

For immediate release
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Beware of rental rip offs students warned

With Orientation Week starting today at many campuses, the Tenants Union has issued a warning to students to be aware of online scammers and dodgy landlords.

“Starting university is an exciting time for most students, however many are falling prey to online rental scams and exploitative landlords in their attempts to find somewhere to live” said Toby Archer, policy worker at the tenants union.

“Most students don't have any experience living independently and navigating the private rental market. They need to be aware there are unscrupulous operators around at this time of year will try to rip them off. It is also vital that they understand the law and where to get help.”

“We have assisted many students who are struggling to secure properties in the mainstream rental market. These students often turn to specialist student accommodation providers, some who claim exemption from the Residential Tenancies Act. This sector is replete with landlords who do not respect the consumer protection framework. Many provide substandard rooming house style accommodation”

“Most students search for accommodation online. If they are unaware of standard letting practices they often fall prey to online scams which usually involve transferring large sums of money in the guise of bond payments via online or international transfer services before meeting the landlord or viewing the property. Needless to say these students rarely see their money again. Students should remember that if it looks too good to be true, then it probably is” said Mr Archer.

Students seeking advice should contact the Tenants Union of Victoria or Consumer Affairs Victoria.