

**CITY OF MADISON  
OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY  
Room 401, CCB  
266-4511**

Date: November 19, 2015

(Nos. 18-20 added from 11-19-15 L/T Meeting)

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Members of the Landlord and Tenant Issues Committee

FROM: Steve Brist, Assistant City Attorney

RE: Best Practices Guidelines

I. Proposed Best Practices

1. A landlord or landlord's agent should provide at least 24 hours notice before entering upon a tenant's leased property, unless it is reasonably believed that entry is necessary to preserve or protect the premises from damage or destruction.
2. The landlord should provide at least 24 hours notice, a reasonable time of entry and an estimated length of stay when showing the leased property to potential future tenants. The landlord and tenant may also mutually agree to shorter notice periods or a larger window of availability.
3. The landlord should provide the tenant with written guest regulations, if such regulations exist.
4. The landlord should provide the tenant with the Tenant's Rights and Responsibilities brochure at the beginning of the tenancy.
5. The landlord should provide a new tenant with voter registration forms at the time the tenant takes possession of the residence.
6. The landlord agrees that late fees and penalties will not exceed 5% of the periodic rent.
7. The landlord will provide written reasons for denial of a rental application or for the non renewal of a lease.
8. If the residence is subject to rent abatement the landlord will so inform successor tenants.
9. This landlord will use written check in and check out forms.

10. The landlord will photograph any damages found at the end of the tenancy and will make the photographs available to the former tenant.
11. The landlord will provide the outgoing tenant not only with an itemization of amounts withheld from security deposits, but also receipts and estimates and hourly rate charges for work performed.
12. The landlord will provide the tenant with a telephone number where the tenant may reach the landlord or the landlord's agent.
13. The landlord will itemize any amounts withheld from an earnest money deposit.
14. The Rental Criteria used by the landlord shall be provided to the tenant at or prior to the time they are given a rental application.
15. A security deposit will not exceed the equivalent of one month's rent, however the parties may mutually agree in writing to additional fees as a security deposit for pets or a waterbed.
16. A landlord will not simultaneously hold a security deposit given by a tenant and a sub tenant of the same rental premise unless the total of the deposits made by the parties does not exceed the equivalent of one month's rent.
17. A landlord will disclose to a tenant any known defects which are potentially subject to rent abatement, whether or not notice of the defects has been received by the landlord from code enforcement authorities.
18. A landlord will inform tenants that City ordinances prohibit smoking in the common areas of buildings which contain three or more rental units.
19. A landlord of a lodging house will post, in a conspicuous place readily available to the occupants, the names and telephone numbers of two persons who may be contacted for emergency work.
20. A landlord will not charge a prospective rental applicant a nonrefundable credit check fee.