

# Starting a tenancy

## Sign the General Tenancy Agreement

The General Tenancy Agreement is a legal contract. You and the lessor/agent agree to the conditions listed when you sign it. Before signing the tenancy agreement, make sure you read and understand it.

The agreement states:

- who is renting the property and who can live there
- when the agreement starts and ends
- the amount of rent to be paid per week, and how often and which method you will use to pay the rent (for example electronically, weekly or fortnightly)
- standard and special terms of agreement.

You must sign and return the agreement within five days of receiving it.

When you sign the tenancy agreement, the lessor/agent must give you:

- a signed copy of the General Tenancy Agreement (Form 18a)
- a signed copy of the Entry Condition Report (Form 1a), completed by the lessor/agent (see below)
- the booklet Renting a house or unit in Queensland (Form 17a) or Renting a caravan or moveable dwelling in Queensland (Form 17b).

You should keep these documents in a safe place.



## Paying the bond and rent in advance

### What is a bond?

A bond is money you pay at the start of your tenancy that the lessor/agent can claim if you break the agreement and owe money for rent, damages or other costs at the end of the tenancy.

### How much bond will I pay?

If your rent is \$700 a week or less, the maximum bond a lessor/agent can charge is equal to 4 weeks rent. The lessor/agent can charge any amount as bond if the weekly rent is more than \$700.

## What happens to my bond money?

The lessor/agent must lodge your bond money with the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA), where it is held in trust while you live in the property. The RTA sends you an official receipt with your Rental Bond Number on it. Keep this receipt in a safe place, such as in a folder with the copies of your rental documents.

## What if I don't have enough money for the bond?

If you cannot afford to pay the full rental bond, ask the lessor/agent if you can pay in instalments and/or check if you may be eligible for a Department of Communities Bond Loan. Information on how to apply for this bond loan is available at your nearest Housing Service Centre or at [www.housing.qld.gov.au/loans/bond/index.htm](http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/loans/bond/index.htm).

## How can I get my bond back at the end of my tenancy?

When you are about to leave the tenancy, you must apply to the Residential Tenancies Authority to get your bond back by completing a Refund of a Rental Bond (Form 4), as soon as you return the key to the lessor/agent. You should send this completed form directly to the Residential Tenancies Authority. It is best if everyone (all the tenants and the lessor/agent) sign and agree on the bond refund amount.

## Need more help?

Visit [www.housing.qld.gov.au/contact/offices/index.htm](http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/contact/offices/index.htm) for the contact details of your nearest Housing Service Centre or call 1300 880 882.

