

# TENANCY DEPOSIT SCHEME

**Important information for tenants of a privately rented property**



**If you started to rent your home from a private rented landlord after 1 April 2013 a new law affects you.**



Department for  
**Social  
Development**

[www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)

## **What is the Law?**

The Law says that deposits paid on, or after, 1 April 2013 by tenants in the private rented sector must be protected by your landlord in an approved scheme.

## **What is a private rented property?**

This is a property that is not owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or a Registered Housing Association.

## **What is a tenancy deposit?**

A tenancy deposit is a sum of money usually paid at the start of a private tenancy. It is paid to a landlord as protection, for example, against damages to the property or for unpaid rent.

## **How should my deposit be protected?**

The landlord must protect your deposit in an approved tenancy deposit scheme within 14 days of receiving it. Your landlord must also provide you with specific information, including the particular scheme in which your deposit has been protected, within 28 days of receiving it. It is up to your landlord to decide which type of scheme to protect the deposit in, either a custodial or an insurance scheme.

**A custodial scheme** is where the landlord gives the deposit to an approved scheme administrator to look after; or

**An insurance scheme** is where the landlord holds the deposit and pays a fee to an approved insurance scheme to protect the deposit.

### **How will I get my deposit back at the end of my tenancy?**

Two things can happen:

If you and your landlord agree about the amount of deposit to be repaid, this should happen within 5 working days from the end of the tenancy; or

If you do not agree about the amount of deposit you are getting back you can contact the scheme administrator protecting your deposit to use the free 'dispute resolution mechanism'.

### **What happens if my landlord or agent does not protect my deposit?**

If your landlord does not let you know within 28 days where your deposit is protected you should report this immediately to your council environmental health department.

If your landlord does not comply with the Law they could be required to pay up to three times the amount of the deposit or if prosecuted in court be fined up to £20,000.00.

## Who administers the Tenancy Deposit Scheme?

The Department for Social Development (DSD) has appointed three scheme administrators to operate the scheme. The scheme administrators are:

Letting Protection Service NI

Tel: 0330 303 0032  
[www.lettingprotectionni.com](http://www.lettingprotectionni.com)

My Deposits Tel: 0845 218 1060  
[www.mydepositsni.co.uk](http://www.mydepositsni.co.uk)

The Dispute Service NI Tel: 08450 940 740  
[www.tdsnorthenireland.com](http://www.tdsnorthenireland.com)

Further information on Tenancy Deposit Schemes  
can be found at  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/propertyandhousing](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/propertyandhousing)



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