

7 Legal Reasons to Reject an Application and Tips on Management by Jeffrey Taylor, "Mr. Landlord.com"

Want to turn down a resident, but want to make sure you are doing so for a "legal" reason? Here are 7 of the most common legal reasons for rejecting a rental applicant. Whatever your standards, make sure you apply the same criteria to all applicants.

1. Negative information found on credit report.
2. No verifiable source of sufficient income
3. Too many people for the property
4. Pets
5. Former eviction
6. Unstable rental history (moves too often).
7. Unsatisfactory reference from landlord or employer

Screening for Potential Problem Residents

On your rental applications, ask, "Name of your lawyer?" You wouldn't believe how many people fill it in. Then it is very easy to look up in the yellow pages to see if that lawyer specializes in bankruptcies, personal injury suits, etc. When reading over their application, I casually ask them if the attorney is any good and how much work he has done for them. You would be surprised at how many will then volunteer that he is handling their bankruptcy filing.

Keep Your Applications

Never throw rental applications away no matter how old. Showed a house this week. The husband looked good and started to check him out, but for whatever reason I had a bad gut feeling about the wife. She looked familiar, but couldn't put a finger on it. Long story short, found out she was heavy into drugs. So stamped rejected on the application and went to file the application in my file with all applications. My old applications are kept in alphabetical order.

There it was just as plain as the nose on my face - An application on the girl only from a year ago and it had in big letters Rejected. She had on the application she was leaving her husband. It all came back to me. I had the feeling family services were after her kids and she just needed an address. I remembered she was desperate for it that day and if I couldn't tell her right away she was going to move on. She was a stripper that worked an hour away and didn't have a car. I was able to reject the same person twice but it would have saved some time if I had just first gone to my file and checked.

Please note: With the growing concern of identity theft, it is now being recommended that landlords who keep information on applicants or residents, should keep applications and other documents in a locked place, (i.e., locked file cabinet and locked room or office.) If the information is stored on the computer, the access to those sites must be password protected. Another suggestion is to remove information like the social security number, the date of birth and other identifying information off any stored documents.

How Residents Can Prevent Clogged Drains - (*Print and give as a handout to new residents*)

Okay, you've finally gotten that drain unclogged. You'd prefer never to experience the mess and inconvenience of a clogged drain again. Keeping your drains clear is probably easier than you think. With a few simple precautions, you can prevent your drains from clogging.

Tips for the Kitchen Sink

- Pour grease into cans and throw them in the garbage. If you empty grease into the sink, the grease collects along the sides of the pipe and then food particles stick to the pipes,

eventually contributing to a clog. Also too much grease can eventually cause sewer blockages since the bacteria in sewage systems cannot readily break down grease.

- When you are grinding up food in a disposal, run plenty of cold water to flush food particles down the pipe. Using too little water can contribute to the particles collecting along the sides of the pipe.
- Don't empty coffee grounds in the sink.
- Pour a kettle of boiling water down the drain once a week to melt away any fat or grease that may have collected.
- If your drains clog often, periodically you may want to put 1/2 cup of baking soda and 1/2 cup of white vinegar down the drain. Let this mixture sit for a few minutes with the drain covered. Flush the mixture down with a kettle of boiling water. The baking soda and vinegar mixture should break down fats and keep your drains smelling fresh.

Tips for the Bathroom

- Clean the pop-up stoppers in sinks frequently. Hair often collects here and causes clogs.
- Never flush heavy paper products down the drain. Excess paper can clog the toilet and/or the whole sewer system.

General Tips

- Never dump chemicals like paint or paint thinner down the drain. Avoid pouring hot wax or other substances in the drains. Dumping acid into your septic tank system is against the law.
- Beware of products that claim to maintain a septic system or unclog greasy soil by enzymatically attacking grease. The general consensus is that these products are ineffective and may even be harmful. Some products may use chemicals that kill the bacteria needed to break up solid wastes.
- If you have your own home septic tank, have a professional inspect it every two to three years. Some regions require septic tank inspection on a regular basis. Check with your local health board about the rules in your community.

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