



All about tenancy bonds

A bond is money that a landlord can ask tenants to pay when they move into a property. The bond is held to cover any unpaid rent, damage to the property (if that damage can be shown to be the tenant's fault) or any other claim. If the property has been properly looked after and the rent paid up to date, tenants will get their bond money back after they move out. **Bond money can be any amount up to a maximum of four weeks' rent. Some landlords may ask for less.**

All bond forms are available on www.tenancy.govt.nz, from any Tenancy Services office or by calling 0800 737 666.

Lodging the bond

The law requires that a landlord who takes a bond must lodge it with the Tenancy Services Centre within 23 working days of receiving it.

When you send us the bond money make sure you:

1. Complete the cheque carefully. (We will not be able to lodge the bond if the cheque has not been made out correctly.) Make the cheque payable to the *Residential Tenancies Trust Account*.
2. Enclose the Bond Lodgement form with your cheque. Please fill in every section of the form completely and clearly – to prevent delays when you apply for a refund.
3. Make sure you give an 'Address for Service' for both the landlord and tenant. Without this we may not be able to process the bond. (An 'Address for Service' is an address in New Zealand where notices and other documents relating to the tenancy will be accepted by you or on your behalf, even after the tenancy has ended. The 'Address for Service' cannot be a post office box).
4. Check the Bond Lodgement form is signed by both landlord and tenant. When an application is made for a bond refund the signatures on the Bond Refund form are checked against those on the Bond Lodgement form – so the Tenancy Services Centre needs to hold a copy of the signature of anyone likely to sign the Bond Refund form.
5. If you are paying the bond by instalments a bond number will be printed on the acknowledgement of your first payment. Please make sure that you quote this bond number on each Bond Lodgement form that you use for later instalments or part payments – unless you do this the bond may be filed under several different numbers, resulting in a delay in the bond refund.

Please turn over.../



Change of tenant or landlord

When there is a change of tenant, the new tenant's details must be sent to the Tenancy Services Centre as soon as possible. Either send a completed Change of Tenant form if at least one of the old tenants remains, or if all the old tenants move out send a completed Bond Refund form. Make sure you put your bond number on the form.

When there is a change of landlord, the new landlord's details must be sent to the Tenancy Services Centre as soon as possible, by sending a completed Change of landlord form. This should include both new and previous landlord names and signatures, and the bond number.

If you lose or forget your bond number

If you have forgotten the bond number, please telephone 0800 737 666 (with as many details of the tenancy as possible, including the address and the date when the tenancy began) so we can tell you the number.

Bond Refunds

A Bond Refund form will be sent to you with your bond acknowledgement letter.

1. **Refunds are by direct credit** so you need to provide a bank account number on the refund form.
2. Put the bond number on the Bond Refund form. We need to check your bond number against our computer file.
3. Have the Bond Refund form signed by both the landlord and tenants – or we may not be able to refund the bond.
4. State on the Bond Refund form the amounts of refund that the landlord and tenant have agreed to. If you do not, there will be a delay while we contact you to find out how much to refund to whom.
5. Give contact phone numbers and addresses for both landlord and tenant so, if we need to, we can contact either party for more information.
6. Check that the tenant names on the Bond Refund form are the same as those that were supplied to the Tenancy Services Centre on the bond lodgement form. We can only refund a bond if the Bond Refund form is signed by the same people who signed the Bond Lodgement form.

Transferring the bond to a new property

When you move out of a property, the bond money can be transferred to a new tenancy, if the old landlord agrees to release the bond. You will need a Bond Transfer form.

When you want to transfer your bond money send in the Bond Transfer form with the previous bond number on the form.

The new landlord should ask the tenants for the Bond Transfer form (signed by the tenants and the old landlord) and should send this into the Tenancy Services Centre.

Should there be a dispute concerning a bond, the matter will be referred to the local Tenancy Services office. The Tenancy Services Centre is not able to assist in the settlement of disputes.