



# Dispute Resolution Services

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Residential Tenancy Branch  
Office of Housing and Construction Standards

## DECISION

Dispute Codes      MNSD, FF

### Introduction

This hearing dealt with the tenant's application pursuant to the *Residential Tenancy Act* ("Act") for:

- authorization to obtain a return of all or a portion of their security deposit pursuant to section 38; and
- authorization to recover the filing fee for its application from the landlord, pursuant to section 72.

Both parties attended the hearing and were given a full opportunity to be heard, to present their sworn testimony, to make submissions, to call witnesses and to cross-examine one another. Both parties confirmed that they had exchanged their documentary evidence.

### Issue to be Decided

Is the tenant entitled to a monetary award equivalent to double the value of his security deposit as a result of the landlord's failure to comply with the provisions of section 38 of the *Act*?

Is the tenant entitled to recover the filing fee for this application from the landlord?

### Background, Evidence

The tenant's testimony is as follows. The tenancy began on July 14, 2014 and ended on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The tenants were obligated to pay \$850.00 per month in rent in advance and at the outset of the tenancy the tenants paid a \$425.00 security deposit. The tenant testified that he provided his forwarding address in writing to the landlord on December 21, 2016. The tenant is seeking the return of double his deposits \$425.00 x 2 = \$850.00. The tenant is also seeking the recovery of the \$100.00 filing fee.

The landlord testified that they did receive the forwarding address from the tenant on December 21, 2016 in writing. The landlord testified that the tenant left the unit damaged and dirty and didn't return the security deposit on that basis.

### Analysis

While I have turned my mind to all the documentary evidence and the testimony of the tenant, not all details of the respective submissions and arguments are reproduced here. The principal aspects of the tenant's claim and my findings around each are set out below.

The tenant said he is applying for the return of double the security deposit as the landlord has not complied with the s. 38 of the *Residential Tenancy Act*.

Section 38 (1) says that except as provided in subsection (3) or (4) (a), within 15 days after the later of

- (a) the date the tenancy ends, and
- (b) the date the landlord receives the tenant's forwarding address in writing,

the landlord must do one of the following:

- (c) repay, as provided in subsection (8), any security deposit or pet damage deposit to the tenant with interest calculated in accordance with the regulations;
- (d) make an application for dispute resolution claiming against the security deposit or pet damage deposit.

And Section 38 (6) says if a landlord does not comply with subsection (1), the landlord

- (a) may not make a claim against the security deposit or any pet damage deposit, and

**(b) must pay the tenant double the amount of the security deposit, pet damage deposit, or both, as applicable.**

The landlord acknowledged and conceded that they did not return the security deposit or file an application for dispute resolution within fifteen days of receiving the tenant's forwarding address. Based on the testimony of the tenant, the documentary evidence before me and the landlords own acknowledgment, I find that the landlord has not acted in accordance with Section 38 of the Act and that the tenant is entitled to the return of double his deposits in the amount of \$850.00.

The tenant is also entitled to the recovery of the \$100.00 filing fee.

Conclusion

The tenant has established a claim for \$950.00. I grant the tenant an order under section 67 for the balance due of \$950.00. This order may be filed in the Small Claims Court and enforced as an order of that Court.

This decision is made on authority delegated to me by the Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch under Section 9.1(1) of the *Residential Tenancy Act*.

Dated: February 23, 2017

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Residential Tenancy Branch