New rent rules

Communication kit for stakeholders

*This communication kit provides easy tools to allow you to communicate about the new rental rules to your members, clients, staff, associates, and other stakeholders.*

Introduction

New renting rules came into effect on 29 March 2021, so it’s time for every renter and rental provider (landlord) to understand the changes.

Whether you’re a renter or rental provider (landlord), the new rental rules create a fairer, safer system for all Victorians.

More than 130 reforms have been introduced.

These clarify the rights and responsibilities of both renters and rental providers – from before you sign a rental agreement, until after the agreement ends – and apply to all types of tenancies, including private rentals, caravan and residential parks, and rooming houses.

The new laws include minimum rental property standards and allow renters to make simple modifications without seeking permission.

Rental providers benefit, too, from clearer accountabilities for renters, clearer obligations, and modern regulations and processes.

It is important that everyone is aware of and understands these laws. You can help us spread the word. This kit provides all the materials you need to share this information with your community and/or network. In doing so, you’ll be playing an important role in the creation of this new, fairer and safer rental system.

Thank you for your involvement.

## Key messages

New renting rules came into effect on 29 March 2021.

These new rent rules create a fairer, safer system for everyone.

These new rules have been shaped by multiple public consultation processes, the last of which received more than 700 submissions.

We’re making renting easier with clearer rights and responsibilities for both renters and rental providers.

These new rules increase protections for renters, while ensuring rental providers can effectively manage their properties.

There are also new standard agreements, condition reports and forms rental providers should ensure they're using.

The new laws ensure rental properties meet basic standards. These are the things most people would reasonably expect in a rental property - and most already have them.

More than one in four people rent in Victoria, so it’s vitally important that they have a rental property that feels like a home.

The Victorian Government is working with renters and rental providers to ensure a smooth transition to the new rules.

Notable reforms include:

* Renters can no longer be evicted for no reason – a valid reason is required, including: a sale, change of use, or if the owner is moving back in.
* Rental minimum standards have changed, including renters’ rights around heating and door and window locks in the rental property.
* Rental providers have a duty to ensure their rental property meets the rental minimum standards including basic standards of cleanliness, security and privacy. These are the things most people would reasonably expect in a rental property - and most already have them. These apply in all new rental agreements after 29 March 2021.
* If a rental is not up to minimum standards, renters can request an urgent repair.
* Some rental minimum standards have been delayed to give rental providers more time to prepare – these include standards for window coverings, electrical safety, and energy efficient heaters.
* Rent can only be increased once a year.
* It is unlawful to discriminate against renters based on their personal attributes, such as age, race, religion or disability.
* Pets cannot be unreasonably refused, although renters must still ask for permission.
* A renter can be evicted if they are violent or threatening towards a rental provider, agent or neighbour.
* Renters experiencing family violence can change or terminate their rental agreement and not be held liable for damages in some circumstances, by applying to VCAT.
* More things are now considered an urgent repair, such as a broken cooling appliance, a functioning smoke alarm, pest infestation, mould and meeting the rental minimum standards.
* Rental providers are responsible for conducting gas and electricity checks every two years for all new rental agreements after 29 March 2021.
* There is a staged requirement for rented properties to have an energy efficient heater so renters can stay warm without worrying about their electricity bills.

***Helping to make a rental property feel like a home***

* Renters can make simple modifications without seeking permission, such as attaching child safety devices or replacing curtains.
* Other modifications that a rental provider cannot unreasonably refuse include allowing the planting of a vegetable or herb garden, painting, securing gates and installing security systems and flyscreens at the renter's own cost.

***Increasing accountability and benefits for renters and rental providers***

* New processes are available so that a renter can seek return of their bond at the end of the rental agreement without the rental provider’s agreement.
* If the rental property isn't structurally sound, renters can get out of the rental agreement.
* Rental providers cannot ask for or accept more than one month’s rent as a bond, or require renters to pay more than one month’s rent in advance, for properties with a rent of $900 per week or less.
* When a renter pays back overdue rent within 14 days, any notice to vacate issued by the rental provider for that overdue rent is invalidated (the first four times this happens in a year).
* Rental providers or their agents cannot request inappropriate information in a rental application – for example, the renter’s bond history.
* Rental providers cannot encourage someone to enter a rental agreement by misleading or deceptive conduct or statements, and a rental property can only be offered at a fixed price.

The full list of rental reforms is available at [consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules)

It’s time for rental providers to ensure all rental properties comply with the new rules.

## How you can help

We want to make sure that everyone in your community understands these new rules. We don’t want renters to miss out on their new rights to make modifications, and rental providers should ensure their property is compliant. Everyone should understand their rights and responsibilities, to make the renting experience a positive one for everyone.

* Share the resources and materials in this pack with your network and community.
* Speak about the campaign online or in person using the key messages as a guide.
* Direct people to [consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules) to find more information and the full list of 130 changes.

## Materials

The following pages include a variety of resources and materials you can use, share and publish to help introduce every Victorian to the new rent rules and the fairer, safer system they create.

**Factsheet**

You can use this written material as is or adapt it to your community. You can publish it in a newsletter, online, or in a publication. It includes facts about the campaign and quotes from a spokesperson.

**Social posts**

Download these graphics for use on your social media channels and messaging platforms, like Facebook, WhatsApp, or LinkedIn.

We have included suggested text you can copy into the posts to make it easy, or you can adapt them to suit your needs.

## Factsheet

**New Rent Rules: The Fast Facts**

*What is changing?*

New renting rules came into effect on 29 March 2021, to create a fairer, safer system for everyone.

More than 130 reforms have been introduced. You can find the full list and more information at  [[consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules)](https://vicgov.sharepoint.com/sites/msteams_1a9eba/Shared%20Documents/Portfolio%20Coordination%20and%20Delivery/Renting/Stakeholder%20comms/Stakeholder%20packs%20(general%20audiences)/consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules)

These changes put minimum standards for rental properties into law. Things like hot and cold water, working ovens, stovetops and sinks and a permanent, working heater.

*Why and how do Victorians benefit from these changes?*

More than one in four people rent in Victoria. Renters are able to make simple modifications without seeking permission, so they can have a rental property that feels like a home.

Renters cannot be evicted without a valid reason, including a sale, change of use, or if the owner is moving back in.

Rental providers benefit from changes that clarify what renters are accountable for and that all updated obligations are easier to understand to support quicker action if there is a problem. This gives rental providers a more transparent relationship with renters and greater confidence their rental property is maintained.

Rental providers have ample time to ensure properties comply with these regulations.

The Victorian Government is working with renters and rental providers to ensure a smooth transition to the new rules.

Notable reforms include:

* Renters can no longer be evicted for no reason - a valid reason is required, including: a sale, change of use, or if the owner is moving back in.
* An expanded definition of urgent repairs, which includes serious faults that impact on safety and use of the property.
* Rent can only be increased once a year.
* New minimum standards ensure that rental properties meet basic standards of cleanliness, security and privacy. These are the things most people would reasonably expect in a rental property - and most already have them. These apply in all new rental agreements after 29 March 2021.
* Renters can make simple modifications without seeking permission, such as attaching child safety devices or replacing curtains.
* Allowing other modifications that a rental provider cannot unreasonably refuse, including allowing the planting of a vegetable or herb garden, painting, securing gates, and installing security systems and flyscreens at the renter's own cost.
* Rentals can now only be offered at a fixed price. Rental providers and agents cannot invite rental bids for higher rent.
* Rental providers and agents cannot make false or misleading representations to encourage someone to sign a rental agreement.
* It is unlawful to discriminate against renters based on their personal attributes, such as age, race, religion or disability.
* Rental providers cannot ask for or accept more than one month’s rent as a bond, or require renters to pay more than one month’s rent in advance, for properties with a rent of $900 per week or less.
* Pets cannot be unreasonably refused, although renters must still ask for permission.
* A renter can be evicted if they are violent or threatening towards a rental provider, agent or neighbour.
* Renters experiencing family violence are able to change or terminate their rental agreement and not be held liable for damages in some circumstances.
* Rental providers are responsible for conducting gas and electricity checks every two years.
* A staged requirement for rented properties to have energy efficient heater so renters can stay warm without worrying about their electricity bills.
* Introducing new standard rental agreements, conditions reports and forms, which rental providers should ensure they are using from 29 March.

*Comments attributable to Nicole Rich, Director Consumer Affairs Victoria*

“These new rules are about creating a fairer, safer system for all.”

“The biggest reforms to renting in Victoria’s history came into effect on 29 March 2021, so it’s time for rental providers to prepare so that every rental property complies.”

“These new rules ensure that a lot of things that most people already expect from a rental property become law by introducing rental minimum standards. Renters and rental providers have clearer rules and greater accountability so that every renter and every rental is looked after.”

“Renters are able to make simple modifications, enabling them to make their house a home. Rental providers also benefit from clearer accountabilities for renters, clearer obligations, and modern regulations and processes. We’re working with both parties to ensure a smooth, gradual transition to a fairer system.”

## Social posts

Download the graphics below for use on your social media channels and messaging platforms, like Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.











We have included suggested text you can copy into the posts to make it easy, or you can adapt them to suit your needs.

We have included versions for both renters and rental providers.

***Suggested text to use when posting these graphics***

*When addressing renters:*

New rent rules are here to help you make your house a home.

Find out about your new rights and responsibilities at [consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules) or call 13 14 50 to speak to Consumer Affairs Victoria with an interpreter.

*When addressing rental providers:*

New rent rules are here to create a safer, fairer system for everyone. Make sure your property complies. Find out how at [consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules) or call 13 14 50 to speak to Consumer Affairs Victoria with an interpreter.

*When addressing everyone or unsure:*

New rent rules are here to create a safer, fairer system for everyone.

Learn more at [consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/rentrules) or call 13 14 50 to speak to Consumer Affairs Victoria with an interpreter.