

# Stage 1 rental law reform

On 20 October 2021, the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* (the RTRA Act) was amended by the *Housing Legislation Amendment Act 2021* (the HLA Act) to deliver Stage 1 rental law reforms which improve safety, security and certainty for the Queensland rental market.

A staggered approach to the commencement of the new measures was used to provide time for renters, property owners and property managers to understand the new rights and obligations and prepare for them to come into effect.

## Stage 1 Rental Law Reform Commencement Summary

From 20 October 2021	Domestic and family violence (DFV) protections
From 1 October 2022	Ending tenancies fairly Renting with pets Minimum Housing Standards prescribed and repair and maintenance obligations strengthened
From 1 September 2023	Rental properties must comply with minimum housing standards when a new lease is entered.
From 1 September 2024	All rental properties must comply with minimum housing standards.

## When changes start

### Domestic and family violence (DFV) protections

#### From 20 October 2021

Protections allow renters experiencing domestic and family violence to end their tenancy quickly with limited liability for end of lease costs. Renters experiencing DFV:

- can leave immediately (after giving 7 days notice) and access any bond contribution they made
- will have break lease fees capped at 1 week's rent
- are not liable for property damage caused by DFV
- any remaining co-renters can be asked to top-up the bond by the property owner or manager
- can change the locks to the property, without requiring owner's consent, to ensure their safety
- must provide documentation to support their notice and property owners, managers and their employees must not disclose this information (except where permitted).

### Ending tenancies fairly

#### From 1 October 2022

Changes under the ending tenancies fairly reforms will give renters and property owners more certainty about how and when they can end their tenancies, including to end no grounds evictions by property owners. Changes include:

- removal of 'without grounds' as a reason to end a tenancy for rental property owners
- new grounds for property owners to end tenancies, including the need to undertake significant repair or renovation or sale of the rental property requires vacant possession
- new grounds for renters to end tenancies, including the property is not in good repair or does not comply with the Minimum Housing Standards.



## Renting with pets

### From 1 October 2022

Changes making it easier for renters to have a pet include:

- a renter can seek the property owner's permission to keep a pet, and property owners can only refuse a request on identified reasonable grounds, such as keeping the pet would breach laws or by-laws
- the property owner must respond to a request for a pet in writing within 14 days, or consent is deemed
- the property owner's consent may be subject to reasonable conditions such as the pet has to be kept outside. A rent increase or a pet bond are not reasonable conditions.

## Minimum Housing Standards

### From 1 October 2022

Strengthened repair and maintenance obligations will commence from 1 October 2022 to support the staggered introduction of Minimum Housing Standards.

Renters on residential tenancy agreements will have 7 days to complete and return the entry condition report and renters and property managers can authorise emergency repairs up to the equivalent of 4 weeks rent.

Renters and other interested third parties can seek Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) orders, enforced by the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA), including the property can't be rented or to reduce rent until repairs and maintenance are completed.

### From 1 September 2023

Rental properties must comply with Minimum Housing Standards when a new lease is entered into from 1 September 2023.

Minimum Housing Standards will require all Queensland rental properties to meet basic minimum housing standards for safety, security and functionality, including:

- the premises to be weatherproof and structurally sound
- fixtures and fittings to be in good repair and not likely to cause injury to a person
- locks on windows and doors
- the premises to be free of vermin, damp and mould
- privacy coverings
- adequate plumbing and drainage
- functioning kitchen and laundry facilities (where supplied).

### From 1 September 2024

All rental properties must comply with minimum housing standards from 1 September 2024.

**For more information on the rental reforms visit:**

<https://www.chde.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/rental-law-reform>

<https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/about-us/legislation/rental-law-reform>

