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# APPLICATION AND SCREENING GUIDANCE

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## PROCESSING AN APPLICATION

As an owner, you must establish the criteria you will use to determine if you will rent to a prospective tenant. The criteria are a list of things you will review like criminal, credit, or rental history, etc.

Landlords often charge application fees and utilize tenant screening companies to obtain information. If you require an application fee, before accepting it you must disclose to the applicant, in writing, the criteria on which the application will be judged.

After accepting a fee, you must provide the applicant with a written receipt. You cannot use, cash, or deposit an applicant screening fee until all prior applicants have either been screened and rejected, or offered the unit and declined to enter into a rental agreement.

If you charge an applicant an application fee and then reject the applicant, then the you must, within fourteen (14) days, notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for rejection, including any criteria that the applicant failed to meet, and the name, address, and phone number of any tenant screening agency or other credit reporting agency you used in considering the application.

Most of the time you do not have to refund an application fee but, you must return the application fee if:

- You don't use it to buy a screening report, credit report, or to check references
- You give the apartment to someone who applied before this applicant.
- You reject an application based on criteria you did not disclose when the applicant applied.

# Tips for developing your Tenant Screening Criteria:

Screening criteria helps you to screen prospective tenants fairly and objectively when you have a vacancy to fill. Your screening criteria should include information that establishes the requirements an applicant must satisfy to qualify for your rental property.

Though there is no requirement to use any or all of the following. Some items that are typically reviewed during the application process include:

- Criminal History
- Rental History
- Income
- Rental References
- Identification

Your screening criteria is also helpful for prospective tenants to determine if your property is the right place to call home. You may want to cover any property specific policies related to:

- Pets
- Smoking
- Parking
- Laundry
- Occupancy

Additionally, your screening criteria must reflect the application of the uniform screening guidelines established in Saint Paul code of ordinances, [Chapter 193: Section 193.04](#), and comply with [Chapter 54 Rental Application Fees](#).

# Tips for making exceptions to your screening criteria:

If you are making an exception for an applicant, you should document why the application would be rejected under your current screening criteria, and the specific reason(s) for the exception. You should also document if you are requiring an additional Pre-paid Rent or Security Deposit.

**BELOW IS A LIST OF TENANT SCREENING COMPANIES THAT WORK IN MINNESOTA:**

<p><b>TenantReports.com, LLC</b> P.O.Box 450 Springfield, PA 19064 (855) 244-2400 <a href="http://www.tenantreports.com">www.tenantreports.com</a></p>	<p><b>First Check</b> P.O. Box 334 Wyoming, MN 55092 (no phone or website)</p>
<p><b>Rental Research Services, Inc.</b> 7525 Mitchell Rd, Suite 301 Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (952) 935-5700 <a href="http://www.rentalresearch.com">www.rentalresearch.com</a></p>	<p><b>AppFolio, Inc.</b> <a href="mailto:Consumer.relations@appfolio.com">Consumer.relations@appfolio.com</a> (866) 648-1536 <a href="http://www.appfolio.com">www.appfolio.com</a></p>
<p><b>Multihousing Credit Control (MCC)</b> 10125 Crosstown Circle, Suite 100 Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (952) 941-0552 <a href="http://www.mccgrp.com">www.mccgrp.com</a></p>	<p><b>RealPage Resident Screening</b> c/o Leasing Desk Screening Consumer Relations 2201 Lakeside Blvd. Richardson, TX 75082 (866) 934-1124</p>
<p><b>Screening Reports, Inc.</b> 220 Gerry Dr. Wooddale, IL 60191 (866) 389-4042 <a href="http://www.screeningreports.com">www.screeningreports.com</a></p>	<p><b>TransUnion My Smart Move - Disputes</b> PO Box 800 Woodlyn, PA 19094 <a href="http://www.mysmartmove.com">www.mysmartmove.com</a></p>
<p><b>Rental History Reports, Inc</b> 7900 W 78th St., Suite 400 Edina, MN 55439 (952) 545-3953 <a href="http://www.rentalhistoryreports.com">www.rentalhistoryreports.com</a></p>	<p><b>Checkr.com</b> Attn: Legal Department 1 Montgomery St, Ste. 2400 San Francisco, CA 94104 <a href="http://www.checkr.com">www.checkr.com</a></p>
<p><b>Twin City Tenant Check</b> 910 Ivy Ave East St. Paul, MN 55106 (651) 224-3002 <a href="http://www.tcofmn.com">www.tcofmn.com</a></p>	<p><b>TenantAlert.com</b> 23801 Calabasas Rd, Ste 1022 Calabasas, CA 91302 <a href="http://www.TenantAlert.com">www.TenantAlert.com</a></p>

For informational purposes only. The City of Saint Paul does not endorse any of these companies or their services



## FOR MORE HELP, VISIT:

- [www.lawhelpmn.org](http://www.lawhelpmn.org)
- [Attorney General: Landlord and Tenant - Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [StPaul.go/SAFE](http://StPaul.go/SAFE)

