



Frequently Asked Questions 21-Day Return of Security Deposit *Washington State Law (ESB 6413) effective date June 9, 2016*

Q: How long do I have to return the security deposit?

A: Effective June 9, 2016, you will have 21 days to provide a specific statement of deductions from the security deposit and return any balance of the deposit the tenant is entitled to receive.

Q: If there is extensive damage to the unit and I know that the cost is going to be more than the security deposit, am I still required to act within 21 days under the law?

A: Yes, no matter what the level of damage or amount of security deposit, you are required to (1) provide a specific statement of deductions which details the cost of the damage caused by the tenant, and (2) refund any portion of the tenant's security deposit the tenant is entitled to receive.

Q: What if my existing, fixed-term rental agreement says the security deposit and statement of deductions will be returned 14 days after the tenant vacates the unit?

A: You must comply with your existing rental agreement. Landlords should continue to return the specific statement of deductions and any balance of the security deposit within 14 days until July 1, after the law become effective. However, if you wish to change the time limit you must give the tenant 30 days notice of the change. In a fixed term lease, such change would not become effective until the end of the term unless the tenant agrees otherwise. For month-to-month rental agreements, the change becomes effective in 30 days.

The information provided in this document is given for general guidance only and should not be considered legal advice. You are encouraged to consult your legal counsel or call our office directly if you have any questions.