



FRAUD ALERT

RESIDENTIAL ONE YEAR LEASE AGREEMENT

What is rental fraud?

A rental fraud occurs when an interested party in a property is schemed into paying an upfront fee to rent said property. In rental fraud, the property could already be occupied, was rented to multiple individuals, or does not physically exist.

The damage of rental fraud:

In 2022, the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) received 1,348 reports of real estate fraud - which included rental fraud - in Florida. Real estate fraud in Florida had caused reported losses of **\$54,555,025** to victims of the frauds. A majority of the victims were over the age of 40.

Tips to help avoid becoming a victim of rental fraud:

- Do not send wire transfers to people you do not know. Avoid using peer-to-peer (P2P) payment services like Zelle, Venmo, and Cash App.
- Do not provide a security deposit before signing a lease.
- Do not provide funds towards a property that you have not seen.
- Conduct research into the property owner or property management to determine who actually owns the property.
- Do not provide personal identifiable information (PII) until you have met with property management or the property owner.



- Check the current rates of rental prices in the area.
- Check for grammatical errors, misspellings and excessive punctuations.
- If you are being pressured into sending money or making a quick decision, or feel like the events are out of control, STOP and THINK.

What do I do if I am already a victim or know someone who has fallen to a rental fraud?

Stop all contact with the scammer. If you have already sent money, contact your financial institution and report to them the transfer of funds. File a report with your local authorities and with the Federal Bureau of Investigations through their Internet Crime Complaint Center at ic3.gov.

