

TenantFit Rental Pre-Screening Form Guide For Landlords

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This guide supports landlords using the TenantFit Rental Pre-screening Form to save time and reduce rental risks. It provides guidance on how to use the answers in the form, followed by Smart Screening Tips and Red Flags to watch in the answers.

Disclaimer

This guide is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. We do not provide legal services, and nothing here should be interpreted as a substitute for professional legal guidance. Readers are encouraged to consult a qualified legal professional for advice specific to their circumstances. Laws and regulations may change or vary depending on location.

Purpose of the Form

This is not a full rental application. It helps you:

- Filter for serious, qualified candidates
- Avoid collecting sensitive data too early
- Set the stage for fast and fair screening

How to use the answers in the form by section

Consent to contact

Without candidate providing their email and agreeing to be contacted through it, you cannot proceed with the application.

Move-in date and flexibility

Knowing when they need to move helps you prioritize serious candidates who fit your availability.

Number of people living in the unit

Avoid surprises and plan for wear and tear. Be prepared to provide appropriate accommodations.

Housing situation

This provides good information on rental history and stability, and gives helpful context for making informed, fair screening decisions.

Rental history and intended use

Prior renting experience often indicates familiarity with tenant responsibilities. If they did not you can plan for a more thorough on-boarding.

Income and employment status

Collecting this information helps you assess general financial stability and rental suitability early in the process - without collecting sensitive documents. This helps landlords screen fairly and efficiently, while respecting privacy and avoiding unnecessary deep dives too soon.

Consent and declaration

Landlord is required to obtain consent prior to performing any background check. If you are planning to run credit check yourself, this allows to understand candidate's readiness for that.



Want to automate this step? Try TenantFit's pre-screen form. [Register for free](#)

Auto-score responses - Highlight red flags - Sort top candidates - Save time and keep records

Smart Screening Tips

Document decisions

Keep a separate folder per candidate where you take notes about your conversation and all related documents. Assign Application ID to the responses.

Track response speed

Serious renters reply quickly and clearly. Use timestamps to note how long it takes applicants to reply after your first message. Slow replies may mean low interest or multiple concurrent applications.

Be consistent

Send the exact same form to all leads. Consistency helps you compare responses more easily and keeps the process fair.

Don't ask for personally identifiable information upfront

Avoid names, IDs, bank info, SINs. This may deter quality candidates

Follow up if unclear

Missing data or red flags aren't always dealbreakers, but require clarification.

Don't over-screen too early

This form is meant to narrow, not finalize.

Look for details

Quality messages reflect quality applicants. Applicants who explain why they're moving, who they are, and what they're looking for usually signal thoughtfulness and commitment.

Keep communication factual and minimal.

Avoid real-time conversations — use email only if possible. Use templates for all emails. Do not promise or provide any timelines. Ensure communication is neutral, consistent, and well-documented. You're not required to explain why an applicant was not selected.

Layer the Screening Process:

Pre-screen → short-list → request documents → background check → schedule interview → respond to offer. Keeps your process professional and structured.

Red Flags to watch

Co-operation & seriousness

If someone doesn't take time to fill the pre-screening form, that hesitation can itself be a red flag.

Honesty & openness

Compare answers across fields: E.g., If they say they've rented before but check "no" on "rented from private landlord," dig deeper.

Do extended answers appear truthful? Do you notice any discrepancy there?

Vague explanations: Short, generic answers like "NA", "none", "just looking" across the form may signal evasiveness.

Behavioral mismatch

If a candidate's tone in the answers seems unusually eager, rushed, combative or overly flattering

Trying to instill a sense of urgency, pushing for immediate viewing without answering questions.

Current Housing vs. Reason for Moving

Inconsistent or vague responses can be a sign of issues:

Claims they own their home but list "moving because of eviction."

"Living with friends" but lists prior landlord reference in Stage 2 (why not mentioning landlord now?).

Look for vague or evasive answers like "just looking for a change."

Rental History vs. Time at Current Address

If they claim to have lived at 1 unit in the last 5 years but also say they've been at their current place for "less than 6 months" — ask for clarification.

Rapid moves (multiple units in 5 years, all under 12 months) may indicate instability or eviction history.

Rent Payment History vs. Reason for Moving

If they admit to paying rent late but say they're "moving because current landlord is selling," it may not add up.

Conflict between reasons given and rental history is worth a follow-up.

Vehicle Ownership vs. Parking Needs

Lists multiple vehicles but selects "1 parking space required" or none — could suggest parking congestion risk, or unregistered use of space.

Mentions motorcycles/boats but doesn't ask about storage — check if this contradicts your lease terms.

Employment Stability, Income Level

High income reported but under "employment duration," selects "Less than 6 months" — this could be a recent job or unverifiable claim.

Very high income + short employment time frame could need verification early.

Does the income level match stated profession?

Business Activity in the Unit

Says “No business activity” but selects “Self-employed” in occupation — follow up to clarify if they intend to work from home.

Some home businesses may violate lease terms, insurance rules, or zoning bylaws.

Unusual Field vs. Current Housing

Lists a very high-salary profession (e.g. “corporate lawyer,” “surgeon”) but is “living with friends” or in temporary housing.

Could indicate fabricated info or financial instability.

Potential risk

Saying that they willing to rent without seeing your property in person.

Want to send a cashier’s check while out of country.

Want to pay deposit or rent higher than specified amount.

Lifestyle match:

Can your property accommodate tenant's possession - e.g. if they indicate they have a boat, do you have parking available for that?

Is your house able to accommodate the family size?