



NJ Landlord Compliance Checklist

Essential Guide for New Jersey Property Owners

Stay compliant with NJ's complex landlord-tenant laws. This checklist covers required disclosures, security deposit rules, eviction procedures, and more.

⚠ IMPORTANT: This checklist is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Always consult with a qualified New Jersey attorney for advice specific to your situation.

✔ Required Disclosures

Truth in Renting Act Notice

- Must provide to ALL tenants annually
- NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA) document
- Can be delivered via: hand delivery, certified mail, or email with confirmation
- Must use current year's version
- **Deadline:** Within 30 days of lease start, then annually
- **Penalty:** Lease may be unenforceable; tenant may withhold rent

Lead Paint Disclosure

- Required for properties built before 1978
- Provide EPA pamphlet "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home"
- Disclose known lead-based paint hazards
- Include lead warning statement in lease
- Provide any available lead inspection reports
- **Document:** Keep disclosure forms for 3 years

Window Guard Notice

- Required for multi-family buildings (3+ units)
- Must notify tenants of right to request window guards
- Install if requested by tenant or if children under 10 live in unit
- Provide annual notice
- **Deadline:** Include in lease or within 30 days of occupancy

Flood Zone Disclosure

- Required if property is in a flood zone
- Disclose flood insurance requirements
- Provide FEMA flood zone information
- **Document:** Keep signed acknowledgment

Security Deposit Receipt

- Provide written receipt within 30 days of deposit
- Include: bank name, address, account type, interest rate
- **Keep:** Copy of receipt with tenant signature




Security Deposit Rules

Collection Limits

- Maximum 1.5 months' rent for annual leases
- No limit for month-to-month (but 1.5x is standard)
- Must be deposited in separate, interest-bearing account
- Account must be in NJ bank or credit union
- Account must be FDIC/NCUA insured


Timeline Requirements

Action	Deadline
Deposit funds into separate account	Within 30 days of receipt
Provide deposit receipt to tenant	Within 30 days of receipt
Pay annual interest to tenant	Within 30 days of each anniversary
Return deposit after move-out	Within 30 days

 **Tip:** The current interest rate is determined annually by NJ DCA. Landlords can deduct 1% administrative fee. Interest is owed if tenancy lasts 12+ months.

Security Deposit Return Checklist

- Itemized list of deductions
- Remaining balance within 30 days
- Forwarding address from tenant
- Photos/video of property condition
- Copy of move-out inspection

 **Penalty for Violations:** Double deposit plus attorney fees if you fail to deposit in separate account, don't provide proper receipt, wrongfully withhold deposit, or miss the 30-day return deadline.



Eviction Notice Requirements

Notice Types & Timeframes

Notice Type	When to Use	Notice Period
Non-Payment	Tenant hasn't paid rent	30 days
Habitual Late Payment	Late 3+ times	30 days
Disorderly Conduct	Disrupting other tenants	3 days
Destruction of Property	Intentional damage	3 days
Violation of Rules	Lease violation	30 days (or lease-specified)
Owner Occupancy	Landlord wants to move in	2 months
Property Sale	Selling to buyer who will occupy	2 months

Notice Requirements

- Must be in writing
- Must state specific grounds for eviction (NJ Anti-Eviction Act)
- Must be properly served (personal service or substituted service)
- Cannot use "self-help" (changing locks, shutting off utilities)

Service Methods (In Order)

- Personal service** - Hand to tenant
- Substituted service** - Hand to adult at residence, plus mail copy
- Posted service** - Post on door, plus mail copy (only if first two fail)

⊘ Prohibited "Self-Help" Evictions: Changing locks, shutting off utilities, removing tenant's belongings, harassment to force move-out.

Penalty: Triple damages, attorney fees, possible criminal charges

Court Process Timeline

Typically 6-10 weeks from notice to lockout:

1. File complaint in Special Civil Part or Law Division
2. Pay filing fee (\$50-\$200)
3. Serve tenant with summons and complaint
4. Wait for court date (usually 2-4 weeks)
5. Attend hearing with all documentation
6. If granted, obtain warrant of removal
7. Schedule lockout with court officer



Document Retention Guide

Keep Permanently

- Deed and title documents
- Mortgage and loan documents
- Insurance policies (current and past)
- Property tax records
- Major repair/rehabilitation receipts
- Lead paint disclosure records

Keep for 7 Years

- Tax returns and supporting documents
- Depreciation records
- Business expense receipts
- 1099s and W-2s
- Bank statements

Keep for 5 Years After Move-Out

- Lease agreements (expired)
- Move-in/move-out inspection reports
- Security deposit records and receipts
- Rent payment history
- Correspondence with tenants
- Repair requests and receipts
- Eviction records



Digital Storage Tips: Scan all paper documents, use encrypted cloud backup, organize by property and year, name files consistently (YYYY-MM-DD_DocumentType_Property), keep offline backup.

January

- Review and update lease templates
- Check security deposit interest rates
- Send annual Truth in Renting notices
- Review rent roll and security deposit balances
- Schedule annual inspections

February

- Issue 1099s to contractors
- Prepare tax documents
- Review insurance coverage
- Check smoke/CO detector batteries

March - April

- Property tax assessment review
- Tax filing (April 15)
- Spring maintenance
- HVAC system servicing

May - June

- Lead paint inspection (if required)
- Window safety check
- Mid-year rent review
- Lease renewal offers

July - August

- Heat safety compliance
- Budget review

- Lease renewals for year-end
- Property inspection blitz

September - October

- Fall maintenance checklist
- Gutter cleaning
- Heating system servicing
- Window guard notifications
- Winter safety inspections

November - December

- Annual property inspection completion
- Year-end accounting
- 1099 preparation
- Tax planning with accountant
- Document organization and archiving
- Set goals for next year



Immediate Action Items

For New Landlords

- Register with municipality (if required)
- Open separate security deposit account
- Obtain Truth in Renting notices from NJ DCA
- Get lead paint disclosure forms
- Review NJ Anti-Eviction Act thoroughly
- Find qualified landlord-tenant attorney
- Join local landlord association

For Every Property

- Verify current Truth in Renting notice provided
- Confirm security deposit properly held
- Check all required disclosures signed
- Test all smoke and CO detectors
- Verify emergency contact info current
- Review insurance coverage adequate



Important Resources

Resource	Contact
NJ Department of Community Affairs	(609) 292-6420
Truth in Renting Hotline	(609) 984-0075
NJ HUD Office	(973) 693-3000
Legal Services of NJ	(732) 572-9100
NJ Apartment Association	(609) 799-8777

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Key statutes: NJ Anti-Eviction Act (N.J.S.A. 2A:18-61.1), Truth in Renting Act (N.J.S.A. 46:8-43), Security Deposit Law (N.J.S.A. 46:8-19), Lead Paint Law (N.J.S.A. 26:2-137)