



## Texas Lock Laws

Landlords in Texas are required to follow Property code requirements with regard to “Security Devices” in rental properties. Did you know failure to follow Texas Lock Laws allows your tenant a free and legal walk-away cancellation of the lease agreement? It also places the property owner in a position of greater liability in case of a break in.

Upon accepting a new tenant the owner must have all locks re-keyed. This expense cannot be passed on to the tenant, even if the tenant agrees. It is illegal to charge tenants for re-keying locks in the state of Texas. This re-keying charge is usually in the \$70.00 - \$100.00 range.

All exterior doors in the rental property must have a keyless deadbolt installed. The garage doors leading from the inside of the home into the garage is considered an exterior door. All exterior doors in the rental property must have a door viewer (peep hole) installed. The exception is where a glass window exists either in the door or directly beside the door that allows the occupants to see who is outside before opening the door. Any sliding patio doors must have a pin and a locking handle or a Charlie bar installed. Exit doors, such as an upstairs passage door leading to a balcony, are not required to have keyed deadbolts or locking doorknobs, but must have a keyless deadbolt installed.

The locksmith companies we use are experts on the Texas Property Code requirements and communicate changes as they occur. When we ask our locksmith to rekey or bring a property up to code, they also check all smoke detectors with smoke spray to make sure they are all functional. Each bedroom must have an operable smoke detector in addition to those that must be in a living area or hallway.

The first time a property is placed on the rental market the cost to the owner for bringing a home to current code is usually between \$250-\$350. Once the home is brought to code the cost is significantly decreased as the Property Code requires the home to be re-keyed upon move-in of new tenants. You will see fees like these on your owner statement whenever a new tenant takes occupancy and your balance will be reflected.

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Owner Signature

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Date

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Owner Signature

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Date