

# VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

264 NORTH WINOOSKI AVE.  
P.O. Box 1367  
BURLINGTON, VT 05402  
802-863-5620 (VOICE AND TTY)  
FAX 802-863-7152  
(800) 747-5022

**OFFICES:**

BURLINGTON  
MONTPELIER  
RUTLAND

**OFFICES:**

ST. JOHNSBURY  
SPRINGFIELD  
WATERBURY

DATE

LANDLORD CONTACT INFO

Re: CLIENT, tenant of ADDRESS

Dear Mr. LANDLORD:

I am writing this letter on behalf of your former tenant CLIENT. Mr. CLIENT was a resident of ADDRESS in TOWN, Vermont. The property was seriously damaged by DISASTER-related flooding that rendered it uninhabitable, and CLIENT has been unable to reside at the premises since DATE OF DISASTER. CLIENT told me he had a long talk with you on DATE in which you both agreed that the property was irreparable and that CLIENT'S tenancy terminated as of DATE OF DISASTER and that his security deposit would be returned. CLIENT is now seeking return of his security deposit: \$X,XXX.

I am certain you must be facing extremely difficult circumstances right now as the owner of a flood-damaged rental property. Ineligible for FEMA grants, landlords are left with no resources other than SBA Disaster Loans at a time when many landlords already have as much debt on their properties as they can manage. I am truly sorry for your losses. However, tenants like Mr. CLIENT who were forced to vacate uninhabitable rental units are also struggling financially and must have their security deposits returned to them.

Vermont law requires a landlord to return a security deposit to a tenant within 14 days from the date on which the tenant vacated or abandoned the dwelling unit. See 9 V.S.A. § 4461(c). If the full security deposit is not returned, the landlord must send the tenant a written statement itemizing any deductions. If the landlord does not return the full security deposit within 14 days or provide a written statement explaining why the full deposit is not being returned, the landlord forfeits the right to withhold any portion of the security deposit. 9 V.S.A. § 4461(e).

CLIENT knows that you have suffered significant losses. In an effort to give you time to collect any pay-out from your insurance carrier, CLIENT waited XX days before reminding you that you agreed to return his security deposit. At that point, you said that you were not going to return the security deposit to Mr. CLIENT. Vermont law requires that the deposit be returned. Please send Mr. CLIENT his full security deposit, \$X,XXX, to ADDRESS, no later than DATE. If you do not have the financial resources to be able to make such a payment at this time, please contact me at CONTACT INFO to explore different options. I am hopeful that we will be able to work out a reasonable solution.

Sincerely,

YOU

cc: CLIENT