

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCREENING

With the cost of eviction rising to the point where it can be cheaper to "buy" someone out of a lease than to pursue eviction, it is more important than ever to do a thorough job of tenant screening.

SELECTION CRITERIA

It is important that you have written selection criteria to assure that you are treating all your applicants consistently.

Suggested criteria includes *denying* applicants who:

- ✓ Falsify their application
- ✓ Have a criminal history
- ./ Have a history of drug / alcohol use that results in behavior that would adversely affect the living environment of the building
- ./ Have a record of evictions
- ./ Are unable to have utilities connected in their name
- ./ Have not met their financial obligations – especially with regard to rent
- ./ Cannot provide 36 months of residential history

THE APPLICATION

The application is a starting point for gathering information about the applicant. Make sure that you get proper identification with which to verify the date of birth and the proper spelling of the applicant's name. Ask probing questions – *not just the basics*:

- ./ Do you expect any changes to your household composition?
- ./ Is there anyone currently living with you that is not on the application?
- ./ Do you have sole legal and physical custody of the children?
- ./ Have you ever been evicted or had an unlawful detainer filed against you?
- ./ Have you ever been convicted of a crime, including a felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor, anywhere in the United States?
- ./ Have you ever been admitted to a detoxification center?
- ./ Will you be parking a car in our parking lot?

THE INTERVIEW

One goal of the interview is to educate the applicant about your application and verification process. A good interviewer is able to gather more information from the applicant by reviewing the information provided on the application and asking open ended or probing questions of the applicant.