Virginia 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/virginia-security-deposit-laws

Virginia caps security deposits at two months of rent and gives landlords 45 days after the tenancy ends to return the deposit with a written list of deductions. Landlords must keep deduction records for two years.

Key points

- A security deposit cannot exceed two months of periodic rent.
- The landlord must return the deposit, with a written itemized list of any deductions, within 45 days after the tenancy ends or the tenant moves out, whichever is later.
- Deductions must be itemized in writing; when a third party contractor is needed for repairs, the landlord gives notice within the 45 days and has 15 more days to send the final list.
- If a landlord willfully fails to comply, the court orders the deposit returned and can award actual damages and reasonable attorney fees.
- The section generally does not currently require interest on security deposits.

Virginia at a glance

Rule	Virginia	Law
Deposit limit	A security deposit cannot exceed two months of periodic rent.	Va. Code 55.1-1226(A)
Deadline to return the deposit	The landlord must return the deposit, with a written itemized list of any deductions, within 45 days after the tenancy ends or the tenant moves out, whichever is later.	Va. Code 55.1-1226(A)
Itemized deductions	Deductions must be itemized in writing; when a third party contractor is needed for repairs, the landlord gives notice within the 45 days and has 15 more days to send the final list.	Va. Code 55.1-1226(A) and (E)
Interest on deposits	The section generally does not currently require interest on security deposits.	Va. Code 55.1-1226

Rule	Virginia	Law
Penalty for wrongful withholding	If a landlord willfully fails to comply, the court orders the deposit returned and can award actual damages and reasonable attorney fees.	Va. Code 55.1-1226(E)

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:

- Va. Code 55.1-1226(A)
- Va. Code 55.1-1226(A) and (E)
- Va. Code 55.1-1226
- Va. Code 55.1-1226(E)
- Va. Code 55.1-1226(F) and (G)

Official sources:

- Code of Virginia (Virginia Legislative Information System): https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title55.1/chapter12/
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development: tenant rights statement: https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/
- Virginia's Judicial System: https://www.vacourts.gov/

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