

A Practical Guide from Envy Property Management

# SECURITY DEPOSIT: WHAT EVERY TENANT SHOULD KNOW



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## INTRODUCTION

# WHAT IS A SECURITY DEPOSIT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?



**W**hen renting a home or apartment, one of the most important financial responsibilities a tenant must prepare for before moving in is the security deposit. This is a standard requirement in all residential lease agreements, and its purpose is to provide the property owner and manager with a form of financial protection in case of damage, unpaid rent, or lease violations.



The security deposit is not an extra fee, it is a refundable amount held by the property management company throughout the duration of the lease. If the tenant fulfills all the lease terms, maintains and returns the property in good condition, and leaves with no outstanding balance, the deposit is returned in full.

It's important for tenants to understand not just how much they need to pay, but why the security deposit is required before moving in. Essentially, it acts as a safeguard to ensure the property is properly maintained during the tenancy, and it allows for a smoother transition between tenants by helping cover any cleaning, repairs, or other necessary costs after move-out.



## PART 1

# THE SECURITY DEPOSIT POLICY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## Payment Requirement Before Move-In

**T**he full security deposit must be paid before move-in and prior to taking possession of the rental property. The amount required for the security deposit is typically a minimum of one month's rent, so tenants should plan ahead and budget for both the security deposit, the first month's rent and any applicable fees when preparing to move in. Failure to pay the security deposit on time is considered a serious breach of the rental agreement and may result in legal or financial consequences, including the loss of the right to occupy the property.

## Use of the Security Deposit

In the state of Utah, the landlord may deduct from the security deposit any amount the tenant owes at the end of the lease, including unpaid rent, damages to the property beyond normal wear and tear, necessary cleaning, or any charges specified in the lease agreement. These deductions must be delivered to the tenant along with the remaining balance of the deposit within 30 days after the tenant vacates the property.





## PART 2

# CONDITIONS FOR A FULL REFUND



**Y**our security deposit will be refunded in full only if all the following conditions are met:

1. **Completion of the Lease Term:** The lease must have ended without any violations, and you must not remain in the property beyond your lease term.
2. **Proper Notice to Vacate:** You must give written notice of your intent to move out, following the timeline and format required by your lease, whether you are at the end of a fixed term or on a month-to-month arrangement.



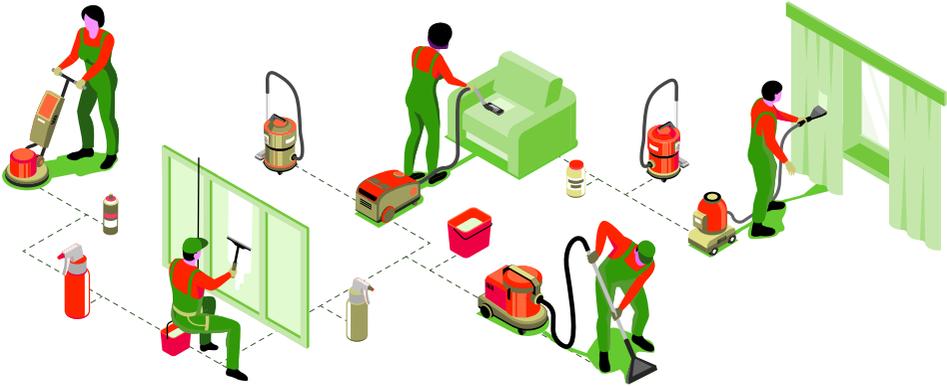
3. **No Outstanding Balances:** You must not owe any money to the property owner or manager under your lease or any related agreement.
4. **Repairs:** You must not leave any damage to the premises resulting from the actions or negligence of yourself, occupants, guests, invitees, or pets. All such repairs must be completed before move-out and in accordance with applicable construction and maintenance industry standards. Costs to correct improper repairs may be charged to you and be deducted from the security deposit.
5. **Thorough Cleaning and Removal of Personal Items:** You must leave the property clean, with all appliances and fixtures in good condition. All garbage and personal belongings must be removed. Charges for cleaning may apply if this is not done properly, and these may be deducted from your deposit.
6. **Return of Keys and Access Devices:** All keys, remotes, fobs, access cards, and garage openers must be returned. The property must be fully surrendered by all occupants.

## Move-Out Instructions and How to Protect Your Deposit

To help ensure you receive your full security deposit back, it's essential to follow the move-out procedures carefully. Below is a step-by-step guide on what to do before your lease ends:

### Two Days Before Move-Out

- **Deep Cleaning Is Required:** The unit must be cleaned thoroughly to move-in ready condition. You'll receive a Cleaning Addendum to sign. If not signed, it will be assumed that you authorize the use of professional cleaning services through Envy Property Management, and the cost will be deducted from your deposit.
- **Minimum Cleaning Fee:** If the unit is not properly cleaned, a minimum \$250 fee will be charged.



- **Carpet Cleaning:** If your property has carpet, EPM will have it professionally cleaned after move-out as required by the lease. The cost will be deducted from your deposit.
- **Disposal:** Do not leave any items left behind in the home. Do not leave large furniture or non-household items in or around the dumpster. You are responsible for disposing of these properly.
- **Avoid Common Charges:** Before you move out, make sure to complete these small but often overlooked tasks to avoid deductions from your security deposit:
  - Replace burned-out lightbulbs.
  - Replace smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries.
  - Replace furnace filters.
  - Clean or replace oven drip pans.
  - Refill water softener salt (if applicable)
  - Maintain or remove personal washers and dryers.
  - Address any pest issues.
  - Clear any clogged drains.
- **Avoid third-party repair fees:** If a repair is deemed the tenant's responsibility and a vendor is used, an additional \$25 Maintenance Coordination Fee will be charged on top of the invoice.



## DISTINCTION BETWEEN TENANT-CAUSED DAMAGE & NORMAL WEAR & TEAR



**T**enant-Caused Damage refers to any damage beyond normal use that results from negligence, misuse, accidents, or intentional actions by the tenant, occupants, guests, or pets. The tenant is responsible for the cost of repairing such damage. Common examples include:

- Large holes or excessive nail holes in walls
- Broken or damaged windows, doors, or fixtures
- Carpet stains, burns, or pet damage
- Scratched or gouged flooring
- Damage due to improper use of appliances or plumbing

Normal Wear and Tear refers to the expected, minimal deterioration that occurs over time with normal use of the property. The owner is responsible for repairs or replacements related to this type of wear. Examples include:

- Minor scuffs or small nail holes in the walls
- Carpet or flooring worn from normal foot traffic
- Faded paint or sunlight discoloration
- Loose door handles or cabinet hinges from regular use
- Appliance wear consistent with standard usage



## PART 4

# DETAILED MOVE-OUT CLEANING CHECKLIST



**T**o ensure the property is returned in acceptable condition, use the following as a cleaning reference:

### **Kitchen / Dining Room**

#### Refrigerator:

- Remove all food from the refrigerator and freezer.
- Wash the interior (including egg trays, door shelves, and drawers) with warm soapy water.
- Clean and dry the exterior, including the top.
- Pull the unit out and clean behind and underneath (do not turn it off).
- If not frost-free, defrost and remove ice build-up.
- Dust the bottom grill.

#### Stove / Oven:

- Remove and soak racks, broiler pan, and drip pans in hot soapy water. Scrub if necessary.
- Clean inside the oven, under the burners, stove top, and pan drawer. Use oven cleaner if not self-cleaning.
- Wash and sanitize the exterior.
- Pull out the stove or remove the bottom drawer to clean underneath.
- Scrub the range hood, exhaust fan, and clean or replace the filter.



### Dishwasher:

- You can place a dishwasher-safe bowl with 1 cup of white vinegar on the bottom rack and run a hot cycle.
- Clean and sanitize inside and outside.

### Microwave:

- Boil 1 cup of water with 1 tbsp of vinegar or baking soda (2–5 minutes) to loosen grime.
- Clean and sanitize inside and out.

### Cabinets, Drawers, Sinks, Countertops:

- Empty all cabinets and drawers.
- Clean and sanitize inside and outside surfaces thoroughly, scrubbing sticky areas.
- Clean and sanitize the sink and all countertops.

### Shelves, Doors, Baseboards, Walls:

- Clean and sanitize shelves, pantry, and closets.
- Wipe all doors, especially grooves.
- Clean baseboards and walls, removing all dirt and cobwebs.

### Floors:

- Mop hard surfaces.
- Vacuum any carpeted areas.

### Windows / Blinds:

- Clean inside and outside of windows.
- Clean tracks, sills, and ledges (including sliding door tracks).
- Wipe each individual slat on the blinds.

### Light Fixtures / Outlets:

- Wash all fixtures with warm water. Dry and replace.
- Clean outlet and switch covers.
- Replace any burnt-out or mismatched bulbs.

## **Living Areas (Family Room, Den, Hallways, Entry)**

### Cabinets, Drawers, Closets:

- Empty and clean all cabinets and drawers inside and out.
- Clean and sanitize closet shelves.

### Doors, Baseboards, Walls:

- Wipe all doors and grooves.
- Clean baseboards and all walls.
- Remove any cobwebs from walls and ceilings.

## Bedrooms

### Cabinets, Drawers, Closets:

- Empty and clean all cabinets and drawers inside and out.
- Clean and sanitize closet shelves.

### Doors, Baseboards, Walls:

- Wipe all doors and grooves.
- Clean baseboards and all walls.
- Remove any cobwebs from walls and ceilings.

### Floors:

- Mop hard surfaces.
- Vacuum any carpeted areas.

### Windows / Blinds:

- Clean inside and outside of windows.
- Clean tracks, sills, and ledges (including sliding door tracks).
- Wipe each individual slat on the blinds.

### Light Fixtures / Outlets:

- Wash all fixtures with warm water. Dry and replace.
- Clean outlet and switch covers.
- Replace any burnt-out or mismatched bulbs.



## Bathrooms

### General Surfaces:

- Scrub and sanitize tub, shower tiles, toilet (including behind and under), and sink.
- Clean all mirrors and vents.

### Cabinets, Drawers, Countertops, Sinks:

- Remove all items.
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces thoroughly.

## Laundry Area (if applicable)

### Appliances:

- Clean inside and outside of the washer and dryer.
- Remove lint from the dryer and clean behind/under appliances.

### Cabinets, Drawers, Sinks, Countertops, Surfaces:

- Empty all cabinets and drawers.
- Clean and sanitize inside and outside surfaces thoroughly, scrubbing sticky areas.
- Clean and sanitize the sink and all countertops.

## Garage (if applicable)

- Clean and sanitize all doors, inside and out.
- Remove all personal belongings and debris.
- Sweep thoroughly.
- Power wash sticky or stained areas.
- Remove cobwebs from all surfaces, including ceiling.

### **GOLDEN RULE**

*If it can be cleaned, scrubbed, vacuumed, dusted, or mopped, it should be. The property must be left as if it has been professionally deep-cleaned, ready for immediate occupancy by the next resident.*



## PART 5

# FINAL EVALUATION AND DEPOSIT RETURN



**A** move-out evaluation will be conducted after you turn over and we receive possession of the property.

Per Utah Law, any refundable deposit (minus deductions) will be returned within 30 days of your lease end date, along with a list of any charges.

Most tenant charges are related to tenant-caused repairs that were not fixed and poor cleaning. Especially in the kitchen, bathrooms, baseboards throughout the home, and window blinds, be sure to pay extra attention to these areas.





## FROM OUR TEAM TO YOU



**A**t Envy Property Management, our goal is to make your rental experience as smooth and transparent as possible, from move-in to move-out. We understand that moving can be stressful, and we want to help you feel confident and well-informed every step of the way.

By following the move-out instructions and cleaning checklist provided in this guide, you're not only protecting your security deposit, you're also helping us prepare the property for the next tenant to feel at home, just as you did.

Thank you for choosing Envy Property Management.

We appreciate you and wish you the very best in your next chapter!

**Contact us for more information.**

- 801-337-4337
- [www.envypm.com](http://www.envypm.com)

