



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**CONSUMER &
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

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Last Updated 3.8.17



- Wage Enforcement
- Consumer Counseling
- Complaint Investigations
- Small Claims Court Assistance
- Mediation
- Foreclosure Prevention Assistance
- Small Business Assistance
- Consumer Education and Outreach
- Financial Empowerment

Serving Los Angeles County consumers and
businesses since 1976.



OUR MISSION

To promote a fair and vibrant marketplace, we serve consumers, businesses, and communities through education, advocacy, and complaint resolution.



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Security Deposits

FACTS FOR RENTERS



SECURITY DEPOSITS

The landlord can require a security deposit when you move in. It can be no more than two months' rent for an unfurnished unit, and no more than three months' for a furnished unit.

Your first month's rent is not a security deposit. "Nonrefundable" security deposits are against the law

What can my landlord use my deposit for?

- Rent you owe.
- Repairing damage caused by you or your guests.
- Cleaning, if the unit is not as clean as when you moved in.
- Other items agreed on in writing

The landlord cannot use the deposit for repairs because of "ordinary wear and tear."

Is my landlord required to give me a walk-through inspection before I leave?

Yes, unless you moved in prior to 2003. This inspection gives you a chance to repair damage to the unit and avoid unnecessary deductions from your security deposit.

When does my landlord have to return my deposit?

The landlord must return your deposit within 21 days after you move out. If the landlord makes deductions from your deposit, they must give you a written explanation and send you a refund of the balance.

If your landlord does not return the deposit, or if you disagree with the amounts deducted, you can sue in Small Claims Court. For more information, contact our Small Claims Advisors at (800) 593-8222.

What if the landlord sells the building?

If your landlord sells the building, they must return your deposit or transfer it to the new owner. If neither happens, then both the old and new owners are responsible for returning your deposit. Always keep a copy of your rental agreement showing the amount of your deposit in case of a later disagreement.

Can I collect interest on a security deposit?

State law does not require landlords to pay interest on security deposits, but some local rent control laws do.

Call your city's rent control board at the following numbers:

Los Angeles, including the San Fernando Valley: (866) 557-7368

Santa Monica: (310) 458-8411

West Hollywood: (323) 848-6450

Beverly Hills: (310) 285-1119

Can the landlord increase my security deposit?

Yes. However, your landlord must first give you a 30-day written notice.

Your landlord can't raise your deposit if:

- You have already paid the maximum security deposit allowed by law: two months' rent for unfurnished units and three months' rent for furnished.
- You are currently on a fixed-term lease and you have not paid the maximum security deposit.

If your unit is covered by rent control, different laws may apply. Please contact your city's rent control board for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



(800) 593-8222



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