an hour I consider it "normal wear and tear". Large holes will require multiple passes with a drying period in between, and so I don't consider that normal and they would likely entail a small charge.

Black scuffs and fingerprints on the walls need to be removed, but before you resort to painting try some cleaning. I've had great success using magic erasers to remove these. A wet washcloth, magic eraser, and some 409 will usually get these off without having to resort to paint which doesn't always match well.

10. Other Damages: Carpets stains, torn vinyl, holes in doors, broken windows, torn screens, lost remotes, and broken light fixtures happen in lesser instances. If you have damage to these areas please feel free to talk to me in advance. It's a little more complicated than I want to address in this document, but you are responsible for all the items your break, or lose while leasing the home.

Cleaning Checklist

1. General Cleaning:

- Light Bulbs & Smoke detector batteries working (I do this first so I can see what I'm doing 😊).
- Remove marks, fingerprints, cobwebs, nails, and tacks from walls.
- Dust mini blinds.
- Clean windows sills and inside glass.
- Clean/dust baseboards and closet shelves.
- Vacuum all carpets and mop all tile/vinyl floors.

2. Kitchen:

- Refrigerator cleaned inside and out (usually can't be done well without removing shelves and drawers).
- Stove cleaned. I find it's often better to just replace the stove pans. The top panel of the stove will often lift up for easier cleaning, and be sure to get food splatters on walls around the stove and on its knobs.
- Microwave cleaned.
- Counters cleaned.
- Cabinets wiped out inside and out.
- Dishwasher cleaned.
- Sink and faucet cleaned (remove water stains and soap build up).

3. Bathrooms:

- Clean tub, surround and faucet. The soap scum needs to be removed.
- Clean sink and faucet (remove water stains and soap build up).
- Clean inside and outside of cabinets (no shaving hairs).
- Clean in and around toilets (remove stains and don't forget behind the toilet).

4. Outside:

- Yard work done.
- Sweep out the garage and clean up any oil spills.
- Porches & Patios swept or washed off.

5. Pet specific cleaning:

- Pet hair removed from baseboards and wall corners where the carpet cleaner will have trouble reaching.
- Pet hair removed from floor vents.
- Pet footprints on doors removed.
- Pet waste removed from yard.
- Pet smell, if any, addressed appropriately.

Notice to Vacate Property

(Written notice is required to terminate your lease, however use of this particular form is not required for notice to be accepted. It is provided merely for your convenience.)

Date: _____

Owner/Manager Name: _____

Tenant/Resident Name: _____

I/We hereby give notice to vacate the property located at:

_____ (Address)

on or before _____ (date).

(Resident Signature)

(Resident Signature)

(Resident Signature)

*If available please give us your new contact information in the area below. It isn't required for the notice, but it will speed up the refund of any deposits being held.

Notes:

1. Month to Month Agreements: If you are on a month to month agreement notice must be given 20 days prior to the end of the calendar month. Otherwise, you will owe rent for the next month also.
2. We will charge additional rent if you fail to vacate the property and return keys on the date listed above. If you can't drop the keys off by that date for some reason please contact the office for alternate means.