7 Tips for Paying the RIGHT Amount Before You Move In

1. **Up-Front Costs**
   At or before your tenancy begins, your landlord can only charge you an amount equal to first month’s rent, last month’s rent, a security deposit (less than or equal to first month’s rent), and the cost to buy and install a new lock and key. Be sure to include these up-front costs in your budget.

2. **Last Month’s Rent**
   This amount can’t be more than you paid for your first month’s rent. Your landlord is also required to give you the yearly interest earned on this money.

3. **Security Deposit**
   This amount can’t be more than you paid for first month’s rent, and your landlord must give you a receipt when you pay it. Within the next 30 days your landlord must also tell you, in writing, the name of the bank and the account number where your deposit is being kept.

4. **Finder’s Fee/Broker’s Fee**
   A rental agent may be able to charge you a “finder’s fee,” but they must give you written notice of the amount to be charged, that they are a licensed real estate agent, and their license number.

5. **Illegal Fees**
   Your landlord cannot charge you an application fee, a credit check fee, an initial pet deposit, or a fee for not paying your rent on time unless it is more than 30 days late.

6. **Get Receipts**
   Be sure to get receipts for all the money you pay, especially if you pay in cash, by bank check, or by money order.

7. **FREE Legal Services**
   If you are a student at UMass Amherst and you think you’ve been overcharged, complete an intake form with the Student Legal Services Office (www.umass.edu/slso) to discuss your options!

**UMassAmherst**

Off Campus Student Life
Student Legal Services Office
Student Legal Services Office

The Student Legal Services Office (SLSO) is a student-funded law office providing legal assistance to fee-paying UMass Amherst students and student groups.

We offer FREE, CONFIDENTIAL advice and/or referral in most legal matters affecting students, assisting them to identify and solve their legal problems. In certain limited circumstances we represent students in court.

922 CAMPUS CENTER
WWW.UMASS.EDU/SLSO
SLSO@UMASS.EDU
(413) 545 - 1995

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document has been prepared for educational purposes only. Communication of information through this document is not intended to solicit clients, to provide legal services as to any particular matter, to convey or constitute legal advice, nor to provide a substitute for obtaining legal advice from a qualified attorney.