

Your Residential tenancy agreement for more than 5 years

A guide for you



How to use this guide



Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) wrote this document. When you see the word 'we', it means CAV.



We have written this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We have written some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 30.



This Easy Read document is a guide to your Residential tenancy agreement for more than 5 years.



You can ask for help to read this document.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this guide?

What is your Residential tenancy agreement?	4
What does your Residential tenancy agreement say?	6
Things you must do	10
Things your landlord must do	14
What is in your Residential tenancy agreement?	16
Changes to your home	28
Word list	30
Contact us	32

What is your Residential tenancy agreement?



This document is about your **Residential tenancy agreement** for more than 5 years.



Your residential tenancy agreement is an agreement between you – the **tenant** – and your **landlord**.



You are the tenant if you pay money to live in a home that someone else owns.



Your landlord is the person who owns the home.



You need to read your agreement carefully.



You and your landlord both need to sign the agreement.

You need to keep a copy of the agreement.



It is a legal contract under the law.



The law is called the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

This law protects the rights of:

- tenants
- landlords.



When you move in, your landlord should give you a booklet called *Renting a home: a guide for tenants*.

What does your Residential tenancy agreement say?

Your agreement talks about:



- the home you will live in



- you and any other people who will live in the home



- how long you will live in the home



- your **rent** – how much you must pay to live in the home and how often you must pay it



- your **bond** – money you pay before you can move in.



Your landlord must send your bond to the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority (RTBA).

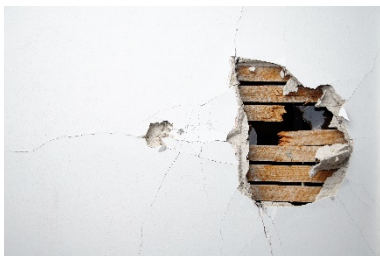


The RTBA looks after bonds for all Victorian tenants.

You can get your bond back when you move out if you:



- keep the home clean



- don't cause any damage to the home



- have paid all your rent.

Condition reports



You and your landlord both need to fill out a **condition report** when you first move in.

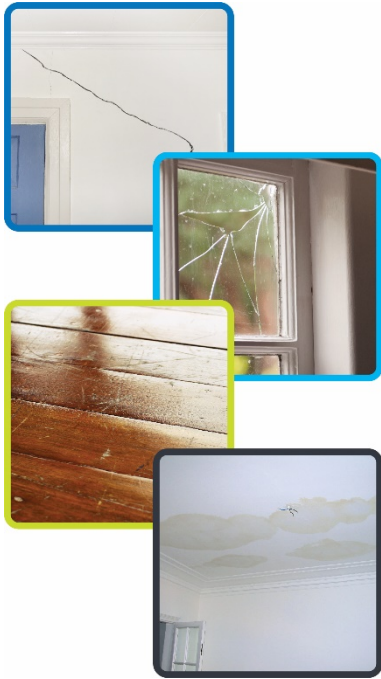


A condition report has a list of all the different rooms in the home.

You write notes in the condition report about:



- how clean the home is



- any marks, stains, scratches or cracks in the:
 - walls
 - windows
 - floor
 - ceiling.



You need to keep a copy of the condition report.



Your landlord will do the condition report again after you move out.

Things you must do



There are things you must do when you live in the home.



They are part of your agreement.



You must look after the home.



You must try not to cause any damage.



You must tell your landlord about any damage that happens.



You must keep the home clean.



You must not do anything in the home that is against the law.



You must not cause any problems for your neighbours.



You must respect your neighbours':

- comfort
- privacy.



You must get permission from the landlord if you want someone new to move into your home.



You might need to pay for the other services you use in your home, like:

- electricity
- gas
- water.



Your home will have a meter that keeps track of how much you use from these services.



If each service has a separate meter, you must pay the bills.



You might share a meter for a service with your neighbours. This means that your service and your neighbour's service use the same meter.



If this is true, your landlord must pay the bills.

Things your landlord must do



There are things your landlord must do while you live in their home.



They are part of your agreement.

Your landlord must make sure the home is:



- safe to live in



- clean before you move in.



Your landlord must make sure the home is a place where you can enjoy living.



Your landlord will need to visit your home to check how well you are looking after it.

They can do this once a year.



Your landlord must tell you they plan to visit at least 14 days before.

What is in your Residential tenancy agreement?



Your agreement will include lots of important information about:

- you
- your landlord
- the home you will live in.

Your new home



Your agreement will tell you the address of your new home.

Your rent

Your agreement will tell you:



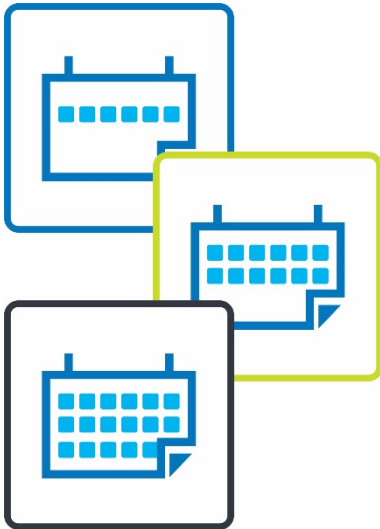
- how much your rent will cost



- the date your first rent payment is due on



- how often you must pay your rent.



You might have to pay your rent:

- each week
- every 2 weeks
- each month.



If you pay your rent each month, it must be paid on the same date.



Your agreement will tell you which day of the month your rent will be due.

Changes to your rent



The cost of your rent could change.



The cost of your rent might go up each year.



It might change each year on the same date as when your agreement started.

Your rent might go up based on:



- how much the cost of living has gone up



- changes in rent across Victoria.





Your landlord must tell you about changes to your rent at least 60 days before.



Your landlord might put your rent up at a fixed rate each year.

Your bond

Your agreement will tell you:



- how much your bond will cost



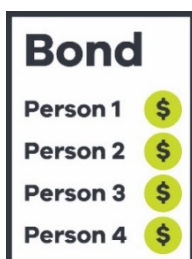
- the date your bond payment is due on.



Your landlord must send your bond to the RTBA within 10 business days.



If other tenants will live with you in your home, you might each pay part of the bond.



You need to say how much each person will pay.

Changes to your bond

5+
years



Your landlord might want you to pay extra bond money after 5 years.

Your landlord can only do this once.

120
days



Your landlord must tell you about changes to your bond at least 120 days before they make any changes.



Your landlord will use any changes to your rent to work out any changes to your bond.



You won't need to pay the whole cost of the bond.

You will only need to pay the extra amount.

10 days



Your landlord must send your extra bond to the RTBA within 10 business days.

Your tenancy period



Your **tenancy period** is the total amount of time you will live in the home.

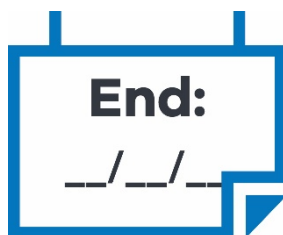
Your agreement will tell you:



- how long your tenancy period will be



- the date the agreement starts on



- the date the agreement ends on.



If you want to stay in your home longer than your agreement says, you must ask your landlord.

Moving out before this agreement ends



If you want to move out of your home before this agreement ends, you might still have to pay some rent.



Your landlord will work out how much you must pay.

It won't be more than 6 months' worth of rent.

It depends on:



- how much time is left on your agreement



- how quickly your landlord finds someone new to move in.

You won't need to pay any extra rent if:



- your landlord asks you to move out before this agreement ends



- the home is not safe for you or anyone else to live in



- your landlord didn't do something they were told they must do at least twice before



- your landlord didn't do what an order from the **Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)** told them to do.



VCAT helps solve legal problems for people in Victoria in a way that is quick and fair.

Other people who will live in your home



Will anyone else live in your home with you?



If other people will live in your home with you, their names must be in the agreement.

Name 

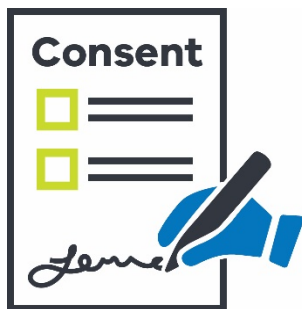
There will be space in the agreement to write the details of any other tenants.

Contacting you



Your landlord might want to use email to:

- contact you
- send you information.



Your landlord needs your **consent** to do this.



When you give your consent, you say it is ok to do something.

Urgent repairs



If there is a problem with your home and you need it fixed quickly your agreement will say who you must contact.

Extras

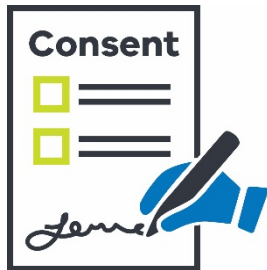


You and your landlord might have extra things you want to include in your agreement.



There is space in your agreement where you can write anything extra.

Changes to your home



Your landlord must give you their consent before you change or add things to your home.



For example, you might need to use hooks or screws to hang things on the wall, such as:

- photos
- shelves
- a TV.



You might need to put things in to keep you safe or protect you, such as:

- handrails
- strong locks.



If you have a disability you might need changes so you can live in the home.

The law says your landlord must let you make these changes.



You must ask your landlord every time to you want to change or add something.



If you move out, you might need to:

- put things back the way they were when you moved in
- pay the cost for this work.

Word list



Bond

Your bond is money you pay before you can move in.

Condition report

A condition report has a list of all the different rooms in the home.

You write notes in the condition report about:

- how clean the home is
- any marks, stains, scratches or cracks in the:
 - walls
 - windows
 - floor
 - ceiling.



Consent

When you give your consent, you say it is ok to do something.



Landlord

Your landlord is the person who owns the home.



Rent

How much you must pay to live in the home and how often you must pay it.



Residential tenancy agreement

Your Residential tenancy agreement is an agreement between you – the tenant – and your landlord.



Tenancy period

Your tenancy period is the total amount of time you will live in the home.



Tenant

You are the tenant if you pay money to live in a home that someone else owns.



Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

VCAT helps solve legal problems for people in Victoria in a way that is quick and fair.

Contact us



1300 40 43 19

The cost is the same as a local call.

If you speak a language other than English, please contact TIS – Translating and Interpreting Service.



131 450

Ask to talk to an Information Officer at Consumer Affairs Victoria on

1300 40 43 19

TTY

If you use textphone or modem, call the National Relay Service.



133 677

Give them our number – **1300 40 43 19**



If you use Speech to Speech Relay call

1300 555 727

Give them our number – **1300 40 43 19**



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