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BOND RETURN REQUEST

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (ACT) — Section 20, Sections 33–35

Your rights at the end of tenancy — how to claim your bond and dispute deductions

WHEN TO USE THIS BUNDLE

Use this bundle at the end of your tenancy to formally request the full release of your bond. Use it alongside your move-out inspection documentation and your original condition report.

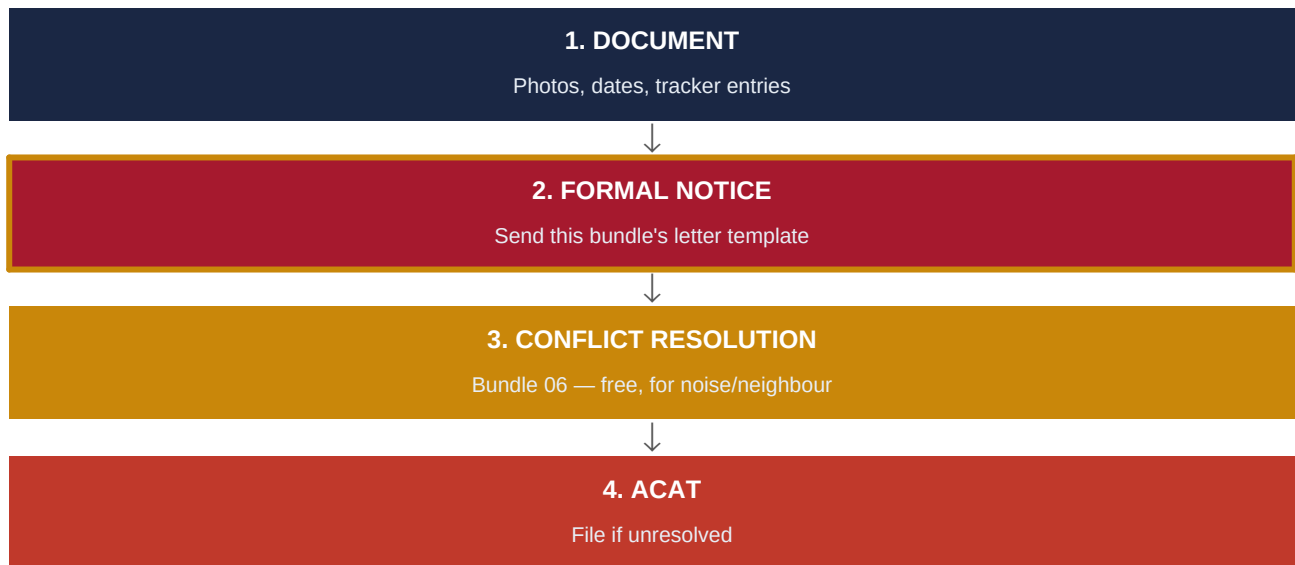
KNOW THE LAW — BOND RETURN (S.20, SS.33–35)

Under s.20, the maximum bond a lessor can require is 4 weeks' rent. Bond release is governed by ss.33–35 — either you or the lessor can apply for release, and disputes about all or part of the bond are resolved at ACAT under s.35.

FAIR WEAR AND TEAR VS. DAMAGE

FAIR WEAR AND TEAR (NOT CHARGEABLE)	DAMAGE (CHARGEABLE)
Minor scuff marks on walls	Large holes in walls
Faded paint (normal sunlight)	Stains, significant marks
Carpet flattening from normal use	Carpet stains from spills or burns
Small nail holes	Broken fixtures or fittings
Worn door handles / locks	Damaged appliances

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS — YOUR ESCALATION PATH



The highlighted box shows where this bundle fits in the journey.

- 01 Photograph the property thoroughly before vacating**
Mirror your move-in documentation exactly — photograph every room, every surface, every appliance.
- 02 Compare move-out photos to your condition report**
Note where the property is in the same or better condition than at move-in.
- 03 Lodge your bond release application the day you vacate — don't wait for the lessor**
You do not need the lessor's permission or cooperation to apply for release under ss.33–34.
- 04 Send the template letter the same day**
Notify the lessor your application is already lodged and any deduction must now be raised as a formal, evidenced dispute.
- 05 Challenge every unjustified deduction in writing**
Itemise your objection to each claim with supporting evidence, using the Deductions Log.
- 06 Escalate a disputed claim**
Disputes about all or part of the bond are resolved at ACAT under s.35.

IF YOU NEED TO ESCALATE — WHAT ACAT CAN ORDER

ACAT will assess each deduction individually against your evidence under s.35. A well-documented Evidence Tracker with entry and exit photos is significantly more persuasive than verbal claims.

★ GOOD TO KNOW — FAIR WEAR AND TEAR CANNOT BE CHARGED

Lease clauses attempting to require professional cleaning, carpet replacement, or repainting as standard end-of-tenancy obligations are generally unenforceable in the ACT. The 'reasonably clean' standard prevails, tested against your condition report and the s.30A final inspection.

■ CRITICAL — LODGE YOUR OWN BOND RELEASE APPLICATION — DON'T WAIT

Either party can apply for bond release under ss.33–34. Lodging your own the day you vacate puts you in control of the timeline rather than the lessor.

■ CRITICAL — FAIR WEAR AND TEAR IS NOT DAMAGE

The lessor cannot deduct for normal wear and tear — scuff marks, minor carpet flattening, faded paint from sunlight, or worn fittings from ordinary use.

TEMPLATE — BOND RETURN REQUEST

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (ACT) — Section 20, Sections 33–35

1. COPY

Copy the letter below into a new email

2. FILL

Replace every **[bracketed]** field with your details

3. SEND

Email it — request a read receipt, save a copy

*Fill in every **[bracketed]** field, then send via email — request a read receipt.*

SUBJECT:

FORMAL REQUEST FOR BOND RELEASE: **[Insert Property Address]**

I am writing to confirm I have vacated the above-referenced property on **[Insert Vacate Date]** and have lodged a bond release application for the full bond amount of \$**[Insert Bond Amount]**.

1. PROPERTY CONDITION

- The property has been left in the same or better condition than recorded in the condition report at the commencement of the tenancy, as evidenced by the attached photographs.

2. BOND RELEASE APPLICATION

- My bond release application was lodged on **[Insert Date]** pursuant to sections 33–34 of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

3. ANY PROPOSED DEDUCTIONS

- Any deduction you wish to claim must be itemised and supported by evidence. I will respond in writing to each item and, if unresolved, pursue this through ACAT under section 35.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Property Address]

[Date]

[Contact Number / Email]