



News Release

Date:	Tuesday 28 July 2015
Subject:	Half of tenants miss an opportunity to discuss getting their deposit back by not attending 'check out'

Bristol, Tuesday 28 July 2015 – Almost half of tenants in England and Wales do not attend a 'checkout' at the end of their tenancy, according to figures published by The Deposit Protection Service (The DPS).

During checkouts landlords or their representatives record the condition of the property in comparison to when the tenants arrived, and The DPS recommends that tenants attend.

However, 48% of respondents to The DPS' recent survey of 8,035 tenants said they had not attended.

Almost half (46%) of tenants who did not attend said that they had either not been invited or were not informed of the date or time.

Julian Foster, Managing Director of The DPS, said: "Checkouts are one of the most important stages of any tenancy.

"By viewing the property and discussing its condition together, tenants and landlords can resolve problems quickly and help prevent longer disputes, for instance, over the return of the deposit.

"It's vital that landlords enable tenants to attend – and that tenants go along when invited."

The DPS has also issued its top ten tips for landlords to help ensure that checkouts are successful.

1. **Take along a report from the check in.** The first stage of making sure your check out process is successful is to carry out an inspection that is agreed by the tenant on the state of the property when he or she arrives. Bring the resulting report to the check out as a reference point for both your inspection and the discussions.

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2. **Make sure you invite tenants in writing and with sufficient notice.** It's important you have a record of the invitation so its existence cannot be disputed afterwards; and tenants should be given a reasonable chance of being able to attend.
3. **Make sure the tenant understands the process.** Explain that this is his or her chance to put forward their case regarding the state of the property. It's sensible to include a description of the process in your written invitation, and give them an opportunity to ask questions when it starts.
4. **Consider the use of an inventory clerk.** These are professionals who understand best what needs to be recorded when tenants arrive – and how best to assess and demonstrate change at the end of the tenancy. If you do use their services, make sure the tenant understands their role.
5. **Be safe.** It is of course extremely unlikely that a check out will provide a risk to your safety, but make sure someone else knows where and when it is taking place and if you have any concerns, bring someone else along.
6. **Take your time and be thorough.** Although confrontation can be difficult and it can feel awkward to be touring your property that has acted as someone else's home –you are making life more difficult for both you and your tenant if you do not cover every aspect of your check in list properly, or later on refer to an issue that wasn't noticed during check out.
7. **Make notes.** In particular, record any of your tenant's admissions or any agreements you reach. Ask your tenant to sign and date the notes. Make sure they receive a copy of these soon after check out takes place. As ever emailing a copy helps demonstrate that you were in touch.
8. **Bring a camera and take photos of any damage or anything else contentious.** Digital cameras work best because they have a date stamp, which helps demonstrate when the photos were taken. Explain in your invitation that you may take photos during the visit.
9. **Use video evidence where appropriate.** Demonstrating that equipment is no longer working, for example, may most easily be achieved using a video. However, most often photos provide the best form of evidence, as adjudicators can study the image more easily.
10. **Carry out the check out before any repair works take place.** Although it seems obvious that evidence of the damage will help demonstrate your case, unfortunately the rush to overcome problems ready for the next tenant sometimes means opportunities to record them are missed.

Ends

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Notes

1. For high resolution images of spokespeople, visit <http://cpu.vg/spokespeople>

About The DPS

The Deposit Protection Service is the custodial tenancy deposit protection scheme accredited by the Government. It is provided free of charge, and funded entirely by the interest earned from deposits held in the scheme. The DPS was approved by the UK government to run an insured TDP scheme in September 2012 in addition to the approval it has already been granted by the UK government in respect of the custodial scheme. The DPS is run by [Computershare Investor Services PLC](#). Online self-service allows landlords to register and make deposit payments, transfers and repayments 24 hours a day. Help and advice is available through a dedicated call centre during office hours. An impartial Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service, helps to resolve any disputes quickly and without the need for court action. For more information, visit www.depositprotection.com

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