

What to Look Out for with Tenant Background Checks

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Landlords and property managers usually have a general understanding of why tenant background checks are important. A tenant background check will help you determine the right choice of tenant that will result in reliable rent payments and ensure your property stays well-maintained and safe. Running tenant background checks on potential renters also provides landlords and property managers with a greater understanding of a person's financial and rental history. These types of routine screenings are helpful for identifying any red flags that might signal that this potential tenant would not be a good fit for your rental property. There are other factors to look out for through the rental application process to make sure you find the optimal tenant for your property.

Application Etiquette for Prospective Tenants

The application process is typically very clear and thorough, which gives a prospective tenant a great way to make a first impression by properly completing all the necessary pre-screening information. When you advertise vacancies on your property, a responsible prospective tenant will follow the instructions and supply any requested information through the application process. Additionally, if you post contact information with your advertisement, your first contact with a prospective tenant might even be over the phone or via email.

Prospective tenants recognize that rental applications are part of the process and should do their best to supply all the requested information. When a prospective tenant has concerns about what might show up on a tenant background check, such as any criminal history, they can address that information with the landlord or property manager in an attempt to be open and transparent. If you sense hesitancy in completing the required paperwork, a prospective tenant might be wary of what will be revealed in a tenant background check. Areas left blank or filled out incorrectly could be simple errors, or it could be a red flag that you want to review further.

References for Prospective Tenants

You might request references from prospective tenants as part of your rental application in order to better gauge someone's rental history. However, prospective tenants come from a variety of previous living situations, including living with family members, which can make providing references a tricky business. Family members listed as references isn't a red flag in and of itself, though a prospective tenant may wish to identify family members for their references in an attempt to avoid sharing information from a previous landlord or property manager. That's why a tenant background check can provide you with the necessary rental history and residency information so you can make an informed decision.

Why Rental History Is Important

Reviewing the rental history of a prospective tenant can help you determine whether they have demonstrated a history of responsibly adhering to rental agreements. This

can also provide you with any history of evictions, which are an obvious red flag that can be cause for concern. Moving residences every year within the same city might be a sign that someone is moving out to avoid evictions. However, it helps to dig into this information further and have a conversation with the prospective tenant when you have questions or concerns.