

Top Four Warning Signs of a Bad Tenant

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Performing a background and credit check are both great ways to get an initial overall impression of a potential tenant, but they don't tell you everything you need to know to find a great tenant. Observation during the initial interview, as well as following your initial instincts, can also help determine if a tenant is the right fit. Watch for these top 4 red flags that may be an indication that unwanted issues could potentially arise.

Frequent Moving

If on a tenant application, several frequent moves are listed, that could be a red flag for landlords. Unless a tenant has a reason for multiple moves, such as working in the military, moving often could be a warning sign that a potential renter either didn't pay rent on time or disregarded lease terms that led to termination. This could mean added time and expense for you as the landlord if you move forward with the application. Including reasons on the application for why renters left previous addresses could help you determine if the renter is a risk or not.

Questioning the Background Check

If, during the application process, an applicant seems to over-question the application and background process or states that going through this process is a "sham" or "waste of time," it could clue landlords into possible problems. Tenants have a right to a copy of their background checks, but if they try to pass off these checks as meaningless or invalid, chances are they are covering up for something. Responsible tenants expect to be screened and are prepared to move forward with the process in a timely manner.

Short Moving Period

It's always a good idea to look more closely at potential tenants that seem in a rush to move in. This could be a sign that they are looking to move into a place quickly before dealing with an issue with their current landlord. Rushing into another unit or place could be meant to avoid paying for damage to a previous rental unit, trying to get out of a lease early, or trying to avoid an impending eviction. Tenants that are responsible will leave themselves ample time to find a lease and a place that is right for them.

Tardiness

Possible tenants that are constantly late to showings or appointments or don't seem to call back when they say they will could raise a red flag. If a renter always has excuses and doesn't seem to want to take responsibility for any tardiness or mistakes, it could transfer over into them as a tenant as well. They may try to make excuses for damage to the unit or may not want to own their part in anything that comes up over their time living there. Although mistakes do happen, a potential tenant's character, even during the application process, can show a lot about them.

Keep these potential problems in mind when choosing your next tenant. While first impressions say a lot about someone, be sure to be observant and listen to your instincts. It could save you a lot of headaches in the long run.

