

Landlording (Buy and Hold)

How do I find out if someone has had an eviction?

Check Public Court Records

Visit your county courthouse and look up the person's name in records for county court proceedings. In most states an eviction is referred to as a "dispossessory" and most cases are tried in the civil court system. The court clerk's office is usually where cases are filed. Provide the clerk with the name and ask if he can provide you with the information. Some states have online systems where you can look up dispossessory proceedings. The tenant will be listed as the defendant and the landlord as the plaintiff. The court records will confirm whether the tenant was evicted, the date and the amount of money awarded as a judgment in favor of the landlord, or whether the case was dismissed, which would mean that the tenant was not evicted or a settlement was reached with the landlord.

Conduct a Credit Check

Use an accredited online service that provides credit checks, such as Tenant Verification or Tenant Data. They will provide a report that will include a public records section listing any eviction or dispossessory judgments. Conducting a credit check will require that you have the name, Social Security number and consent of the tenant to perform a credit check and can prove property ownership. It is illegal to run a credit check on any individual without their consent and signed authorization. Doing so could result in a lawsuit if discovered by the individual.

Screen Tenants

Require that tenants complete a rental application. Many landlords use tenant screening service providers. Apartment owners and property managers often join organizations like the American Apartment Owners Association to get free tenant screening services. The reports will disclose if the person has been evicted in the previous three to five years.

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