**Housekeeping Documents**

To keep the management agreement short (and easy to defend in court) use “housekeeping documents” to expand on sensitive operational issues. Over time you’ll discover that you and your owners will have disagreements over certain parts of the management process (tripping points). Do NOT add all that operational minutia to the PMA but rather deal with it in a separate document that the owner (not the manager) signs (or initials). These operational documents will change over time without having to change the actual management agreement. These housekeeping documents are mostly CYA documents protecting you plus they give you opportunity to add additional charges and costs that were not mentioned in the actual management agreement.

1. **Mold / Mildew / Moisture Disclosure**

Any moisture issues the owner has discovered inside the property in the past five years needs to be disclosed to you (and the tenant) before you take on the property. Make sure every owner signs (or initials) this document during the onboarding process.

1. **Establishing & Maintaining the Trust Account**

Tell your owner/client clearly about your trust account requirements and how your state law regulates the management of those funds. Make it clear they need to prefund maintenance, maintain a minimum account balance and keep all trust accounts positive.

1. **Personal Property Disclaimer**

This document tells the owner to take their personal property out or not expect to see it ever again. This document makes it clear you’ll list items they leave behind (on the move in inspection) but they can’t hold you accountable when they turn up missing or broken. Owners think they can count on you to manage and protect their precious stuff. You need to make it clear that you don’t.

1. **Owner’s Mortgage Disclosure**

When the owner signs this document they are promising the mortgage is current. If it goes into foreclosure they will notify you immediately (not that it will help any), and (here is the big one) they will pay your attorney fees if you get sued by the tenant over the foreclosure issues.

1. **W-9 Form**

The IRS requires that you report the rent you collected to the IRS (with a copy to your owner) at the end of every year. This is an IRS-required document to manage their rental property.

1. **Lead Paint and Flood Disclosure**

Houses built before 1978 often used lead paint in the initial construction which has been discovered to be toxic and a serious health hazard to the occupants. Federal law requires that you have the owner (and tenant) sign this to disclose the presence of (or lack of) this poison in the home.

1. **Authorization to Add Manager (property manager) as an Additional Insured**

Never manage a rental unless the owner/client adds your company name to their landlord policy as an additional insured.

1. **Property Features**

You’ll need an intake form for the owner to describe all the features of their property including asking rent, projected deposit, target available date, number of bedrooms, bathrooms, schools, community amenities, utility companies, schools and other features. You want to keep this minutia out of the PMA so you need a separate housekeeping document for all this data. Do NOT use the management agreement to collect property (or owner) data.

1. **Authorization and Agreement for Automatic Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT/ACH)**

This document gives you the authority to automatically credit and debit funds from the owner’s account as necessary. You will need this to ACH their money to them electronically.

1. **Owner Declaration and Data Schedule**

This document helps clarify ownership ie; who’s speaking for the owner(s) (or entity). This is a data-collection form. Don’t clutter up the PMA with data collection on all the owners. Keep the PMA signature page clean and simple by NOT requesting a bunch of owner data. Use this Data Schedule for that purpose.

1. **Unenforceable Terms in the Lease Disclosure**

This document reminds the owner that you’ll put some things in the lease that are basically unenforceable like no-smoking, only pets under 10 pounds, outdoor pets only, tenant is responsible for lawncare or gutter cleaning, no guest can stay over seven days and other rules that managers are hard pressed to monitor and enforce. Remember that putting these things in the lease (which we all do) sets an expectation from the owner that you will track and enforce them. This will become a tripping point over time if you don’t address this in advance.

1. **New Property/Owner Sign Up Checklist (internal office onboarding checklist)**

Every office needs to develop an internal tracking form to assure all the owner sign up documents are in the file and all the issues have been addressed. You likely already have one but if not, this will give you a good jumping off point. Tweak it as you need.

Your housekeeping documents will evolve over time as you learn more about the business. As you experience things that cause conflict with your owners, you’ll develop housekeeping documents that we never needed. These are the ones that we needed based on our experience.