

# Landlord Information Pack



# Renters Reform Bill

**What Landlords need to know**

# Overview



The Renters' Reform Bill represents the most significant shift in the private rental sector in more than three decades.

It aims to rebalance the relationship between tenants and landlords in England by increasing tenant security, improving property standards, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms.

The Bill introduces sweeping reforms that will require landlords to adopt new practices and ensure full compliance with updated legislation.



# What's Changing?

## The Bill Includes several different changes, including:

### 1. Abolition of Section 21 'No-Fault' Evictions

- Landlords will no longer be able to evict tenants without providing a specific reason. The aim is to give tenants greater security and protect them from arbitrary or retaliatory evictions.
- All evictions will have to follow the revised Section 8 process, which mandates that landlords give a valid, legally defined reason for repossessing a property.

### 2. Reform of Section 8 Eviction Grounds Section 8 will be the sole route for repossession and is undergoing substantial changes:

- **Mandatory vs. Discretionary Grounds:** The law clarifies which grounds will result in automatic possession (mandatory) and which are left to the court's judgment (discretionary).
- **New Grounds Introduced:**
  - **Ground 1B – Landlord or Family Member Moving In:** Enables possession if the landlord or a close family member needs to occupy the property as a primary residence. This is a discretionary ground.
  - **Ground 1C – Selling the Property:** Landlords may regain possession to sell the property. This is a mandatory ground. However if served under this ground, the landlord will not be able to re-let the property for at least 12 months, a stipulation meant to prevent misuse.
  - **Ground 8A – Repeated Rent Arrears:** A new mandatory ground applying if the tenant has been at least two months in arrears three times within the previous three years, regardless of whether the arrears were paid off each time.
  - **Ground 14 – Anti-Social Behaviour:** Expanded and strengthened to include disruptive and nuisance behaviour towards neighbours or the community, with a lowered threshold and the possibility of immediate proceedings.



### ● Strengthened Existing Grounds:

- **Ground 8 – Rent Arrears:** Continues to apply when a tenant owes at least two months' rent at the time of the court hearing.
- **Ground 12 – Breach of Tenancy:** Applies when tenants breach any term of the tenancy agreement, including subletting or causing damage.
- **Ground 13 – Deterioration of Property Condition:** Landlords can seek possession if tenants have allowed the property's condition to worsen significantly.

### 3. Changes to Notice Periods

#### ● Notice periods are being revised to reflect the nature and severity of the eviction grounds:

- **Ground 1B (family moving in):** Two months' notice.
- **Ground 1C (sale):** Two months' notice, and a 12-month prohibition on re-letting.
- **Ground 8A (repeated arrears):** Four weeks' notice.
- **Ground 14 (anti-social behaviour):** Immediate notice and expedited court process.
- Other grounds vary between two weeks and two months.

### 4. Mandatory Periodic Tenancies

- All tenancies will become periodic from day one, removing the ability to offer fixed-term agreements.
- Tenants can give two months' notice to leave at any time.
- This increases flexibility for tenants but reduces predictability and long-term security for landlords.

### 5. Restrictions on Upfront Rent Payments

- The Bill will restrict the use of large upfront rent payments (e.g., six months in advance), which were often used to bypass affordability checks or referencing standards.
- Landlords will be required to accept monthly rent payments unless there is a clear, mutually agreed justification and documented agreement.

### 6. New Rules on Rent Increases

- Rent increases can only occur once every 12 months.
- Landlords must issue a minimum of two months' written notice using a prescribed Section 13 form.
- Tenants will be able to challenge rent increases they believe are excessive by referring the matter to the First-tier Tribunal.
- The ability to increase rents via a new fixed-term tenancy with a higher rent is being removed.



## 7. New Property Portal

- A national landlord register will be created. All landlords must register their properties and update information regularly.
- Local authorities will use the portal to monitor compliance with regulations.
- Tenants will be able to see if a landlord is registered, and if there are complaints or enforcement actions recorded.
- Failing to register or submitting incorrect information could result in fines and formal enforcement.

## 8. New Private Rented Sector Ombudsman

- All landlords will be required to join this redress scheme.
- The Ombudsman will offer a legally binding resolution service to tenants, which can compel landlords to carry out repairs or issue compensation.
- Refusing to join or comply with the Ombudsman may lead to fines and exclusion from the rental market.

## 9. Pets in Rented Properties

- Tenants will have the right to request a pet, and landlords must consider the request fairly.
- Landlords cannot unreasonably refuse without evidence.
- Landlords will be permitted to require pet insurance or a reasonable adjustment to cover potential damages.

**Legal and Financial Risks for Landlords:** Landlords who fail to adapt to these new requirements may face:

- Rent Repayment Orders
- Fines and civil penalties from local authorities
- Court dismissals of possession applications due to incorrect procedures
- Damage to public reputation via the landlord register
- Potential banning from renting property

**Why This Is Too Complex to Navigate Alone:** These reforms significantly increase the responsibilities and liabilities of private landlords. To stay compliant, landlords must:

- Understand and implement revised eviction procedures
- Track and adhere to precise notice periods and grounds
- Use approved documentation for rent increases and evictions
- Register all properties on the landlord portal and update regularly
- Monitor tenants' behaviour and respond swiftly to complaints

A mistake in timing, paperwork, or legal grounds can result in long court delays, invalid notices, and loss of income.



# Why Choose Us



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**Legal Assurance:** We manage notices, documents, rent increases, and property compliance on your behalf.



**Tenant & Court Management:** We prepare and present legal cases, handle disputes, and maintain clear communication with tenants.



**Reputation Protection:** We ensure your name remains clean on public registers and within the community.



**Two Decades of Experience:** Our 20+ years in lettings means we've weathered every legal change before — and helped landlords do the same.

**Next Steps:** Contact Bates & Co today to arrange a compliance health check and discuss how we can future-proof your lettings portfolio.