



## THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE RENTING A PROPERTY

### 1. GET A LEASE AGREEMENT IN WRITING

Having a lease agreement in writing is preferable as this eliminates any chance of a misunderstanding. A verbal agreement is binding however having a written lease agreement is clear and concise and it is easy to prove if either party is not adhering to the agreement.

### 2. INSPECT THE PROPERTY WITH THE LANDLORD BEFORE MOVING IN

This inspection is important as both the landlord and tenant can make a list of existing damages to the property. This ensures that the tenant is not held liable for damages they did not cause.

### 3. READ AND UNDERSTAND IMPORTANT CLAUSES IN THE LEASE

It is important for the tenant to know the steps needed to cancel a lease agreement. This ensures that if either party wishes to cancel the lease all the necessary steps are taken and no one is prejudiced. Another important clause to take note of is the rent increase. This ensures all parties are aware of the increase which is agreed to from the onset.

### 4. DEPOSIT

The landlord needs to keep the tenants' deposit in an interest accruing account. The interest needs to be given to the tenant when the deposit is returned. The landlord can deduct money for agreed costs and the deposit needs to be paid to the tenant within 14 days of the property being vacated.

### 5. MAINTENANCE

The general rule is that the landlord is responsible for the structural maintenance of the property such as external wall damage and roof leaks. The tenants' responsibility is to look after the internal aspects of the property and the upkeep of the yard and garden where necessary. In this regard it is also important to know what the lease agreement states.

### 6. RECEIPTS

It is important to keep a record of rental payments made. If payment is made in cash, the tenant is entitled to get a receipt for the payment and the tenant should insist upon receiving this.