A logo with a moose and text

Description automatically generated

Next Steps - Maine Security Deposit Return Letter

Pine Tree Legal Forms Project

Prepared on {{ format\_date(today()) }}

Next Steps

Now that you have a letter to your former landlord, it’s time to use it! These are the steps you can follow to try to get your security deposit back:

**Step 1.** Fill out the Maine Security Deposit Form Letter. **You’ve just finished this step!**

**Step 2.** Send the letter to your former landlord. Use Certified Mail; Return Receipt Requested. If you aren’t sure how to do this, ask about Certified Mail at your local U.S. Post Office.

**Step 3.** Keep a copy of the letter for yourself.

**Step 4**. Hold on to the Return Receipt when it comes back in the mail.

**Step 5.** Wait 7 days (from the date your landlord gets the letter) for your landlord to respond.

**Note:** If your landlord did not sign for the first mailing, send another copy by regular mail and wait 10 days (3 days for delivery plus the 7 day notice period).

What If My Landlord Still Won't Return My Deposit?

If your landlord doesn't refund the deposit after the seven day notice is over you can sue your landlord in Maine Small Claims Court. Under Maine law if your landlord wrongfully keeps your security deposit you can sue them for double the amount of your deposit.

Small Claims Court is meant to be more accessible to regular people. You can learn more about it, and how to sue your former landlord, if needed, in this guide from the Maine Judicial Branch: [A Guide to Small Claims Cases](https://www.courts.maine.gov/help/guides/sc-guide.pdf)

More resources

Many times a letter reminding a landlord of their legal responsibilities is enough to solve a problem – but not always.

Learn More

* If you want to learn more about security deposits and your rights as a tenant in Maine, start with our article: [Rights of Maine Renters – How to get your security deposit back, and what to do if you don’t](https://www.ptla.org/security-deposit).
* If you need information about your rights as a renter in Maine generally, we have [many educational Rental Housing resources](https://www.ptla.org/self-help/rental-housing) available!

Get Legal Help

* Pine Tree Legal Assistance offers free help with many civil legal issues like rental housing problems, debt collection, problems with public benefits, and more – if you need legal help you can [contact PTLA](https://ptla.org/contact-us).