

New rental laws are now in effect. There are many changes that make it safer and fairer for both tenants (now referred to as renters) and landlords (now referred to as rental providers).

This factsheet provides limited information on how the new laws might affect you before, during and after your tenancy.

For detailed information visit: tenantsvic.org.au or www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting

Before you rent:



- Agents or rental providers must give renters specific information about the property before it is rented, helping renters decide if they want the property. Also, they cannot ask for certain information when you apply to rent. For a list of what they can't ask visit tenantsvic.org.au.
- Some terms can no longer be included in the rental agreement, or leases.
- Bond is capped at 4 weeks rent if the weekly rent is \$900 or less. If advertised for a fixed amount, agents and rental providers cannot invite higher offers.
- You must be given one set of keys, or security fobs, for the property for each renter on the lease. Rental providers must also give you 2 copies of the completed and signed condition report before you begin to occupy the property.

When renting:



- Agents or rental providers must give options to pay rent that does not incur extra costs. They must also give options to pay by Centrepay or EFT.
- Rent increases are limited to once every 12 months and must specify the method by which the increase has been calculated.
- You will be allowed to make some changes or modifications to the rental property. Some with no consent needed and others with consent needed. For a list of these visit tenantsvic.org.au.
- New items have been added to the list of urgent repairs. Repairs must be done by a qualified person. For a list of these visit tenantsvic.org.au.
- There are new safety duties assigned to rental provider & renter. For a list visit of these tenantsvic.org.au.
- There is now compensation for open for inspections and, unless the renter agrees, inspections are limited to twice a week and for no longer than one hour each.
- A person who is a victim survivor of family violence, whether or not the victim survivor is on a lease, can apply to VCAT to either remove a perpetrator of family violence from the lease or to remove themselves from the lease. For more information visit <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting/family-violence-when-renting>

Minimum standards:

Rental providers now have a duty to rent out properties that meet basic minimum standards to renters who move into new properties after 28 March 2021. For a list visit tenantsvic.org.au.

Ending the rental:



- End to 'no reason' notices to vacate. Rental providers will need to have a valid reason if they want to give a notice to vacate, except when giving 'end of fixed term' notice to vacate. Some notices to vacate now require evidence.
- A condition report must be completed within 10 days after the end of the rental. And, there is a new requirement to have the rental property professionally cleaned.
- Some personal possessions a renter leaves behind cannot be destroyed or disposed of.
- New arrangements for getting your bond back including family violence provisions, visit tenantsvic.org.au for more information.

Information & Support

Tenants Victoria's Renter Advice Line

(03) 9416 2577

Monday to Friday 10.00 am – 2.00 pm

The approximate waiting time is over 30 minutes.

Calls are answered by lawyers, advocates and intake workers with specialist knowledge of Victorian rental laws.

Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program (TAAP)

Available to residential tenants who are financially disadvantaged or experiencing family violence.

TAAP services provide:

- Information and referrals,
- Negotiation with landlords or real estate agents,
- Assistance in preparing for and attending hearings at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Bayside Peninsula/Southern Melbourne - Peninsula Community Legal Centre: **9783 3600**

Brimbank Melton - Uniting Lentara: **9351 3600**

Hume Moreland - Uniting Lentara: **9351 3601**

Inner Eastern Melbourne - Uniting Harrison: **9051 3000**

North Eastern Melbourne - Uniting Kildonan: **1800 002 992**

Outer Eastern Melbourne - Uniting Wesley: **8870 4020**

Western Melbourne - WEstjustice: **9749 7720**

Goulburn - Beyond Housing: **5833 1000**

Inner Gippsland - Quantum Support Services: - **5120 2000**

Overdue rent:

You can be given a Notice to Vacate for rent that is 14 days overdue.

You do not have to move out just because you get a notice to vacate.

Before you have to leave there are options that can help:

- Contact the agent or rental provider as soon as possible and explain your situation. Offer a payment plan - don't offer more than you can afford - put it in writing and keep a copy (you can use this as evidence, if needed).
- If you need help to make a payment plan contact National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007 or talk to a support worker.
- You may be able to seek out financial support for the arrears, call Opening Doors on 1800 825 955 for help.
- If you pay the overdue rent owed within the 14-day notice period, the notice to vacate has no effect. You can do this 4 times within a 12-month period without effect.
- If your payment plan is rejected or you are unable to make any payments, you will be given a Notice of Hearing from VCAT - its very important that you attend the hearing to explain your situation. For help to prepare for your hearing contact either Tenants Victoria or TAAP in your area (see opposite).
- VCAT must consider a range of factors when making a decision of possession including hardship. For a list of other factors visit tenantsvic.org.au.