



Chula Vista Apartment Crime Prevention Screening Checklist for Prospective Renters¹

Note: this document focuses on crime prevention; many landlords use additional screening tools, such as credit, employment and eviction checks.

What landlords told the developer of the guide that prompted this checklist:

“You can spend \$100 in time and money up front or be stuck with thousands later.”

“99% of these problems can be avoided through effective screening. There is no better investment you can make.”

“I’ve quit relying on character judgment. For managing rental property, it doesn’t work.”

Set the tone - tell applicants: For the safety of our current residents, and to ensure your safety at this property, we ask a series of safety-related questions of all applicants. In addition, I monitor all the activity at this property, and cooperate with the Chula Vista Police Department. I track police calls for service to each unit, so I will know right away if there are any criminal or nuisance problems with a resident or their guests, and will take immediate action to correct the problem.²

Interview the applicants: It’s best to complete this form using an “interview” approach, in which you ask the questions and fill it out yourself. Advantages: you can read the writing, you can gauge the applicant’s reactions to questions, and applicants should know the answer to most questions without having to think about them.

This form should be completed for *each* prospective tenant over 18 years of age.

1. Review two pieces of photo identification and make sure the information matches the applicant and the information on the application form. Ask for all names (such as married or maiden names) that the applicant has used over the past 10 years.

- driver’s license
- military ID
- passport
- other: _____

Names used:

¹ The material in this document is adapted from Campbell DeLong Resources, Inc., Landlord Training Program. Keeping Illegal Activity out of Rental Property: A Practical Guide for Landlords and Property Managers (California Edition), which was based on the original Landlord Training Program, initially developed for the Portland Police Bureau, with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

² Portions of this material are also adapted from “Screening Guidelines,” developed by Michelle Arneson of the Green Bay, Wisconsin Police Department.

2. Ask each adult:

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? yes no

If yes, what were you convicted of? _____

When did this conviction take place? _____

Are you on probation or parole? yes, probation yes, parole neither

If yes, what are you on probation or parole for? _____

How can I contact your probation or parole agent? _____

General South County Probation #: (619) 498-2111; General Chula Vista Parole #: (619) 476-3710

3. Verify past addresses through a credit check

addresses matched those on application addresses **did not** match application

4. Check to make sure prospective tenants do not have any warrants listed on this web site:

<http://apps.sdsheriff.net/warrant/waar.aspx>. If a person with a warrant attempts to rent a unit, please call police right away at 619-691-5151.

did not have warrant did have warrant

5. Did the applicant list any prior Chula Vista addresses in their application?

yes no

If yes, send an e-mail to the Apartment Safety Project staff at the Chula Vista Police Department and request a police call for service history for the applicant's prior address(es). Please provide each applicant's full name, prior Chula Vista addresses, and approximate dates at those addresses. Send your e-mail request to Karin Schmerler at:

kschmerler@chulavistapd.org or call (619) 409-5410

The applicant's prior address(es) did have CFS did not have CFS

Notes:

6. **Obtain references from the 2nd prior landlord for each prospective tenant over 18 that plans to live in the same unit.** (You may wish to charge a small fee for this type of screening expense. Such a fee can both help defray costs and promote self-screening.) If an applicant's 2nd prior landlord was a relative or an applicant has no rental history, require a qualified co-signer and obtain photo ID, ask all the same questions on this checklist, and obtain the same references below from the co-signer.

2nd prior landlord name: _____ phone number: _____

Date reference was obtained: ____/____/____

Methods of verifying the person was the owner or manager:

Owner name provided by applicant matched owner per county tax assessor at (619) 236-3771

Cross-checked manager name and phone number with complex's internet listing

Other: _____

Questions for 2nd prior landlord:

A. Did the tenant ever violate your property's rules? yes no

If yes, what types of rules were violated: _____

B. Did the neighbors complain of noise, disturbances, or other issues caused by the tenant?

yes no

If yes, what was the nature of the problem(s): _____

C. Did the tenant have problem visitors? yes no

If yes, what was the nature of the problem(s): _____

D. Were police ever called to the unit? yes no

If yes, why: _____

2nd prior landlord's other comments:

7. Obtain references from the 3rd prior landlord for each prospective tenant over 18 that plans to live in the same unit. If an applicant's 3rd prior landlord was a relative or an applicant has no rental history, require a qualified co-signer and obtain photo ID, ask all the same questions on this checklist, and obtain the same references below from the co-signer.

3rd prior landlord name: _____ phone number: _____

Date reference was obtained: ____/____/____

Method(s) of verifying the person was the owner or manager:

Owner name provided by applicant matched owner per county tax assessor at (619) 236-3771

Cross-checked manager's apartment name and phone number with complex's internet listing

Other: _____

Questions for 3rd prior landlord:

A. Did the tenant ever violate your property's rules? yes no

If yes, what types of rules were violated: _____

B. Did the neighbors complain of noise, disturbances, or other issues caused by the tenant?

yes no

If yes, what was the nature of the problem(s): _____

C. Did the tenant have problem visitors? yes no

If yes, what was the nature of the problem(s): _____

D. Were police ever called to the unit? yes no

If yes, why: _____

3rd prior landlord's other comments:

8. Conduct a criminal background check that includes misdemeanor crimes

applicant did not have a criminal history applicant **did** have a criminal history

Nature of criminal history: _____

9. Review crime-free lease addendum line-by-line with applicant

Date reviewed with applicant: ____ / ____ / ____

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