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## Tennessee Renters' Rights When Moving In - HELP4TN Blog

### Renter's Rights – Moving In

Moving can be stressful. This blog can help you learn about protecting your legal rights when you move into a new rental home or apartment.

### The Lease

The lease is a legally binding contract between you and the landlord. It will tell you what your responsibilities are as a renter. If you don't do what the lease says, the landlord can make you leave by evicting you. Make sure you read and understand your lease before signing it. Once you sign your lease, you are legally obligated to everything it says. Before you sign a lease you should go visit the place you are going to rent. Make sure that it is clean and free of mold and bugs.

### What are My Rights as a Renter?

It is a good idea to know your rights and responsibilities before you move in to a new place. This can help prevent issues in the future. To learn more about your rights as a renter, it depends on which county you live in:

- Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Davidson, Greene, Hamilton, Knox, Madison, Maury, Montgomery, Putnam, Rutherford, Sevier, Shelby, Sullivan, Sumner, Washington, Williamson and Wilson Counties: [Use this booklet](#)
- All other counties: [Use this booklet](#)

Generally, you have the right to use the property without being bothered by your landlord, except for things like necessary repairs.

## **What Can I Do to Protect My Belongings?**

Renters' insurance helps protect your belongings from things like water damage or theft. Often, your landlord will not be responsible if your things are damaged in your apartment so it is up to you to get renters' insurance.

## **Why Do I Pay a Security Deposit?**

Most landlords will make you pay a security deposit. This is to pay for any damage to the place that is your fault during your lease. If someone that is visiting you causes the damage, that is still your fault. If your pet causes damage, that is still your fault.

## **What Should I Do Before I Move In?**

If there is anything wrong with the place, take pictures before you move in and mark that on your lease before you and the landlord sign. You don't want to get stuck paying for damage that was there when you moved in. If the landlord says they are going to fix something or clean something, get that in writing so that you can enforce it if you need to.

HELP4TN Blog posts are written by TALS staff attorneys. This blog is not legal advice, but it is legal information to help you learn about your rights. If you have questions about this blog or about your legal situation, you can talk to a lawyer for free at 1-844-HELP4TN (1-844-435-7486).

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