

---

## Housing and Transportation Issues

### **Renting Apartments With a Felony:**

One of the women said in the video that most apartments will rent to someone 10 years after their last conviction (disregarding previous felonies). Here is what she told me in response to my question: "It was my experience in Tyler. I finally found an apartment that would let me in 7 years after my conviction. Most of them wanted 10 years. It really bummed me out. I had a good job, credit, and money in the bank. And they would not give me an apartment. I have heard some property companies are changing. But really most apartments do not want people with felonies living there. My experience. I really hope that is changing. That is why I lived in the RV. I did not want to live in a shady apartment complex." (Lori Riggs)

I tried to verify actual laws regarding renting to a felon and found none. So I think this is a policy that many complexes may hold, but it isn't actually written in law, so apartments may vary. Obviously, there are clearer restrictions regarding sex offenders. Additionally, there are some restrictions in many places regarding those convicted of the making and distribution of meth (in particular), and probably distribution of drugs in general.

In short, do not depend on the idea that apartment complexes or rental places will rent to someone 10 years after their last conviction. Property companies have discretion on this matter.

Additionally, rental companies may use different levels of criminal background checks. "Having a criminal record doesn't automatically prevent you from being able to rent an apartment - the decision is up to the landlord. If a landlord chooses to deny your application based on your tenant background check, the landlord must notify you in writing the reasons why you were denied and provide you with a copy of the report."

<https://www.criminalwatchdog.com/faq/what-are-tenant-background-checks>

Landlords may also check your credit score, current employment, and possible previous evictions or landlord recommendations.

### **License Reinstatement Fees:**

Different women have had varying experiences with driver's license reinstatement fees. Apparently, they do vary, based on the number of suspensions you have received. Suspensions could be for driving without a valid license, failing or refusing a blood or breath test, etc. (Find a complete list on the TX DPS website.) A person can receive multiple suspensions, which means multiple reinstatement fees.

Reinstatement fees can be paid online (with a processing fee) or by mail. I recommend paying online, if available, because it is applied immediately. It can take up to three weeks for mailed fees to be processed. Reinstatement fees cannot be paid in person. According to the TX DPS

website, reinstatement fees cannot be reduced or paid in installments. (You may be able to pay tickets in installments, but not reinstatement fees, from what I can tell.)