**Are you getting paid?**

Let’s face it, when tenants don’t pay their rent, WE DON’T GET PAID! Here is a list of proven strategies for avoiding rent arrears, or at least minimising them.

* Produce an arrears list (at least twice weekly).
* Establish a formal documented routine, with NO exceptions.
* Develop clear lines of communication with your landlord clients.
* Explain your system to tenants before they move in. After this, you must enforce the rules – otherwise your credibility will go out the window.
* Maintain an up-to-date record of tenants’ home and work phone numbers and email addresses.
* Act on your arrears list. Having a list does nothing until you act on it.
* Do not put too much emphasis on written reminders (phone calls and text messages are more effective).
* Don’t condone chronic late payers for too long.
* Even a tenant in financial difficulty can pay something.
* Be cautious of tenants with highly believable excuses.
* Treat all tenants the same.
* Hit first offenders hard and early.
* Be confident.
* Swap your arrears list with another team member.
* Don’t take anything a tenant says personally, or on your own shoulders. The tenant is in control of the situation. If they pay their rent, you won’t have to ring them anymore.
* All notices relating to lease breaches must be issued in accordance with the law.
* Generate arrears reports for all tenants who are in arrears 3 days and over (but be aware of your own legislation before taking action). Remember: prevention is better than a cure.
* Where a landlord is accessible via email, use email as preferred form of communication (unless the landlord specifically instructs otherwise). This not only saves time, but creates a paper trail.
* All actions and communication with tenants in arrears are to be recorded in the “tenant” section of the software or in the hard copy file.
* Don’t accept cash payments.
* Arrange, where possible, to have tenants on the same due dates.
* Use monthly or two-weekly rent payments to streamline arrears, reduce bank charges to the office, and reduce entries made.