STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Tenant Move-Out SOP

Document no.	SOP-PRM-002
Revision	1.0
Owner	Property Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To close out a tenancy consistently, with the unit inspected, keys returned, and the security deposit handled according to the lease and local law.

2. Scope

Applies to the move-out process from notice through deposit disposition for residential tenants. Preparing the vacated unit for the next tenant is covered by the unit turnover SOP.

Definitions

Move-out inspection	A walkthrough comparing the unit's condition at move-out to the move-in condition report.
Deposit disposition	The itemized statement showing how much of the security deposit is returned and what, if anything, was deducted.

3. Responsibilities

Property Manager	Approves deposit deductions, prepares the disposition statement, and handles any tenant dispute.
Leasing Agent	Processes the move-out notice, schedules the inspection, and collects keys from the tenant.
Maintenance Technician	Assesses damage against normal wear and tear during the final inspection.

RACI matrix

Activity	Property Manager	Leasing Agent	Maintenance Technician
Process the move-out notice	I	R/A	-
Conduct the final inspection	I	R	R/A
Collect keys and access items	I	R/A	-
Prepare the deposit disposition	R/A	C	C
Respond to a deposit dispute	R/A	C	-

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Move-in condition report for comparison
- Move-out inspection checklist
- Camera or phone for condition photos
- Forwarding address form
- Property management software
- Deposit disposition statement template

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Receive and log the move-out notice** Log the tenant's written move-out notice with the date received and the intended vacate date, and confirm it meets the lease's required notice period.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.2	**Confirm the forwarding address** Ask the tenant for a forwarding address in writing so the deposit disposition and any remaining deductions can be sent to the correct place.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.3	**Offer a pre-move-out walkthrough** Offer the tenant an optional walkthrough before the final vacate date so they can address any items themselves and avoid deductions.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.4	**Schedule the final inspection** Schedule the final inspection for after the tenant has vacated and returned keys, giving proper notice to enter as required by the lease and local law.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.5	**Conduct the move-out inspection** Walk every room with the move-in condition report in hand, photographing and noting any damage beyond normal wear and tear. **Checkpoint:** The move-out inspection is compared item by item against the move-in condition report, with photos taken of any new damage.	Maintenance Technician	☐
5.6	**Collect keys and access items** Collect all keys, fobs, garage remotes, and parking passes issued at move-in, and confirm the count against the original issuance log. **Checkpoint:** Every key and access item logged at move-in is returned or accounted for before access is deactivated.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.7	**Deactivate tenant access** Deactivate any electronic fobs, codes, or building credentials issued to the tenant once keys are confirmed returned.	Leasing Agent	☐
5.8	**Separate damage from normal wear** Assess each item of damage against normal wear and tear guidance, since ordinary wear generally cannot be deducted from the deposit under most local law.	Maintenance Technician	☐
5.9	**Prepare the deposit disposition** Itemize any deductions with supporting photos and repair or cleaning costs, and prepare the disposition statement within the timeframe required by local law. **Warning:** Deposit deductions and return timeframes are governed by local law and the lease. Confirm current requirements before withholding any amount.	Property Manager	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.10	**Send the disposition and refund** Send the itemized disposition statement and any remaining deposit balance to the tenant's forwarding address by the required method and deadline.	Property Manager	☐
5.11	**Handle a tenant dispute** If the tenant disputes a deduction, review the documentation with them calmly, referencing the condition reports and photos, and follow company policy for escalation.	Property Manager	☐
5.12	**Close the tenant file** Update the property management software to mark the unit vacant, archive the tenant's file, and hand off the unit to the turnover process.	Leasing Agent	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every move-out has a documented inspection compared against the move-in report.
- Deposit dispositions are sent within the timeframe required by local law.
- All issued keys and access items are accounted for before deactivation.
- Deductions are limited to damage beyond normal wear and tear, with photo evidence.

7. Records

- Move-out inspection report with photos
- Deposit disposition statement
- Key and access return log
- Tenant forwarding address form

8. KPIs

- Percentage of dispositions sent within the required deadline
- Average deposit amount returned versus withheld
- Number of deposit disputes per quarter

9. Common mistakes

- Deducting for normal wear and tear instead of only actual damage.
- Missing the legal deadline to send the deposit disposition.
- Deactivating access before confirming all keys were returned.
- Not documenting the move-out inspection with photos.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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