

Security Deposit & Damage Protection Options

Stay Okemo - Example Host Resource

SAMPLE TEMPLATE - FOR BRAINSTORMING ONLY. This is not legal advice and is not a finished contract. Have a Vermont attorney review any agreement before using it with paying guests.

On Airbnb, AirCover absorbs a lot of risk invisibly. On a direct booking the host picks one of these instead. They can be combined - many hosts use a small hold plus a protection plan.

Option A - Card authorization hold

- A temporary hold (commonly \$250-\$1,000) placed on the guest's card a day or two before check-in and released after a clean checkout, using Stripe or your PMS.
- Pros: no money changes hands, guests understand it from hotels. Cons: holds expire (usually about 7 days on personal cards), and a hold is not a charge - collecting for real damage means charging within the window or invoicing.

Option B - Refundable cash deposit

- Collect the deposit with the rent and refund it after inspection, on a stated timeline (e.g. within 7 days), minus documented damage with photos and receipts.
- Pros: money is actually there. Cons: more bookkeeping, chargeback exposure, and it raises the guest's upfront total.

Option C - Per-stay damage protection plan

- Third-party plans (for example Safely, Waivo, or Truvi) sell the guest or host a small per-stay policy - roughly \$20-\$60 a stay for \$1,000-\$5,000 of damage cover, often bundled with guest screening.
- Pros: no awkward deposit conversation; claims go to the insurer. Cons: per-stay cost, claim paperwork, exclusions - read what is not covered (wear, theft limits, hot tubs).

What hosts around Okemo typically do

- Small condos: protection plan only. Larger houses, hot tubs, and first-time direct guests: plan plus a modest card hold.
- Whatever you choose, state it in the rental agreement before payment - never surprise a guest with a hold at check-in.