



Dispute Resolution Services

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Residential Tenancy Branch
Office of Housing and Construction Standards

DECISION

Dispute Codes MNSDB-DR, FFT

Introduction

This matter proceeded by way of an *ex parte* Direct Request Proceeding, pursuant to section 38.1 of the *Residential Tenancy Act* (the *Act*), and dealt with an Application for Dispute Resolution by the tenants to obtain monetary compensation for the return of double the security deposit and the pet damage deposit (the deposits) and to recover the filing fee paid for the application.

This decision is written based on the Application for Dispute Resolution, evidence, and submissions provided by the tenants on March 9, 2022.

The tenants submitted two signed Proof of Service Tenant's Notice of Direct Request Proceeding forms which declare that on March 16, 2022, the tenants sent each landlord the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding - Direct Request by registered mail. The tenants provided a copy of the Canada Post Customer Receipts containing the tracking numbers to confirm these mailings.

Based on the written submissions of the tenant and in accordance with sections 89 and 90 of the *Act*, I find that the Direct Request Proceeding documents were served on March 16, 2022 and are deemed to have been received by the landlords on March 21, 2022, the fifth day after their registered mailing.

Issue(s) to be Decided

Are the tenants entitled to monetary compensation for the return of a security deposit and a pet damage deposit pursuant to sections 38 and 67 of the *Act*?

Are the tenants entitled to recover the filing fee for this application pursuant to section 72 of the *Act*?

Background and Evidence

I have reviewed all written submissions and evidence before me; however, only the evidence and submissions relevant to the issues and findings in this matter are described in this decision.

The tenants submitted the following relevant evidentiary material:

- A copy of a residential tenancy agreement which was signed by Landlord M.A. and the tenants on March 28, 2021, indicating a monthly rent of \$1,800.00, a security deposit of \$900.00, and a pet damage deposit of \$500.00, for a tenancy commencing on April 15, 2021
- A copy of a letter from the tenants to the landlords dated January 30, 2022, providing the forwarding address and requesting the return of the deposits
- A copy of a witnessed Proof of Service Tenant Forwarding Address for the Return of Security and/or Pet Damage Deposit form which indicates that the forwarding address was served to the landlords in person at 6:00 pm on January 30, 2022
- A copy of a Tenant's Direct Request Worksheet showing the amount of the deposits paid by the tenants and indicating the tenants vacated the rental unit on January 30, 2022

Analysis

Paragraph 12 (1) (b) of the Residential Tenancy Regulation establishes that a tenancy agreement is required to be "signed and dated by both the landlord and the tenant."

I find that Landlord M.A. has signed the tenancy agreement for Landlord Z.N.; however, Landlord Z.N. has not signed the tenancy agreement themselves, which is a requirement of the Direct Request process.

For this reason, I will only proceed with the portion of the tenants' application naming Landlord M.A. as a respondent.

Section 38(1) of the *Act* states that the landlord has fifteen days from the end of tenancy and the date they received the forwarding address to either return the deposit(s) in full or make an application for dispute resolution claiming against the deposit(s).

Section 38(6) of the *Act* states that if the landlord does not return the deposit(s) or file a claim against them within the fifteen days, the landlord must pay the tenant double the amount of the deposit(s).

I have reviewed all documentary evidence and I find that the tenants paid a security deposit in the amount of \$900.00 and a pet damage deposit in the amount of \$500.00, as per the tenancy agreement.

I accept the following declarations made by the tenants on the Tenant's Direct Request Worksheet:

- The tenants have not provided consent for Landlord M.A. to keep all or part of the deposits
- There are no outstanding Monetary Orders against the tenants for this tenancy
- The tenants have not extinguished their right to the deposits in accordance with sections 24(1) and 36(1) of the *Act*

I accept the tenants' statement on the Tenant's Direct Request Worksheet that the tenancy ended on January 30, 2022, the day the tenants vacated the rental unit.

In accordance with section 88 of the *Act*, I find that the forwarding address was duly served to Landlord M.A. on January 30, 2022.

I accept the evidence before me that Landlord M.A. has failed to return the deposits to the tenants and has not filed an Application for Dispute Resolution requesting to retain the deposits by February 14, 2022, within the fifteen days granted under section 38(1) of the *Act*.

Based on the foregoing, I find that Landlord M.A. must pay the tenants double the amount of the security deposit and the pet damage deposit in accordance sections 38(6) of the *Act*.

I note that the only monetary award available to a tenant by way of the Direct Request process is for the return of a security deposit and pet damage deposit. As the tenants have also sought a monetary award for expenses for sending letters to the landlords, I would not be able to consider this aspect of the tenants' claim through the Direct Request process.

Therefore, I find that the tenants are entitled to a monetary award in the amount of \$2,800.00, the amount claimed by the tenants for double the security deposit and the pet damage deposit.

As the tenants were partially successful in this application, I find that the tenants are entitled to recover the \$100.00 filing fee paid for this application.

Conclusion

Pursuant to sections 67 and 72 of the *Act*, I grant the tenants a Monetary Order in the amount of \$2,900.00 for the return of double the security deposit and the pet damage deposit and for the recovery of the filing fee for this application. The tenants are provided with this Order in the above terms and the landlord(s) must be served with **this Order** as soon as possible. Should the landlord(s) 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.

I dismiss the portion of the tenants' application for a Monetary Order for the return of the security deposit and the pet damage deposit, naming Landlord Z.N. as a respondent, without leave to reapply.

I dismiss the tenants' application for a Monetary Order for expenses with leave to reapply.

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: April 07, 2022

Residential Tenancy Branch