

**Tenancy Services**

# **Tenants' guide to the healthy homes standards**



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government



## Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Hīkina Whakatutuki – Lifting to make successful

MBIE develops and delivers policy, services, advice and regulation to support economic growth and the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

### More information

Information, examples and answers to your questions about the topics covered here can be found on our website:  
[www.tenancy.govt.nz](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz).

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# Introduction

The healthy homes standards are just that – minimum standards for rental properties, to help tenants keep their homes and their whānau warm, dry and healthy.

Landlords are responsible for making sure their rental properties meet the standards – and continue to do so.

We've created this guide to help you understand how the standards work, what to look out for, and what else you can do to help keep your home healthy.

This guide is part of a toolkit for tenants that includes a helpful checklist you can use. Find the toolkit at **[tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-tenant-toolkit](https://tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-tenant-toolkit)**.

## About the standards

There are five healthy homes standards a rental must meet.

Here is a summary of each standard. If you want to know more, see our website, **[tenancy.govt.nz/healthy-homes](https://tenancy.govt.nz/healthy-homes)**

### Heating

Landlords must provide one or more fixed heaters that can directly heat the main living room. The heater(s) must be acceptable types and must meet the minimum heating capacity required for your main living room.

### Insulation

Ceiling and underfloor insulation has been compulsory in all rental homes since 1 July 2019. The healthy homes insulation standard builds on the previous regulations and some existing insulation will need to be topped up or replaced.

### Ventilation

Bedrooms, dining rooms, living rooms and kitchens must have an openable window or door that can be fixed open to the outside. Kitchens and bathrooms must also have an extractor fan or a continuous mechanical ventilation system to remove moisture.

### Moisture ingress and drainage

Guttering and drainage should be up to the job, and if there's an 'enclosed subfloor' (that's the bit below the house, if it doesn't sit directly on the ground) it will need to have a polythene moisture barrier.

## Draught stopping

Any noticeable draughts from unreasonable gaps or holes must be sealed up. Any unused open fireplaces should be blocked off too, unless you want to use them.

## When the standards needed to be met

All rentals must comply with the healthy homes standards.

**Boarding houses:** From 1 July 2021

**Kainga Ora and registered Community Housing Provider homes:** From 1 July 2024

**Private rentals:** From 1 July 2021, if you have signed a new or renewed tenancy agreement your property must have complied within certain timeframes.

New or renewed tenancies between 1 July 2021 and 27 August 2022 had to comply within 90 days.

New or renewed tenancies between 28 August 2022 and 2 March 2025 had to comply within 120 days.

All other private rentals had to meet the standards by 1 July 2025.



## CHECK YOUR RENTAL CHECKS OUT

Use our healthy homes checklist to know what to look out for and what questions to ask.

Find the checklist at **[tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-tenant-toolkit](https://tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-tenant-toolkit)**



## When the standards do not apply

There are some cases where a rental property does not have to meet the standards, or a part of them. These are called exemptions. The property must satisfy certain criteria to be exempt from meeting the standards. For information about exemptions, see our website. [tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-exemptions](https://tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-exemptions).

## What to do if your rental doesn't meet the standards

If you don't think your rental meets the standards, talk to your landlord.

If there is work to be done, try and come up with an agreement together about when the work will be done. Write down what you've agreed to, then sign and date it.

If you can't come to an agreement on how to sort out the problem, you can give your landlord a 'notice to remedy'. This gives the landlord a fixed amount of time to get the work done. The amount of time must be reasonable.

If the landlord does not fix the problem within the time allowed, you can apply to the Tenancy Tribunal to sort the matter out.

Our page about breaches of the Residential Tenancies Act has more information about sending a notice to remedy, including a template you can use. [www.tenancy.govt.nz/breaches](https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/breaches).

## Other things to be aware of

### Tenancy agreements

Your tenancy agreement will need to include a healthy homes standards compliance statement that provides details about compliance with each of the standards.

See an example at [tenancy.govt.nz/healthy-homes/compliance-statement](https://tenancy.govt.nz/healthy-homes/compliance-statement).

### Let your landlord know about any problems

Your landlord will need to make sure your rental continues to comply with the standards. Let your landlord know as soon as possible about any maintenance or repair issues – for example, if your heater stops working, or there are problems with drainage around the property.

## Your landlord can access the property

Landlords can enter their rental properties at certain times, for certain things. They must give the right amount of notice or get their tenant's permission. If they want to do work to comply with the healthy homes standards, they must give you 24 hours' notice before entering.

## Healthy habits – how to play your part

A dry home is easier to heat. Here are some simple things you can do in your home to reduce moisture and make it easier to keep your home and your whānau warm and healthy.



Keep in contact with your landlord about any damage or repairs. Things like blocked or leaking downpipes and gutters, leaks in pipes, dampness or leaks in walls or ceilings, and signs of mould can cause major problems if left unfixed.



Tenants must tell the landlord straight away if they are aware something needs to be repaired or maintained.



Open your windows and doors in the morning to give the house an airing-out. 15 minutes should do it.



Dry your washing outside if you can, or in a room with the doors closed and a window open.



Use the extractor fans in your bathroom and kitchen and open your windows when showering or cooking.



Use lids on your pots when cooking.



Wipe off any condensation from the windows.



Move your furniture away from the walls so there is a gap to let the air flow through.



Air out a room after you leave it and turn off the heater. By releasing the heat you'll avoid condensation.



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