

LPS QUICK NOTES

I. Pre-screening Tips:

- A: **TREAT EVERYONE THE SAME:** Be Careful not to ask questions that could be deemed as discriminatory. IE: The age of your children, where they attend church etc. Stay as much to the application as possible.
- B: **BEWARE OF INCONSISTENT BEHAVIOR:** IE: Driving a nice car but don't dress their kids with proper clothes. Do they look at the apartment quickly with little care of what it looks like or the amenities it contains. Or, do they take their time noting where things may fit?
- C: **APPLICATION FILLED OUT IN YOUR PRESENCE IF POSSIBLE:** This is the best way to have it filled out. Keeps them from having time to do a set-up, false landlord information etc. If they can't remember a number, have them call the information back to you. Try to keep the rental application in the office if at all possible.
- D: **IDENTIFICATION:** See two forms of identification if possible, picture ID is required. Keep a copy for your records, and for safety. (Before you show the unit retain ID for your own safety)! Compare signatures on the ID & application.
- E: **IF THEY SEEM DESPERATE:** Do they have to move in right away? If the application is not processed completely tell them to take a mini vacation and stay at a hotel or friends house.
- F: **THOROUGH SCREENING:** Let it be known that a thorough background check is going to be run, is there anything else they want to disclose to you now.
Let them know a credit report, criminal search, court search for evictions, rental history, and employment verifications will be done.

II. FILLING OUT THE APPLICATIONS:

- A: **FILL OUT COMPLETELY:** All information is needed, including phone numbers and zip codes.
- B: **WRITE LEGIBLY:** Applications are harder to read after they have been faxed. If you have a hard time reading it, your screening company will too.
- C: **GET IT OUT TO US RIGHT AWAY:** This helps prevent the fraudulent setting up on the information.
- D: **FILL IN CLIENT INFORMATION:** Fill in complex, rent amount, unit number and your phone number.

III. CREDIT- HOW TO USE AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR.

- A: **ADDRESS:** Do they show up on the credit report? What dates show for the address?

B: SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS AND BIRTHDATES: Do they match what was given on the application?

C: DATE CREDIT WAS STARTED: Is it current?

D: NUMBER OF ACCOUNTS & RATINGS: See cheat sheet for reference on how to read a credit report. They should be rated well, with small balances or they could be living off credit.

E: BALANCE & PAST DUE ACCOUNTS: Balances should be reasonable and current, paid on time.

F: PUBLIC RECORDS:

1. Bankruptcy: There have been more bankruptcy cases in the past 10yrs in this country than over the past 85 years combined.

2. Chapter 13: Beware, this often times leads to chapter 7 (full blown bankruptcy).

3. Chapter 7: Must be discharged and have established good credit since it took place.

G: Collections: Who were they to? When? How much owing? Etc.

H Judgment & Liens: When? Who? Etc: IRS liens are rarely, if ever, wiped out by a bankruptcy.

I: INQUIRIES: Have they just been screened? New Debt? Living off Credit?

J: Employment: Does it show up on the credit Report? This is not as current information.

Example: We screened a man who had great credit, but was living off of credit cards. He would get one taken care of, max it out, go get another card, and only pay the very minimum payments on each card. This basically means that good credit can't always be used as a guide.

IV. LANDLORD REPORTS:

A: Does the address given match the credit report? Dates match up too?

Is this a real landlord? If there are any questions, use tax rolls and reverse phone books.

B: Have they been abiding by all lease requirements, not just paying rent on time?

C: Is the rent going up dramatically? Can they afford the new rent amount?

D: Any problems we should know about?

E. Have they given proper notice?

F We like to see two landlord reports if possible. The previous is usually more able to divulged negative information than the current. Also, one is easier to "set-up" than two references.

V. Employment:

A; Verify that phone number given is to the company.

B: Try Human Resource Dept or Personnel if possible.

C. Who is authorized to do verifications?

D. Get name and position of person you're speaking with.

E. Most will only verify what you have, which is why the application needs to be filled out completely.

F. Self-employed people must provide tax returns or three months worth of bank statements.

G. How long have they been at this type of business?

Example: We caught a gal who went to work for a doctors office, stole his personal information, SS#, bank statements etc.) and tried to pass off as her. We asked for tax returns, which she could not provide. We found out that she had not only been stealing his personal data, but the drugs from his office as well.

VI. Evictions Searches:

A. Even if a person has good credit, they still may have poor rental histories. They may be trying to save their credit by not paying rent.

B. It gives you added security that you know they haven't been through the eviction process before. Once they've been through it once, they learn the system, which makes it even harder to get them out a second time.

C. We don't want someone who's being served to be evicted into your unit.

D. Eviction judgments don't get on a credit report till it is reported by a collection agency. Some never get on their credit since the landlord just wanted to get them out, knowing they couldn't pay up.

VII. CRIMINAL SEARCHES

A. Drugs are the most common criminal offenses that we find. Drugs in a community attract all kinds of criminal activity.

B. Once criminal activity is allowed on property it grows like a cancer. It destroys the property value and the surrounding neighborhood.

C. The cost to clean up is far greater than the cost to prevent it in the first place.

VIII. LIABILITY:

EXAMPLES:

1. Ex-Apartment maintenance person convicted of child molesting and rape had keys to every unit in the complex.
2. Lady embezzled \$600k from law firm.
3. Man just let out of jail for 1st degree murder.