



**An Ghníomhaireacht
Tithíochta**
The Housing Agency



An Easy-to-Read Guide to Tenancy Agreements



Table of Contents

1. What is this guide?
2. What is a tenancy agreement?
3. What is your rent?
4. What is a deposit?
5. How long is your tenancy agreement for?
6. What are the rules I must follow?
7. What happens if I break the rules in my tenancy agreement?
8. What are the rules my landlord must follow?
9. What happens if my landlord breaks the rules in my tenancy agreement?
10. More information



1. What is this guide?

This is an Easy-to-Read guide to tenancy agreements.

It will help you to understand what a tenancy agreement is.

2. What is a tenancy agreement?

Your tenancy agreement is a contract made between you and your landlord about the home you live in.

A contract is something that you and your landlord must stick to by law.

The tenancy agreement needs to be signed by you and your landlord.

Your agreement has terms and conditions.



If you are not given a tenancy agreement don't worry, not every landlord has to give a tenancy agreement but it can be good to have one.



These terms and conditions are rules about what you can do in your home, and what your landlord must do for you as their tenant.



There are different types of tenancy agreements depending on who your landlord is.

Your landlord could be:

- A local authority, who are also known as "The Council", they provide housing to people at a rent they can afford.





- An Approved Housing Body is an organisation that also provides housing to people at a rent they can afford.
- A private landlord is a person or company that rents out homes or rooms in their home.

It is important to read your tenancy agreement so that you know what rules you and your landlord have to follow.

3. What is your rent?

Rent is a regular payment to a landlord which will allow you to live in your home.

Your tenancy agreement will tell you the amount of rent you have to pay and how often you must pay it.



When you sign a tenancy agreement, you are agreeing to do this.



If you do not pay your rent, you are breaking one of the rules in your tenancy agreement.



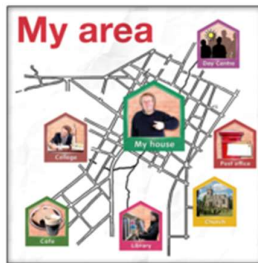
Your landlord can change the rent after a period of time.

There are different reasons why your rent will change depending on who your landlord is:

- If your landlord is a Local Authority or an Approved Housing Body, your rent may go up and down.



This is because the rent is based on how many people are in your household and how much your household income is each week.



Your income is the amount of money you get from working or from a social welfare payment, for example Disability Allowance.

- If you are renting from a private landlord, your rent will be based on what the rent is for other homes like yours in your area.
- No matter who your landlord is, they must give you notice if they want to change the rent.

4. What is a deposit?

You might need to pay a deposit to the landlord before you move into your tenancy.

A deposit is a sum of money you pay to the landlord to keep the home for you and to pay for any damage you might make to the property.



It is different than your rent and is usually paid before you will move in.

You can get this money back at the end of the tenancy if:

- you have not damaged the property,
- you do not owe rent to the landlord.

The tenancy agreement will say what the deposit is for your tenancy.

If you are renting from a private landlord, your deposit cannot be more than the cost of 2 months rent.



5. How long is your tenancy agreement for?

The tenancy agreement will say how long the agreement will last.

It is important to know that the laws in Ireland have rules on how long tenancies can last.

If you live in the property for at least 6 months, you can live there for as long as you like and the landlord has not asked you to leave.

This means that you can have a right to stay in the property even if the end date in your tenancy agreement has passed.

The Residential Tenancy Board have information on this.



6. What are the rules I must follow?

You must stick to the rules in your tenancy agreement.

Most tenancy agreements will have rules like:

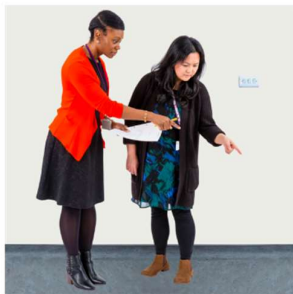
- You must pay your rent on time,
- You must behave well and respect your neighbours, for example you must not play loud music late at night,
- You must not use your home for something that is against the law, for example selling drugs,
- You will be responsible to pay for any utilities you use.



Utilities are things like heating, electricity, internet, and bins.

You will have to sign up to these services and pay them yourself.

- You must keep the property in good condition, for example not putting things down the drains that will block them up.
- You must keep any outside area that comes with the property in good condition, for example keeping your garden tidy and free of rubbish.
- You must not damage the home or other items or furniture the landlord has provided for you on purpose.



For example, breaking a window or a chair.

If you do damage items, you must repair or replace them.

- You must not change your home without asking your landlord if it is ok.

For example, painting rooms or hanging things on walls.

- You must not keep pets in your home without asking your landlord if it is ok.
- You must tell the landlord if anything goes wrong with things like your plumbing, electrics, or heating.
- Your landlord might need to enter to inspect your home or make repairs to your home.



The landlord cannot enter your property without telling you beforehand or without you giving them permission.



You must allow the landlord into your home to do those things if they have agreed a time and date with you.

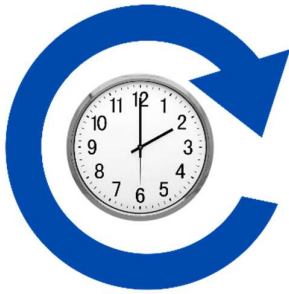


- You must tell the landlord if you want someone to move into your home.
- You must also tell the landlord if anyone moves out of your home.



- You must not leave your home empty for a long time without telling your landlord.

For example, if you have to stay in hospital for a few weeks.



- You must tell the landlord if you are planning to move out.

You must also make sure you give your landlord enough notice.

Notice is a period of time you give to a landlord before you move out so that they can make plans to find a new tenant.

The amount of notice you have to give will depend on how long the tenancy was.

The notice must be written out.

The Residential Tenancy Board or Threshold will be able to tell you how much notice you need to give your landlord.



7. What happens if I break the rules in my tenancy agreement?

If you break the rules in your tenancy agreement your landlord could give you a warning or ask you to leave your home.



- Depending on what rules you break, landlords might need to give you time to fix the problem.



For example, by law landlords have to give you time to get up to date with your rent before they can ask you to leave your home.



- There are other rules where the landlord does not have to give you time to fix the problem.



For example, if you acted in a way that caused serious harm.

This can be things like setting fire to your home on purpose, or if you hurt or threaten your neighbours.



8. What are the rules my landlord must follow?

- If you are renting from a private landlord, the landlord must obey the laws for renting a home in Ireland.



The RTB is a State organisation that is in charge of making sure that landlords and tenants are not breaking the law.

- Your landlord must respect that the property is your home.



For example, the landlord should not enter the property without asking you first.

- Your landlord is responsible to make sure your home is safe and meets the standards set by laws in Ireland for rental properties.

For example, the landlord must make sure that the plumbing, electrical, fire safety, and heating systems in your home is inspected and kept in good condition.

- The landlord must respond to you if you ask them to repair items in your home that are not your responsibility.

For example, if a washing machine provided by your landlord breaks down.



- Your landlord must give you written notice if they want to increase your rent.

There are rules and laws around how much your rent can go up and what notice the landlord has to give you.



- Your landlord must give you notice if they want you to move out and give you a reason why they want you to move out.

There are rules and laws in place that landlords must obey when they are asking a tenant to leave their home.



9. What happens if my landlord breaks the rules in my tenancy agreement?

There are different ways to seek help if your landlord breaks the rules of your tenancy agreement.



If you are a tenant of a private landlord, you can make a complaint to the Residential Tenancies Board, known as the "RTB" or ask Threshold to help you.



They can give you advice on what steps you can take to get your landlord to keep the rules of your tenancy agreement.

You can also contact the RTB for advice if your landlord is an Approved Housing Body.



The RTB can make sure Approved Housing Bodies are keeping to the rules in their tenancy agreements.



If you are a tenant of a local authority and you can make a complaint to the local authority if you think they have broken a rule in your tenancy agreement.



If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been treated by the local authority, you can then contact The Office of the Ombudsman.



The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent government organisation.

They are in charge of making sure local authorities and other government organisations act fairly and within the law.



made with
photosymbols®

10. More information

For more information on see below.

Some useful websites:

[The Residential Tenancies Board](#)

[Threshold.ie](#)

[The Office Of The Ombudsman](#)

[Citizens Information](#)

This Easy-to-Read document was developed by the Housing Agency.

This document was proof-read for its accessibility by people with disabilities.

Easy to Read logo "© European Easy-to-Read Logo: Inclusion Europe. More information at www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read/".