

Missouri Security Deposit Laws: Limits, Deductions and Deadlines

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: <https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/missouri-security-deposit-laws>

Missouri limits security deposits to two months' rent. Landlords have 30 days after the tenancy ends to return the deposit or send an itemized list of damages, and wrongful withholding can cost twice the amount kept.

Key points

- A landlord may not demand or receive a security deposit of more than two months' rent.
- Within 30 days after the tenancy ends, the landlord must return the full deposit or send an itemized list of damages with the balance.
- Deductions are limited to unpaid rent, restoring the unit beyond ordinary wear and tear, agreed carpet cleaning and losses from inadequate notice to end the tenancy, all listed in writing.
- Any interest earned on a security deposit belongs to the landlord.
- A tenant can recover twice the amount wrongfully withheld.

Missouri at a glance

Rule	Missouri	Law
Deposit limit	A landlord may not demand or receive a security deposit of more than two months' rent.	RSMo 535.300
Deadline to return the deposit	Within 30 days after the tenancy ends, the landlord must return the full deposit or send an itemized list of damages with the balance.	RSMo 535.300
Itemized deductions	Deductions are limited to unpaid rent, restoring the unit beyond ordinary wear and tear, agreed carpet cleaning and losses from inadequate notice to end the tenancy, all listed in writing.	RSMo 535.300
Interest on deposits	Any interest earned on a security deposit belongs to the landlord.	RSMo 535.300
Penalty for wrongful withholding	A tenant can recover twice the amount wrongfully withheld.	RSMo 535.300

Mistakes to avoid

- Skipping a dated move-in condition report with photos, then having nothing to compare against at move out.
- Charging for normal wear and tear.
- Missing the return deadline, even by a few days.
- Not asking for a forwarding address before the tenant leaves.
- Losing track of deposit money by mixing it with operating funds without a ledger.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- RSMo 535.300

Official sources:

- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 441 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=441>
- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 535 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=535>
- Revised Statutes of Missouri, chapter 534 (Missouri Revisor of Statutes):
<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=534>
- Missouri Courts: <https://www.courts.mo.gov/>

General information, not legal advice. Check current law and talk to a Missouri attorney before you act. Last reviewed October 29, 2026.