



THE BNB EXCHANGE

How to Get Paid Every Time for Smoke Odor Remediation

The Airbnb Host's Step-by-Step Playbook for
Filing - and Winning - Smoke Damage Claims

Stop leaving money on the table. This guide shows you exactly how to document, invoice, and submit smoke odor claims using the same pricing resources Airbnb's own support team references.

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01 Why Most Hosts Leave Money on the Table

Here's the hard truth: most Airbnb hosts either don't file smoke remediation claims at all, or they file them incorrectly and get denied. The reasons are almost always the same:

- **They don't know Airbnb uses third-party pricing guides** to determine how much to pay out. If you don't reference these guides in your claim, you're guessing - and Airbnb's resolution team will lowball you.
- **They don't have a proper invoice.** A screenshot of Venmo or a handwritten receipt won't cut it. Airbnb expects a professional invoice from a legitimate business entity.
- **They don't document square footage.** Smoke remediation is priced per square foot. If you don't tell Airbnb the total square footage affected, they have no basis to calculate a fair payout.
- **They don't have real-time evidence.** A claim filed 3 days after checkout with no contemporaneous evidence is easy to deny. A text from your cleaner on the day of turnover? That's hard to argue with.

This guide gives you the exact 4-step system to file smoke odor claims that get approved - using the same resources Airbnb's support team references internally.

02 How Airbnb Evaluates Smoke Remediation Payouts

When you file a damage claim for smoke odor, Airbnb's resolution center doesn't just take your word for it. Their team references third-party pricing guides to determine whether your claim amount is reasonable. Specifically, they cross-reference costs using industry resources like these:

Airbnb's Referenced Pricing Guides:

1. Odor Control Network - Smoke Odor Removal Cost Guide
odorcontrolnetwork.com/resources/smoke-odor-removal-cost/
2. Greener Method - How Much Does Odor Removal Cost?
greenermethod.com/how-much-does-odor-removal-cost/

This is powerful information. It means you can look up exactly what these guides say, match your claim to the published price ranges, and submit a number that Airbnb's own team will validate against these same sources.

The key takeaway: **Airbnb prices smoke remediation by square footage.** That means your claim needs to clearly state the total square footage of the affected area - and in most smoking incidents, the odor permeates the entire unit.

PRO TIP: Always state in your claim that the smoke odor has spread throughout the entire home. If your property is 1,200 sq ft, your claim should reference remediation for all 1,200 sq ft - because smoke doesn't stay in one room.

03 The 4-Step Claim System

1 Calculate Your Claim Using Square Footage

Before you submit anything, you need to know your numbers. Look up your property's total square footage (your lease or listing will have this). Then reference the pricing guides Airbnb uses to determine the appropriate remediation cost.

In your claim description, state something like: *"The rental property is [X] total square feet. Upon inspection after guest checkout, heavy smoke odor was detected throughout the entire unit, affecting all rooms, soft furnishings, and HVAC system. Based on industry-standard smoke odor remediation pricing, the cost for treatment of [X] square feet is \$[amount]."*

2 Submit a Professional Invoice

Airbnb will almost always require an invoice to support your claim. This needs to look professional and come from a legitimate business. There are two ways to handle this:

- **Option A: Use a separate business entity you own.** If you run a cleaning or maintenance company (even a simple LLC), you can invoice from that entity to your property management company. This gives you legitimate letterhead, a real EIN, and a professional paper trail.
- **Option B: Use an actual remediation vendor.** If you hire a third-party odor remediation company, request a detailed invoice that includes square footage, treatment method, and total cost.

What Your Invoice Must Include:

Business name and logo (professional letterhead)
Business address and contact information
Invoice number and date of service
Property address where remediation was performed
Description of services (smoke odor remediation, ozone treatment, etc.)
Total square footage treated
Line-item pricing with total amount due
Payment terms

3 Cross-Reference Airbnb's Pricing Guides

This is where you lock in your claim amount. Visit the two pricing resources and compare your property's square footage against their published ranges. Make sure your invoice amount falls within the market rate these guides establish.

Industry Pricing Reference - Smoke Odor Remediation

Property Size	Typical Cost Range	Treatment Level
~200 sq ft (1 room)	\$200 - \$600	Light to Moderate
~500 sq ft (studio/1BR)	\$500 - \$1,200	Moderate
~1,000 sq ft (2BR)	\$1,000 - \$2,000	Moderate to Severe
~1,500 sq ft (3BR)	\$1,500 - \$3,000	Moderate to Severe
~2,000+ sq ft (4BR+)	\$2,000 - \$4,000+	Severe / Full Home

Sources: Odor Control Network and Greener Method - the same resources Airbnb's resolution team references.

Additional Treatment Costs to Include

Service	Cost Range
Ozone Treatment	\$300 - \$700
Thermal Fogging (per room)	\$200 - \$600
HVAC System Cleaning	\$300 - \$500
Upholstery / Fabric Cleaning	\$100 - \$500 per item
Air Scrubbing (per day)	\$100 - \$300

4 Get Same-Day Evidence from Your Cleaning Team

This is the secret weapon that separates claims that get approved from claims that get denied. Train your cleaning team to send you a text message **on the day of turnover** the moment they detect smoke odor in the unit.

This text message serves as contemporaneous evidence - proof that the odor was discovered immediately, documented in real time, and reported before the next guest arrived. Airbnb's resolution team takes this kind of evidence seriously.

What Your Cleaner Should Text You:

- "Heavy smoke smell throughout the unit at [property address]"
- "Found cigarette butts / ash tray / vape cartridges in [location]" (if applicable)
- "Odor is in all rooms including bedrooms, living area, and bathroom"
- Photos of any smoking-related items (butts, lighters, ash, burn marks, vape pens)
- Photos of any visible smoke residue or discoloration

PRO TIP: Screenshot the text thread and include it as an attachment in your claim. This creates an undeniable timestamp that Airbnb cannot argue with. Even better if the cleaner's message includes the property address and date.

04 Claim Submission Checklist

Before you hit submit on your Airbnb damage claim, run through this checklist to make sure you have everything locked down:

[] Documented Total Square Footage

Confirm the total sq ft of your property and state that the odor has spread throughout the entire unit.

[] Professional Invoice on Letterhead

Invoice from a legitimate LLC/business with all required fields (see Step 2). Either from your own service entity or a hired vendor.

[] Claim Amount Matches Pricing Guides

Cross-reference your invoice total against the Odor Control Network and Greener Method pricing ranges for your square footage.

[] Same-Day Cleaner Text with Timestamp

Screenshot of your cleaner's text message documenting the smoke odor on the day of turnover.

[] Photos of Smoking Evidence

Any images of cigarette butts, ash, vape products, burn marks, or other house rules violations.

[] Clear Claim Narrative

Written explanation in the claim describing the situation - square footage, severity, treatment method, and cost basis.

[] House Rules Reference

Your Airbnb listing clearly states no smoking. Reference this in your claim.

[] Filed Within 14 Days of Checkout

Airbnb's AirCover requires claims be submitted within the damage reporting window. Don't wait.

05 Pro Tips That Maximize Your Payout

Always Claim the Full Unit

Smoke doesn't respect closed doors. It gets into HVAC ducts, soft furnishings, curtains, bedding, and every room in the house. Always state that the entire property was affected, because it was.

Stack Your Treatment Methods

Don't just claim 'cleaning.' Itemize ozone treatment, thermal fogging, HVAC cleaning, and upholstery treatment as separate line items. Each has its own market rate, and stacking them increases your total claim within legitimate bounds.

Use Specific Language in Your Claim

Airbnb's team reads hundreds of claims a day. Use professional language: 'smoke odor remediation,' 'ozone treatment,' 'thermal fogging,' 'per-square-foot industry rate.' This signals that you know what you're doing and makes your claim harder to dismiss.

Keep a No-Smoking Policy Visible

Make sure your house rules explicitly state 'No Smoking' on your listing. This establishes that the guest violated your rules, which strengthens your claim and may result in a full payout.

Document Every Incident - Even Small Ones

Even a faint smell is worth documenting and filing. Airbnb tracks guest behavior, and your claim contributes to a pattern that can result in guest suspension or banning. Plus, even small claims can net you \$200-\$500 for minimal effort.

Act Fast - File Within 24 Hours

The sooner you file after checkout, the stronger your case. Same-day filing with same-day evidence is nearly impossible for Airbnb to deny.

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Stop Leaving Money on the Table.

This guide is just one piece of the operator playbook. Inside **The Incubator**, we teach you the complete system for building a profitable short-term rental portfolio from scratch - including deal analysis, pricing strategy, operations, and how to protect your bottom line with processes exactly like this one.

Ready to level up your STR business?

Book a free strategy call with me and let's talk about your portfolio, your deals, and your next move.

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