

Tenants – Social housing

Your rights and responsibilities during the COVID-19 emergency period



The *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* (RTRA Act) is the existing law covering all residential tenancies in Queensland. This includes private and social housing tenancies such as houses, units and caravan parks as well as rooming accommodation such as boarding houses and student accommodation.

On 24 April 2020, the Queensland Government passed the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. The Regulation sets out temporary changes to the existing laws in four main areas including:

- Rent
- Entry to the property
- Ending tenancies
- Domestic and family violence

These changes offer extra protections to tenants in all residential tenancies which are impacted by COVID-19.

The new Regulation sets out [criteria for what it means to be impacted by COVID-19](#).

If you do not meet the criteria, your rights and responsibilities under the existing RTRA Act remain the same.

All tenants still have a responsibility to pay their rent, maintain their property and be a good neighbour. Evictions can still occur for serious breaches.

Find out more about these protections and all COVID-19 changes to rental laws by visiting rta.qld.gov.au/covid, reading the [Residential Tenancies Practice Guide](#), or calling our 24/7 COVID-19 hotline on 134 268 43.



What do these changes mean for you?



Rent

If you are suffering or have suffered excessive hardship because of COVID-19 ([criteria apply](#)), contact your tenancy manager or provider as soon as possible to let them know. You may be eligible for a rent review or a reduction. You will need to provide evidence that you meet the COVID-19 impact criteria - like a copy of a separation certificate, proof of reduced hours or confirmation you have registered with Centrelink.



Entry

The new Regulation allows for changes to entry conditions to properties, particularly for non-essential reasons such as regular inspections and routine repairs or maintenance. You may refuse entry for non-essential reasons under some circumstances (for example, if you or someone in your household is under public health directive to quarantine, or is considered a vulnerable person). You must, however, agree to other forms of property inspection like video conferencing or taking photos of the property.

The COVID-19 emergency period may also impact on the regular maintenance and repair of your property. You must still let your housing provider or tradesmen in to fix emergency repairs or to maintain the smoke alarms. You may need to be patient with routine repairs because they may have difficulties getting parts or tradesmen due to health regulation restrictions.



Domestic and Family Violence

Special protections have also been introduced for any tenant experiencing [domestic and family violence during the COVID-19 emergency period](#). Speak to your tenancy manager or support workers to find out how the new laws can help you.