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RENTERS' RIGHTS BILL TOOLKIT

Quick guide for tenants



The Renters' Rights legislation aims to provide more security for tenants and empower them to challenge poor practice and unfair rent increases without fear of eviction.

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What is changing?

New open-ended tenancies

Your tenancy agreement will change from an Assured Shorthold Tenancy to a Periodic open-ended tenancy that will continue monthly.

You don't need to do anything because when the legislation comes into force, your tenancy will switch over automatically.

New tenants will get a written statement of terms before agreeing to a tenancy.

Ending a tenancy

Under a Periodic tenancy, you will be able to stay in your home until you decide to end the tenancy by giving two months' notice.

Tenants and landlords can agree on a shorter notice period or a specific date that the tenancy ends if they want to.

No more Section 21 evictions

The legislation removes the ability for landlords to evict a tenant without providing any reason which is a Section 21 eviction notice. This means that landlords can only end tenancies in specific circumstances, including where the tenant is at fault or if the landlord needs to sell, using a Section 8 notice.

Even if the landlord wants to move in or sell the property, they won't be able to do this for the first 12 months of your tenancy.

Renting in the private rented sector as a student

In a joint tenancy, if one housemate gives notice, it ends the tenancy for the whole group. The remaining tenants might be able to negotiate with the landlord to re-rent or replace a housemate but the ultimate decision sits with the landlord on whether to let the remaining tenants stay or not.

The legislation also includes a special student housing eviction ground (Ground 4A) to let landlords evict tenants at the end of the academic year for the next group of students. However, this ground can only be used if all tenants are full-time students and you are renting in a property that is classified as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The new rules do not apply to university halls or Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

Limiting rent in advance

Your landlord will only be able to ask for up to one month's rent in advance of the tenancy starting.

Limit on rent increases

Your landlord can only put the rent up once a year and must give you at least 2 months' notice. Landlords must notify tenants of a rent increase by completing a form known as a Section 13 notice.

Rental bidding

Landlords and letting agents can only charge the initially advertised rent, or 'asking rent', for their property. They won't be able to accept bids over this price, nor can they demand or encourage that tenants pay more.

Landlords join the Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman

This will provide a quick, fair, impartial and binding resolution for tenants' complaints about their landlord. You will be able to use the service for free to complain about a landlord's actions or behaviours.

Landlords register with the Private Rented Sector Database

To help landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance, and provide access to more information to tenants about the property they want to rent.

Renting with pets

Landlords must consider all requests for pets and can only refuse with a reasonable reason for doing so.

Preventing discrimination in the private rented sector

Landlords and letting agents must treat everyone fairly and must not discriminate against prospective tenants in receipt of benefits or with children.

Standards

The Decent Homes Standard will apply to the private rented sector. This means the property must be safe, free of hazards and not have damp and mould.

Enforcement

Local councils will be able to issue civil penalties against landlords who fail to comply with our reforms. Furthermore, Rent Repayment Orders can be used to order a landlord to repay an amount of rent to the tenant if they have committed an offence.

Further information

UK Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-renters-rights-bill/guide-to-the-renters-rights-bill>



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