

What every landlord should know

Before a lease is signed, a landlord or agent must provide the tenant with:

- A copy of a standard tenancy agreement (available at newsagents) including a report on the condition of the premises.
- A list of all up-front costs. A tenant can be charged for half the cost of preparing a tenancy agreement but no more than \$15.
- A copy of The Renting Guide.

The condition report, which sets out the general condition and cleanliness of the premises, may become important evidence if a dispute arises with the tenant. The tenant has seven days to sign and comment on the report.

A rental bond paid by a tenant must be sent to the Department of Fair Trading within seven days. The maximum bond for unfurnished premises is four weeks' rent. For fully furnished premises the maximum is six weeks' rent but if the rent exceeds \$250 there is no limit.

A tenant is required to pay rent in advance two weeks' rent if the weekly rent is under \$300, one month if over \$300.

Unless rent is paid direct into a bank account, receipts must be provided showing, among other things, the period which the rent covers. At least 60 days' notice must be given of a rent increase. Tenants may challenge an increase before the Residential Tenancies Tribunal.

A landlord or agent is entitled to inspect the property up to four times a year but must give seven days' notice of each inspection. Two days' notice must be given to carry out repairs. No notice is required for urgent repairs. 'Reasonable' notice must be given to show the premises to prospective tenants or buyers.

The landlord is obliged to carry out all repairs but may be able to charge the tenant if an occupant was responsible for the damage. Urgent repairs must be carried out as soon as reasonably possible or the tenant is entitled to spend up to \$500 and be reimbursed within 14 days.

To end a tenancy a landlord must give 14 days' written notice in a prescribed form, or 60 days' if the fixed term of the lease has expired (30 days if the premises have been sold). If the tenant is more than 14 days behind in the rent, you may give 14 days' notice of termination.

Further information is contained in The Renting Guide published by the Department of Fair Trading (ph. 1800 451 301), which can advise or mediate on problems with tenants. If this fails you can apply to the Residential Tenancies Tribunal.



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