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RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT 2025

From May 1st, 2026, the Renters' Rights Act 2025 came into effect and there have been some significant changes for lettings' agents, landlords, and tenants.

By carefully choosing your managing agent, you continue to adhere to due diligence and your professional responsibilities as a landlord and tenant.

If you are uncertain about the new laws please contact, Gemma Patrick, (MARLA and owner of Patrick Oliver Estate Agency for 10 years), for free no obligation advice about your rental property/properties.

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Below you will find several useful links with more in-depth information.

<https://theindependentlandlord.com/renters-rights-hub/>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/26/contents>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grounds-for-possession-tenant-guidance/grounds-for-possession-guidance-for-tenants>

<https://england.landlordsguild.com/article/new-grounds-for-possession-renters-rights-act-complete-guide>

On the next few pages, there is a summary of the legislative changes which became law on May 1st, 2026.

A Landlord's Guide to The Renters' Rights Act 2025

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP EXPLAINED

The government has confirmed when and how the Renters' Rights Act 2025 will take effect. This guide summarises the timeline, the key reforms, and what landlords, agents and tenants can expect as each phase is introduced.

PHASE 1: MAIN REFORMS

Phase 1 delivers the core changes for all new and existing private rented sector tenancies from 1st May 2026.

ASSURED PERIODIC TENANCIES (APTS)

What's Changed:

All Assured and Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) will automatically become Assured Periodic Tenancies when the Act takes effect. Fixed-term contracts will no longer exist.

What It Means for You:

- Review tenancy templates and remove fixed-term clauses.
- All tenancies will roll monthly.
- Issuing a new fixed-term tenancy using old templates will be an offence.
- Student lets will also move to rolling arrangements.

END OF SECTION 21 ('NO FAULT') EVICTIONS

What's Changed:

Section 21 is abolished. Landlords must use Section 8 and rely on one or more valid grounds for possession.

What It Means for You:

- Possession is only possible for specific legal reasons.
- Tenants gain stronger protection from unfair eviction.
- Sale and move-in grounds can't be used in the first 12 months.

RENT INCREASES AND RENT BIDDING

What's Changed:

Rent can only increase once per year via a Section 13 notice with two months' notice. Rental bidding is banned — landlords must publish an asking rent and cannot accept higher offers.

What It Means for You:

- Use the government's Section 13 form for rent reviews.
- Tenants can challenge increases through the Tribunal.
- Informal or mid-term rises will no longer be valid.

RENT IN ADVANCE

What's Changed:

Landlords and agents can no longer request or accept more than one month's rent in advance for monthly tenancies (or four weeks for weekly tenancies).

What It Means for You:

- Requesting additional rent in advance will breach the Tenant Fees Act.
- Adjust referencing and advertising processes accordingly.
- Only voluntary payments made by tenants after signing are permitted.

PETS IN RENTAL HOMES

What's Changed:

Tenants now have a legal right to request a pet. Landlords must respond within 28 days and cannot unreasonably refuse.

What It Means for You:

- Refusal is only valid for reasonable grounds (lease restriction, property type, allergies, etc.).
- You cannot charge a separate pet deposit or mandatory insurance.
- Keep written records of your responses to pet requests.

RENTAL DISCRIMINATION

What's Changed:

Landlords and agents cannot discriminate against applicants with children or those receiving benefits.

What It Means for You:

- "No DSS" or "No children" statements are unlawful.
- Decisions must be based only on affordability and suitability.
- Review advertising, referencing, and criteria to ensure compliance.

CIVIL PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT

What's Changed:

Local councils have stronger powers to penalise breaches and recover rent for tenants.

What It Means for You:

- Civil penalties can reach up to £7,000 for a first offence and £40,000 for serious or repeat offences.
- Rent Repayment Orders can now cover up to 24 months of rent.
- Stronger investigatory powers take effect from **27 December 2025**.

PHASE 2: DATABASE AND OMBUDSMAN

FROM LATE 2026

Phase 2 introduces two major structural reforms to improve transparency and accountability.

PRS LANDLORD AND PROPERTY DATABASE

- Mandatory for all private landlords.
- Each property must be registered with a unique ID.
- Annual registration fee (to be confirmed).
- Letting agents cannot market unregistered properties.
- Rollout begins regionally from late 2026.

PRS LANDLORD OMBUDSMAN

- A new redress scheme for landlords and tenants.
- Mandatory membership for all PRS landlords.
- Free service for tenants to resolve complaints without court action.
- Expected to become operational by 2028, once the Database is established.

PHASE 3: DECENT HOMES STANDARD

The final phase focuses on improving property standards and safety across the private rented sector.

DECENT HOMES STANDARD (DHS)

- Applies to all private rented homes for the first time.
- Requires properties to be free from serious hazards, warm, safe, and well maintained.
- Target implementation between 2035 and 2037, following consultation.

AWAAB'S LAW

- Extends to the PRS, requiring landlords to fix serious hazards (like damp and mould) within strict legal timeframes.
- Tenants will have the right to take action if landlords fail to respond promptly.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Government consultation proposes that all PRS homes achieve EPC Band C by 2030, unless exempt

KEY DATES AT A GLANCE

Milestone	Date
Council investigatory powers take effect	27 Dec 2025
Landlord guidance published	Nov 2025
Tenant guidance published	Apr 2026
Act's main tenancy reforms take effect	1 May 2026
Information Sheet for existing tenancies due	31 May 2026
PRS Database rollout begins	Late 2026
Landlord Ombudsman operational	By 2028
EPC Band C requirement	By 2030
Decent Homes Standard applied to PRS	2035–2037 (tbc)

STAYING COMPLIANT

CHECKLIST TO PREPARE BEFORE MAY 2026:

- Review tenancy agreements and remove fixed terms.
- Use the official Section 13 form for rent increases.
- Stop taking multiple months' rent in advance.
- Review marketing for discriminatory language.
- Schedule safety inspections and maintenance updates.
- Prepare for Database registration and Ombudsman membership.

QUICKFIRE FAQs

Can I still increase rent whenever I want?

No: only once per year with a Section 13 notice and two months' notice period.

Do existing fixed-term tenancies change?

Yes. They automatically become periodic from 1st May 2026.

Can I refuse a tenant's pet request?

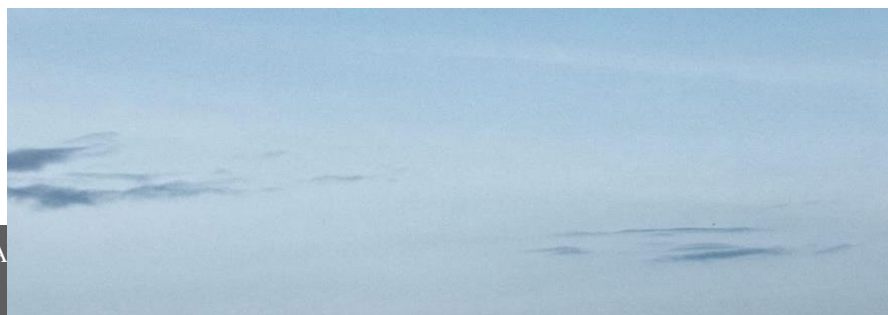
Only on reasonable grounds such as lease restrictions or property unsuitability.

Can I still ask for six months' rent in advance?

No. Only one month's rent may be required before the tenancy starts.

Can I still manage my own property?

Yes, but the new Act introduces greater compliance duties, so professional support can be beneficial.



SERVING A SECTION 8 NOTICE – EXPANDED REASONS FOR GIVING NOTICE TO VACATE

Mandatory Grounds for Possession (Court must grant possession)

Ground No.	Ground	Notice Period	Change
1	Landlord or family moving in	4 months	Amended – tenancy must be 12+ months
1A	Landlord selling up	4 months	New – tenancy must be 12+ months
1B	Social housing rent-to-buy	4 months	New
2	Mortgage repossession	4 months	Amended
2ZA	End of superior lease	4 months	New
2ZB	Possession when superior lease ends	4 months	New
2ZC	Possession by superior landlord	4 months	New
2ZD	Possession by superior landlord (fixed term 21+ years)	4 months	New
4	Student accommodation	2 weeks	Amended
4A	Student let for academic year	4 months	New
5	Ministers of religion	2 months	Amended
5A	Agricultural workers	2 months	New
5B	Employment eligibility (e.g., key workers)	2 months	New
5C	Employment by landlord	2 months	Amended
5D	End of employment eligibility	2 months	New
5E	Occupation as supported accommodation	4 weeks	New
5F	End of supported accommodation need	4 weeks	New
5G	Homelessness duty tenancy ending	4 weeks	New
5H	Affordable housing stepping stone tenancy ending	2 months	New
6	Redevelopment	4 months	Amended
6A	Enforcement action (breach of licensing, compliance issues)	4 months	New
7	Death of tenant	2 months	Amended
7A	Severe anti-social behaviour/criminal behaviour	Immediate	Unchanged
7B	No right to rent	2 weeks	Unchanged
8	Serious rent arrears (3+ months)	4 weeks	Amended

Discretionary Grounds for Possession (Court decides if possession is reasonable)

Ground No.	Ground	Notice Period	Change
9	Suitable alternative accommodation available	2 months	Unchanged
10	Any amount of rent arrears at notice and court hearing	4 weeks	Unchanged
11	Persistent late rent payments	4 weeks	Unchanged
12	Breach of tenancy agreement (except rent)	2 weeks	Unchanged
13	Deterioration of property due to tenant actions	2 weeks	Unchanged
14	Anti-social behaviour	Immediate	Amended
14A	Domestic abuse (social landlords only)	2 weeks	Unchanged
14ZA	Tenant convicted of offence during a riot	2 weeks	Unchanged
15	Deterioration of furniture	2 weeks	Unchanged
17	Tenancy granted based on false statement	2 weeks	Unchanged
18	Tenant in supported accommodation refusing to engage with support	4 weeks	New

When a landlord serves notice to a tenant, it must be for a valid reason using one or several of the grounds for repossession. Under normal circumstances, a tenant will leave as requested and within the legal time period.

Should a tenant stay in the property after the notice has expired, the Section 8 notice will need to be enforced by the local Housing Court. This process would usually take 3-4 months.



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**DISCOVER WHY MORE AND MORE
LANDLORDS ARE SWITCHING TO US**

**DEDICATED EXPERIENCED
LOCAL – OPEN 7 DAYS**

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