



Your application for the release of address information was unsuccessful – what next?

If you have applied to the Chief Executive of the Department of Building and Housing for contact information to try and locate a judgment debtor and neither the Department of Building and Housing, Ministry of Social Development nor Ministry of Justice can find address information and/or release it to you, you can still take some action:

- Hire a tracing or debt collection agency.
- Request the judgment debtor's residential or work address information from other government agencies using the Official Information Act and the same format as the application you made to the Chief Executive of the Department of Building and Housing.
- Wait a few months, and then re-activate your application to the Chief Executive of the Department of Building and Housing. After a few months, a judgment debtor will have time to re-establish and update address records.

You can also re-apply if you obtain information that you were previously unable to supply, such as date of birth, IRD number or Work and Income client number

Preventing problems in the future

You can do some things to prevent problems with tenants in the future and help ensure you do not have to go through this process again. You can also make it easier to source new address information in case you have to go through the process again.

When you meet with prospective tenants:

- ask for references and check them thoroughly
- carry out credit checks – several private debt collection agencies offer this service
- ask for photo ID and use a pre-tenancy application form (available from www.dbh.govt.nz).
- Always ask for a bond (the law allows landlords to collect up to four weeks' bond as well as two weeks' rent in advance). Send the bond, along with a signed Bond lodgement form, to the Department of Building and Housing within 23 working days.

Understand how enforcement of the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 works and ensure that you collect the necessary information at the beginning of a tenancy. Make sure you have contact details (alternative address, work and mobile phone numbers, email address) and ask for alternative contact details (for a family member or friend) which could be helpful if you need to contact the tenant in future.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, call the Department of Building and Housing on 0800 222 012.

