How to use my deposits Northern Ireland

For Users of the Insurance Scheme

Welcome 2
What is deposit protection? 2
How to use the website 3
How to log in 3
How to protect a deposit in your Insurance online account 4
Serving the Prescribed Information 5
Where to find the Prescribed Information 6
Dispute Resolution Mechanism 7
Welcome to my deposits Northern Ireland

We are an independent third party approved by the Department for Social Development to allow landlords and letting agents to protect tenancy deposits and comply with the tenancy deposit protection legislation in Northern Ireland.

The new legislation may seem complicated at first, which is why we are here to support you. We will ensure that you are able to protect tenancy deposits quickly and securely and comply with the legislation without complication.

Welcome to

Eddie Hooker
CEO my deposits Northern Ireland

What is deposit protection?
It’s normal practice for a landlord or letting agent to take a deposit from their tenant. The new legislation that went live 1 April 2013 is designed to protect the tenant’s deposit and ensure they get it back at the end of the tenancy, provided they have met the terms of their tenancy agreement.

How to comply with the legislation
To comply with the legislation, landlords and letting agents must:

1. Protect the tenant’s deposit with a government approved tenancy deposit scheme within 14 days of receiving the deposit from the tenant.
2. And then provide the tenant with key information about the protection within 28 days from receipt of the deposit. This is known as the Prescribed Information.

Penalties to those who fail to comply
A tenant can report a landlord to the Local Council if they fail to protect the deposit with an approved scheme and/or provide the Prescribed Information to the tenant within the specified time limits. Councils will have the power to issue fixed penalties of up to £20,000 in such cases.

Who are my deposits Northern Ireland
my deposits Northern Ireland is brought to you by the my deposits group.

Since 2007, my deposits.co.uk has run an insurance based tenancy deposit protection scheme in England and Wales. It is the preferred scheme for over 100,000 members, including the largest letting agents in the country.

In July 2012 my deposits Scotland launched a custodial tenancy deposit scheme for landlords and agents in Scotland and to date we have safeguarded thousands of deposits.

Supported by:
We are run by experts in the private rented sector:
How to use the website

Our website has been split into two colour coded sections, Insurance and Custodial. Each section has a How We Work page with simple, step by step flow charts that summarise how each part of the protection process works. The Resource Centre in each section is home to a number of FAQs and a range of Scheme documents and guides on how to prepare for dispute resolution.

How to log in to your account

Once you have joined you need to log in to your Member account to protect the deposit.

Click on the 'My Account' button in the insurance based protection area (circled in red).
How to protect a deposit in your **Insurance** online account

Once you have logged in you will see the homepage for your insurance protection member account.

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### Protect in 4 simple steps

1. Click on the ‘Protect a new deposit’ button or the link (both circled in red) to start the Protect a new deposit process.
2. Follow the step by step instructions by entering the necessary information in the fields when prompted.
3. Once this is completed and you have paid the protection fee, your deposit is protected.
4. Remember, you will need to serve the Prescribed Information.

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### Watch the Video

Go to [www.mydepositsni.co.uk/online-tutorials](http://www.mydepositsni.co.uk/online-tutorials) to watch a video on how to protect deposits in your insurance account or visit [youtube.com/mydepositsni](http://youtube.com/mydepositsni)
Serving the Prescribed Information

Part of your legal obligation is to provide the tenant with key details about the deposit protection, known as Prescribed Information, within 28 days of receipt of the deposit.

To make things simple for our members we provide three key documents that make up the required Information, the Deposit Protection Certificate, the Information for Tenants leaflet and the Deposit Deductions template.

1 The Deposit Protection Certificate (DPC)

The Deposit Protection Certificate is produced after you have successfully protected the deposit. You should sign the DPC and pass it to your tenant.

2 The Information for Tenants Leaflet

This leaflet explains our processes to the tenant, and what they should do in the event of a dispute.

3 The Deposit Deductions Template

You must outline the circumstances in which you may retain all or part of the tenant’s deposit, with reference to the tenancy agreement.

We provide you with an editable PDF template to do this. The quickest way to do this is cut and paste relevant clauses into the template.
Where to find the Prescribed Information

You can view and print the Deposit Protection Certificate following the successful protection of the deposit, in your online member account.

The Information for Tenants leaflet and Deposit Deductions Template are also available in your member account. Alternatively you can find the Information for Tenants leaflet and Deposit Deductions Template on the main website.

**Insurance protection:**
mydepositsni.co.uk/insurance/landlords/resource-centre/documents
Dispute Resolution Mechanism

If you believe the tenant has broken the terms of the tenancy agreement and the tenant disagrees with your proposed deductions to the deposit then we offer a free, impartial Dispute Resolution Mechanism (DRM), to resolve the issue.

The DRM is evidenced based and means if you wish to withhold all or part of the deposit you must provide evidence to prove your claim. Therefore if you provide no, or poor evidence then the impartial adjudicator must award the deposit amount to the tenant.

Our experience means we are well placed to offer support and guidance on dispute resolution. The key is to be prepared:

Preparing for a deposit dispute starts before the tenant moves in, not when the tenant moves out.

At the beginning of the tenancy

✅ Have a high quality written Tenancy Agreement
   This is the legal contract with your tenant so ensure it’s clear, concise and fair. Badly worded tenancy agreements are a leading cause of landlords and agents losing disputes.

✅ Take a written inventory and check-in report
   This provides a full record of the fixtures, fittings and décor, and records the standard of the property before the tenant moves in. Make sure it’s signed and dated by both parties.
   - Be descriptive and use consistent terms.
   - The written description is key. Use photos and/or video to support the inventory.
   - Detail age of items.

During the tenancy

✅ Keep receipts and any invoices for charges incurred during the tenancy
   - Proof of purchase.
   - Document payments such as cleaning charges, damages, repairs.
   - Keep bank statements as evidence of costs.

✅ Rent payment log book
   - Keep an accurate record of paid and unpaid rent.

✅ Correspondence and witness statements
   - Keep copies of letters and emails between both parties.

At the end of the tenancy

✅ Complete a check-out report
   - The check-out compares the overall state of the property at the end of the tenancy with the inventory and check-in report from the start of the tenancy.
   - Use the same terms and descriptions.
   - Use photos and videos.
   - Ask the tenant to attend the check-out.