



# Dispute Resolution Services

Page: 1

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* (the "Act") for:

- authorization to obtain a return of all or a portion of the security deposit pursuant to section 38;
- authorization to recover the filing fee for this application pursuant to section 72.

The hearing was conducted by conference call. All named parties attended the hearing and were given a full opportunity to provide testimony, to present evidence and to make submissions. The landlord confirmed service of the tenant's application.

### Issues

Is the tenant entitled to a return of all or a portion of the security deposit, including double the amount?

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

### Background and Evidence

The tenancy for this downstairs suite of a residential house began on August 19, 2019. The tenancy was for a fixed term set to expire August 31, 2020. The tenant provided notice to the landlord and vacated on April 28, 2020 before the expiry of the fixed term. The tenant paid a security deposit of \$1000.00 at the start of the tenancy which the landlord continues to hold.

The tenant is claiming double the security deposit arguing that the landlord failed to return the security deposit within 15 days of the date the landlord received the tenants forwarding address in writing. The tenant provided a letter dated April 28, 2020 as proof of providing a forwarding address. The tenant testified it was deposited in the landlord's mailbox on this same date.

The landlord acknowledged receipt of the forwarding address on April 29, 2020. The landlord argued she did not return the deposit as the tenant failed to provide sufficient notice before ending the lease.

### Analysis

Section 38 of the Act provides that when a tenancy ends, the landlord may only keep a security deposit if the tenant has, at the end of the tenancy, consented in writing, or the landlord has an order for payment which has not been paid. Otherwise, the landlord must return the deposit, with interest if payable, or make a claim in the form of an Application for Dispute Resolution. Those steps must be taken within fifteen days of the end of the tenancy, or the date the tenant provides a forwarding address in writing, whichever is later. A landlord who does not comply with this provision may not make a claim against the deposit and must pay the tenants double the amount of the security deposit, pet deposit, or both, as applicable.

I find the tenant did provide a forwarding address in writing to the landlord. The tenants' security deposit was not refunded within fifteen days of the end of the tenancy or the date a forwarding address was provided as required by section 38 of the Act. The landlord did not have written authorization to retain the security deposit or file an application to claim against the deposit within fifteen days; therefore, the doubling provisions of section 38 apply.

I allow the tenant's claim for return of the security deposit and award an amount of \$2000.00, which is double the original security deposit of \$1000.00.

As the tenant was successful in this application, I find that the tenant is entitled to recover the \$100.00 filing fee paid for this application from the landlord for a total monetary award of \$2100.00.

### Conclusion

Pursuant to section 67 of the Act, I grant the tenant a Monetary Order in the amount of \$2100.00. Should the landlord fail to comply with this Order, this Order may be filed in the Small Claims Division of the Provincial 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: June 22, 2020

---

Residential Tenancy Branch