



TRS NEWS

WHEN THE TENANT CALLS

June 2009

You employed professional Property Managers to handle maintenance, rent collection, and difficult tenant situations. Then the phone rings and it is your tenant. There can be several reasons for a tenant call.

- You and your tenant know each other from previous contacts, so the tenant calls you directly. They figure they do not have to bother to interact with the Property Management Company despite the fact that you have hired them. They just want to talk to you.
- You visited the property and the tenant now decides to call you because they feel this is now a better way to make their requests.
- The tenant is unhappy with a "no" on a maintenance request, a notice to pay or quit, or other information they have received from our company. Instead, they decide to circumvent the Property Manager by calling you.
- The tenants want to cut a "new deal" on rent, repairs, or other issues and decide they have a better chance of getting what they want from the property owner rather than going through the Property Manager.

What to do when the tenant calls

- We ask that you politely give them our number and ask them to call their Property Manager to

discuss any issues that they have. Inform them that you hired our service to take care of the property and work directly with the tenant. Emphasize that we have authorization to act on your behalf and consult with you.

• Call us as soon as possible to let us know that the tenant is trying to circumvent our company and deal directly with you. We will contact them to assist with their problems or requests and discuss the outcome. If their requests exceed our authority, we will not act until we talk with you.

• If they demand immediate action from you, reiterate to them that you will discuss their call with the Property Management Company but they are to call their Property Manager as soon as possible.

• Be calm if a tenant threatens you with legal action. Many people feel that this is how to get what they want. Let the tenant know that you will be discussing the call with us and if necessary, your attorney. Again, it is important that we know they have done this.

• No matter what a tenant says to you, please reserve judgment and give us the benefit of doubt if there is a claim of unfair treatment or lack of repairs. We

will investigate the problem, and then give you the facts. It may differ from the tenant. In fact, if the tenant calls you instead of contacting us, we may not know about a problem or need for a repair. What we do not know about, we cannot fix.

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On-Line Payments

We recently teamed up with PayLease Inc. to streamline our rent collection by allowing online payments via credit/debit card or e-checks from checking or savings accounts. In addition to the rent payments, many of our clients have requested some way for us to accept credit cards when performing make readies on their properties. We now have that option right through our website. There is a small convenience fee (to PayLease, not TRS) to give us the ability to accept these transactions, but the amount is much smaller than the lost rent experienced by waiting until you can get the funds to us another way. In the short time we have had this our collection rates for our tenants has improved and we expect that to continue as more and more of them see the value of getting their rent paid on time and not having to pay late fees.

Looking for Management Elsewhere?

You, or someone you know, may need a property manager in other states. Because of our proud affiliation with NARPM, The National Association of Residential Property Managers, we have contacts throughout the country and may be able to assist you.

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What NOT to do when the tenant calls

- We ask that you do NOT negotiate with the tenant on the rental amount, payment of rent, authorization of repairs, pets, or promise any repairs or improvements. This definitely undermines our authority and you probably do not know what discussions we may have had with your tenant.
- We ask that you do NOT set up an appointment to meet with them. Tell them you will contact us and arrange an appointment at the property with the Property Manager or with you and the Property Manager. We will be happy to do so.
- Definitely do NOT talk to the tenant if there are current eviction proceedings and definitely do not make any promises. Certain actions can void an eviction and you could have to begin the process again, causing more loss of rent and more legal fees. End the phone call as quickly as you can and tell them to consult their legal counsel.

Obviously, a direct telephone call from the tenant can create a three-way situation that can undermine our authority, possibly cause you anxiety, and in some circumstances, create legal issues. We have taken on management of your property so you can avoid difficult circumstances and reduce your liability. Be assured, we will always work to settle tenant issues and protect your investment.