

FLORIDA'S NEW LAW ON TENANT APPLICATION FRAUD

Landlord Legislative Update: Florida Makes Tenant Application Fraud a Third Degree Felony

Overview

Florida has enacted a major new law that directly impacts rental housing providers: **Fraudulent rental applications are now a third-degree felony**. This change gives landlords stronger tools to combat identity fraud, fake documents, and deceptive applications that have become increasingly common in the rental market.

New Felony Offense: Fraudulent Entry of a Residential Dwelling Unit

The law creates a new crime for tenants who use **false, forged, or misleading information** to obtain a rental unit. Examples include:

- Fake pay stubs
- Forged or altered IDs
- Synthetic or stolen identities
- False employment or income claims

Anyone who engages in these actions can now be charged with a **third-degree felony**.

Non-Curable Lease Violation

Fraudulent entry is now clearly classified as a **non-curable violation**, meaning:

- Landlords may issue a **7-day notice to vacate**
- No opportunity to correct the violation is required
- Eviction proceedings may begin immediately upon expiration of the 7-day notice.

This clarifies prior law. We were able to evict when there was fraud detected but this makes it crystal clear.

Why the Law Was Passed

Lawmaker were shown the sharp rise in rental application fraud, including:

- Fake income documents
- Identity theft
- Fraudulent employment verification
- Online document-forging services

These schemes have caused substantial financial losses for landlords and contributed to instability in rental communities. The new law aims to deter fraud and protect both property owners and legitimate renters.

What This Means for Landlords

Stronger Screening Authority

Landlords now have clearer legal backing to:

- Remove fraudulent tenants quicker
- Strengthen application screening processes
- Verify income and identity more thoroughly

Operational Adjustments

Landlords may want to heavily review and update:

- Application procedures
- Income verification methods
- ID authentication tools
- Lease language related to fraud

Effective Date

The law takes effect **October 1, 2026**, giving landlords time to update policies and screening procedures.

Summary

Florida's new law is one of the strongest in the country for combating rental application fraud. By elevating fraudulent applications to a felony and making it clear that it is a non-curable violation, the state is giving landlords powerful tools to protect their properties and communities.

How did this all happen?

The Florida Apartment Association and the Florida State Chapter of NARPM worked to get this law passed. Your PAC contributions were put into action.

What can you do now?

Donate to The Apartment Political Action Committee TODAY!

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