

Your rental bond

What is a rental bond?

A rental bond is a security deposit your lessor or agent may ask you to pay, when you rent a place. A rental bond is usually equal to 4 weeks rent. The Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) looks after your bond money while you rent the place.

When you move out you can apply to the RTA to get your bond money back. If you have met your renting responsibilities you should get all your bond money back.

Your lessor or agent may claim money from your bond, if you break the agreement, owe rent, damage the place, or move out and do not leave the place clean, in a similar condition to when you moved in.

What happens when I pay a rental bond?

- Ask for a written receipt. This is evidence you paid a rental bond.
- The lessor or agent must send your bond money into the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) along with a Bond Lodgement Form 2 signed by both of you. This form records details of your rental bond.
- When the RTA get your bond money they will send you a letter with your bond lodgement number. Contact the RTA if you don't get this letter.

What should I do when I move out?

- Remove your goods and leave the place clean, similar to when you moved in.
- To show you have met your renting responsibilities fill in an Exit Condition Report and give a copy to the lessor or agent when you return the keys. You can also gather other evidence, such as photos and cleaning receipts.
- Use a Refund of Rental Bond (Form 4) to apply to the RTA for your bond. You can get this Form on the RTA website, or call the RTA on 1300 366 311.
- Never sign a blank Form. Write the bond refund amounts on the Form and include bank details for each person who will get bond money back.
- Let the RTA know your new contact details.

How do I get my bond money back after I move out?

When you move out fill in a Refund of Rental Bond (Form 4) and send it into the RTA. If everyone signs the Form 4 the RTA can refund the bond money straight away. If the Form 4 is not signed by everyone the RTA act on the first Form they receive and will send a Notice of Claim to the other people listed on the bond.

If someone gets a Notice of Claim and disagrees with the claim, they have 14 days to send the RTA a Dispute Resolution Request Form 16. If the RTA get this Form they will hold the bond money while people try to solve the bond dispute.

If you agree the lessor can have some bond money write the amount on the Form 4 when you sign it. You should both agree what this money is for and confirm this is in full payment of all claims. Write this on the form. Keep a copy.

When can my lessor or agent claim money from my bond?

Your lessor or agent may claim money from your bond if you leave owing rent, break the agreement, damage the place, or do not leave the place clean.

You are not responsible for routine maintenance, or damage that was there before you moved in (this should be written on your Entry Condition Report).

You are also not responsible for reasonable wear and tear from everyday use. For example, if carpet is worn, or curtains and blinds are old and need repair.

What if I disagree with the claims against my bond?

Ask your lessor or agent what amounts they are claiming and why. You can also ask for evidence, such as photos and receipts, to see if their claims are reasonable.

If you don't agree with your lessor's claims, gather evidence to show you met your renting responsibilities and the lessor's claims are not reasonable.

Your evidence may include

- Photos or receipts to show you left the place clean and in good condition.
- Copies of your Entry Condition Report and Exit Condition Report.
- Evidence you paid the rent.
- Other evidence showing what happened when you rented the place.

What if I get a Notice of Claim letter from the RTA?

After you move out, if someone applies to the RTA for the bond, the RTA will send you a Notice of Claim. If you disagree with the claim you have 14 days to fill in a Dispute Resolution Request (Form 16) and send it into the RTA.

The RTA Dispute Resolution Service can contact you and your lessor by telephone, to help you share information and see if you can reach an agreement.

If you and your lessor reach an agreement, you can fill in a new Refund of Rental Bond (Form 4) and send it into the RTA to release the bond as agreed.

If you don't reach an agreement, the RTA will send you a letter that gives you 7 days to apply to the QCAT tenancy tribunal for a hearing about the bond refund.

If you get a Notice of Claim but do not apply to the RTA or QCAT to disagree with the claim, the RTA will automatically release the bond money according to the first Refund of Rental Bond Form 4 they received.

What if QCAT send me a notice about a tenancy tribunal hearing?

If you (or your lessor) apply to QCAT for a tenancy tribunal hearing, QCAT will send you a letter with the date, time, and location of the hearing. If your lessor applies for a hearing QCAT will send you a copy of their application. It is important to attend the tribunal hearing so you can show your evidence and have your say.

At the QCAT tribunal hearing the Adjudicator will look at the evidence provided by each side and make a final decision about the bond refund.

For advice and help with renting problems call the Tenants Queensland free QSTARS advice service on 1300 744 263