

UNDERSTANDING RENTERS RIGHTS ACT



RESIDENTIAL
LETTINGS

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It is important to stay informed with the latest regulations and tenant rights as a landlord.

With the Renters' Rights Act officially passed through Parliament, landlords and agents are now entering a new era for the lettings sector. This legislation represents one of the most significant reforms to date and is set to reshape how both landlords and tenants operate.

Now that the Renters' Rights Act is in place, we have a clearer picture of the framework and implementation timeline – but what does this mean in practice for landlords?

This guide provides a summary of the Act's key elements and what they mean for landlords and tenants alike.

As with any major legislative change, there will inevitably be a period of adjustment while final details and timelines are established. However, more clarity is emerging on the rules and processes that will apply.

Whether you're an experienced landlord or just getting started, this guide highlights important aspects of the Renters' Rights Act and offers advice on how to adapt your approach accordingly.



Key Points

- Rent increases capped at once per year (2 months' notice required)
- Pet requests cannot be unreasonably refused
- Ban on discrimination against tenants with children or benefits
- 4 months' notice required if selling or moving back in with 12-month restriction on re-letting
- Mandatory PRS property registration before marketing
- New Landlord Ombudsman scheme
- Introduction of a Decent Homes Standard
- Proposed EPC Band C minimum by 2030
- Awaab's Law extended to private rentals
- Financial penalties for non-compliance



PHASE 1 – FROM MAY 1ST, 2026

ASSURED SHORTHOLD TENANCY (AST)

From this date, all new tenancies will begin as periodic agreements with no fixed end date. Existing assured shorthold tenancies will automatically convert to this new format.

ABOLITION OF THE SECTION 21 NOTICE (Form 6A)

The current Section 21 Notice will be abolished and replaced with an updated Section 8 Notice, which contains new mandatory and discretionary grounds for possession.

Landlords will now need to rely solely on these grounds to proceed with an eviction.

CHANGES TO THE SECTION 8 NOTICE

The Act will reform the rules around possession to clarify how landlords can regain control of their property.

Landlords will still be able to serve notice when for example, tenants fall into rent arrears or display anti-social behaviour.

Both rent arrears and anti-social conduct are expected to remain as mandatory reasons for eviction.

CHANGES TO NOTICE PERIODS

Under the updated regulations, landlords must now provide tenants with four months' notice – replacing the previous two-month requirement.

Tenants however, will now be required to give a two-month notice when ending their tenancy.

RENT ARREARS

If a tenant falls into arrears, landlords will no longer be able to issue a notice until tenants are in 3 months arrears.

RENT IN ADVANCE & RENTAL BIDDING

Landlords and agents will no longer be permitted to seek, accept, or encourage rental bids above the advertised rate.

Additionally, while landlords may still ask for rent in advance once contracts are executed, this may not exceed one month's rent prior to the tenancy start date.

RENT INCREASES

Rent increases will be limited to once every 12 months. Landlords must follow the updated Section 13 process and provide tenants with at least two months' written notice before any increase takes effect.

PETS, CHILDREN & BENEFITS

Landlords will have 28 days to respond to pet requests and cannot refuse without reasonable justification.

It will become unlawful to discriminate against tenants who have children or receive benefits. Landlords and agents must not refuse applicants based on these factors.

SELLING OR MOVING BACK IN

If a landlord decides to sell the property or move in themselves, a revised Ground 1 or 1A notice must be issued.

Once possession is granted, the landlord cannot re-let the property for 12 months (the "restricted period").

Landlords must provide four months' notice (previously two) in these cases. If the property is re-let during the restricted period, a penalty of up to £7,000 may apply.

PHASE 2 – FROM LATE 2026

Private Rented Sector Database

All landlords must register their properties on a new Private Rented Sector (PRS) Database, whether they manage the property themselves or use an agent.

An annual registration fee will apply (details to be confirmed). Properties cannot be marketed until registration is complete.

Landlord Ombudsman

A mandatory Ombudsman scheme will be introduced for all private sector landlords. The scheme will offer tenants a clear route for dispute resolution. Registration will be phased in, with landlords expected to join by 2028.

PHASE 3 – LONGER-TERM REFORMS

Standard of Homes & EPC Ratings

A new Decent Homes Standard will apply to the private rented sector for the first time, raising minimum housing standards. This is expected to come into effect no earlier than 2035 or 2037, following further consultation.

There are also proposals to raise the minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating to Band C by 2030, subject to exemptions. Further details will be confirmed, but landlords are encouraged to improve EPC ratings early to allow time for any required upgrades.

Extension of Awaab's Law

Awaab's Law, which currently applies to social housing and requires prompt action on hazards such as damp and mould, will be extended to the private rented sector. Full details and timelines will follow consultation.

English Homes

We aim to have a close relationship with all our landlords, whether you have a single property or a large portfolio.

We will be on hand to take the stress out of renting out your property by managing the day-to-day issues, helping take care of maintenance issues and making sure your property complies with the ever-changing regulations.

You can choose which level of service you require dependent on how hands-on you wish to be with the management of your property.

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