

Tips for residential landlords during the festive season

While South Africa is abuzz with festive cheer, it is also time for property owners to check in with their tenants regarding guests - especially those in sectional title complexes.



Source: www.pixabay.com

“When you own and rent out a property in a seaside town or destination that is popular with visitors over the holidays, it's always best to be very clear about the rules when it comes to tenants and any guests they may receive over the festive season,” says Pearl Scheltema, CEO, Fitzanne Estates.

“In fact, there are quite a few important things to bear in mind when it comes to tenants' responsibilities when they choose to receive guests in a rental space. Therefore, we always recommend that homeowners enlist the services of a rental management agency to ensure that things run smoothly throughout the year – including the festive season.”

Be very clear about subletting

Web-based rental platforms like Airbnb make it very easy to rent out space over the holidays but having your tenants subletting over the summer is not exactly every landlord's cup of tea. As such, it's important to make your wishes very clear in this regard.

If it's not already written into your contract, make a point of sending a formal email or letter clearly stating your rules and expectations in this regard. It is also within your right to limit the number of overnight guests a tenant is allowed to receive, and to prohibit the pitching of tents, etc., to accommodate guests outside of the main structure of the property.

On the other hand, if you yourself are considering the option of vacating your own home over the holiday to make it available as a short-term rental, also be very sure that you are adhering to your scheme's rules in this regard.

"Some schemes' conduct rules do allow for short-term rental of holiday accommodation, but there might be additional costs payable to the body corporate based on additional water and sanitation consumption or increased security risk, for example. So always check beforehand," adds Scheltema.



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Reiterate your scheme's code of conduct

If you have tenants in a property in a sectional title complex, they have probably already been informed of the scheme's code of conduct. However, ahead of the holidays, it might be a good idea to reiterate that these rules also apply to any guests they may receive. It might also be prudent to highlight any noise regulations, as well as the hours in which music is allowed, and rules around the use of common areas, such as children's playing areas.

Don't mess around with parking

If there is one thing that is guaranteed to upset even the most easy-going sectional title residents, it's guests taking up their allotted parking spaces over the holidays. If your tenants inform you that they will be receiving visitors, remind them to make parking arrangements beforehand. This will often mean that their guests will have to settle for on-street parking outside the complex, so they don't encroach on residents' rightful spaces.

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