



It's Moving Season! DATCP Issues Tips on Top Complaint Category

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MADISON, Wis. – August is here, which means landlords and tenants throughout Wisconsin – especially in college communities – are busy with rental housing move-ins and move-outs. In 2023, disputes between landlords and tenants resulted in 2,208 complaints to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), making it the agency's top complaint category two years in a row. DATCP is here to help all parties in rental housing agreements remember their legal rights and responsibilities.

Tips for Moving Out

- Ask the landlord for a walkthrough of the housing unit before the final checkout. This can be helpful to the tenant in assessing what needs to be cleaned or repaired to avoid security deposit deductions.
- Take detailed photos of the property during the final walkthrough to document the condition in which the rental was left.
- Provide the landlord with the new address to receive the security deposit promptly.
- Landlords must return security deposits, minus any withholdings, within 21 days after the rental period expires. If money is withheld for damage, waste or neglect, the landlord must provide an itemized statement.

Tips for Moving In

- If a security deposit is required, tenants have seven days after the start of tenancy to inspect the premises and notify the landlord of any defects by returning a check-in sheet. Take photos of any damages, submit copies of the photos with the sheet, and keep a copy.
- Landlords must provide the contact information of a person who can be contacted regarding maintenance problems, including their name and address. Make sure this information is received at the start of tenancy.
- Read the lease thoroughly to understand what is required. Make note of what utilities the tenant is responsible for paying, what repairs and property maintenance the tenant is expected to fulfill, and when the landlord is authorized to enter the unit.

DATCP's online [Landlord-Tenant Guide](#) and [Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities](#) fact sheet offer an overview of common rental housing issues including security deposits, rent increases, property maintenance, and more. These resources help ensure both parties in a rental housing transaction understand their obligations to each other.

For more information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov or contact the Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

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