

Residential Tenancies Tribunal

Decision 20-0046-01

John. R. Cook
Adjudicator

Introduction

1. The hearing was called at 9:05 am on 02 November 2020 via teleconference.
2. The applicant, [REDACTED], hereinafter referred to as "the tenant", participated in the hearing. The respondent, [REDACTED], hereinafter referred to as "the landlord", did not participate.

Issues before the Tribunal

3. The tenant is seeking an order for a refund of the security deposit in the amount of \$500.00.

Legislation and Policy

4. The jurisdiction of the Director of Residential Tenancies is outlined in sections 46 and 47 of the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2018*.
5. Also relevant and considered in this case is section 14 of the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2018* and rule 29 of the *Rules of the Supreme Court, 1986*.

Preliminary Matters

6. The landlord was not present or represented at the hearing and I was unable to reach him by telephone. This Tribunal's policies concerning notice requirements and hearing attendance have been adopted from the *Rules of the Supreme Court, 1986*. According to Rule 29.05(2)(a) respondents to an application must be served with claim and notice of the hearing 10 clear days prior to the hearing date and, where the respondent fails to attend the hearing, Rule 29.11(1) states that the hearing may proceed in the respondent's absence so long as he has been properly served. The tenant submitted an affidavit with his application

stating that he had served the landlord, by e-mail and text-message, on 09 October 2020 and a copy of that e-mail was also submitted with his application as well as proof that that e-mail address was used by the tenant to send rent to the landlord. The landlord has had 23 days to provide a response. As the landlord was properly served, and as any further delay in these proceedings would unfairly disadvantage the tenant, I proceeded with the hearing in his absence.

Issue 1: Refund of Security Deposit - \$500.00

Relevant Submissions

7. The tenant stated that he had entered into a 1-year, fixed-term rental agreement with the landlord on 01 June 2019. The agreed rent was set at \$800.00.
8. With his application, the tenant submitted a copy of his banking records showing that he had paid the landlord \$1300.00 on 31 May 2019. He stated that \$800.00 of that amount was for rent for June 2020 and the remaining \$500.00 was payment of a security deposit.
9. The tenant testified that the landlord issued him a verbal, 3-month termination notice in 2020 and the tenant stated that he vacated the unit on 01 June 2020.
10. The tenant complained that the landlord had not returned the security deposit to him after he moved out and he is seeking an order for its return. He further testified that he had not entered into any written agreement with the landlord on the disposition of that security deposit.

Analysis

11. Section 14 of the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2018* deals with security deposits, and the relevant subsections state:

Security deposit

14. (8) A security deposit is not an asset of the landlord but is held by the landlord in trust and may be used, retained or disbursed only as provided in this section.

(9) Not later than 10 days after the tenant vacates the residential premises, the landlord shall return the security deposit to the tenant unless the landlord has a claim for all or part of the security deposit.

(10) Where a landlord believes he or she has a claim for all or part of the security deposit,

(a) the landlord and tenant may enter into a written agreement on the disposition of the security deposit; or

(b) the landlord or the tenant may apply to the director under section 42 to determine the disposition of the security deposit.

(11) Where a tenant makes an application under paragraph (10)(b), the landlord has 10 days from the date the landlord is served with a copy of the tenant's application to make an application to the director under paragraph (10)(b).

(12) A landlord who does not make an application in accordance with subsection (11) shall return the security deposit to the tenant.

12. I accept the tenant's claim that he had paid a security deposit of \$500.00 and that it had not been returned to him after he had moved out of the rented premises. I also accept the tenant's claim that he had not entered into any written agreement with the landlord on the disposition of that deposit.
13. As the landlord has not made application to the Director of Residential Tenancies to determine the disposition of the security deposit, he is required, as per subsection 14.(12) of the *Act*, to refund the full amount of the security deposit to the tenant.

Decision

14. The tenant's claim for refund of the security deposit succeeds in the amount of \$500.00.

23 February 2021

Date

John R. Cook
Residential Tenancies Tribunal