



Housing Toolkit: Easy read guide to tenancy agreements



A guide for people with learning disabilities in
East Sussex

February 2020



How to use this booklet



If you need help to read this you could ask

- a support worker
- someone in your family
- a friend or carer



This is a guide about your tenancy agreement with your **landlord**.

You can use this guide to



- help you understand your tenancy agreement



- write down important information from your tenancy agreement.

Words highlighted in **blue** are explained on pages **22** and **23**.

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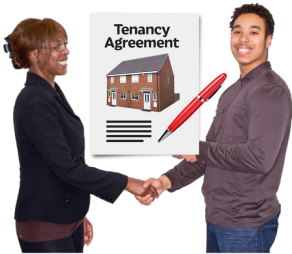
22 and 23



A page for you to write notes on

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What is a tenancy agreement?



A tenancy agreement is a written agreement about where you live.

It is a **legal contract** between you and your landlord.

A tenancy agreement gives you the right to live in your house or flat as long as you:



1. Pay the rent

Rent is money you pay each week or month to live somewhere.

2. Pay the service charge if there is one.

The service charge is money you pay each week or month.

It may help to pay for things like window cleaning, gardening, and lighting in shared areas.





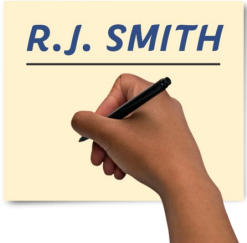
3. **Look after your home** and follow any other rules in the agreement.



Your tenancy agreement also tells you

- what rights you have
- what you can **expect** from your landlord.

Your information



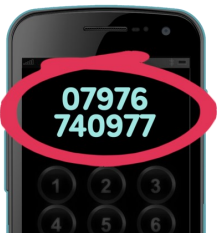
Your name

You are the tenant



Your landlord's name

The landlord is the owner of the property or building



Your landlord's phone number



Your tenancy start date



The date you move in if this is different from your tenancy start date



Your home address

Money



How much is the rent?

£ _____



How much is the service charge?

£ _____



What is the total amount of money you have to pay?

£ _____



When do you have to pay this?

What things must your landlord do?



- Your landlord must keep your home in good condition.
This includes making sure the heating, plumbing and lighting work all the time.



- Your landlord must tell you what **repair** work they are going to do and when they are going to do it.



- Your landlord must tell you how you can **complain** if you are not happy about something.



- Your landlord must tell you when they are going to ask you to pay more rent.
They can only do this once a year.

What things must you do?



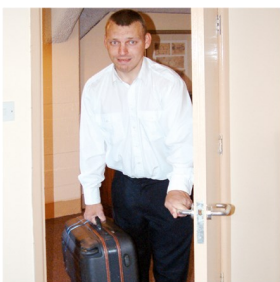
You must live in your home and keep it clean and tidy.



You must put your rubbish in the bins and not leave it lying around.



You must tell your landlord if something is broken or needs repairing.



You must let your landlord in to do repairs, **decorate**, or do any other work on your home that they need to do if they have given you **notice**.



You must be a good neighbour and **respect** others living near your home.



You must keep to any other rules that are in your tenancy agreement.



You must ask your landlord if you are thinking about getting a pet.

Each landlord has their own rules about pets so you will need to check.

What things must you not do?



You must **not** **damage** your home, furniture or fittings.



You must **not** annoy or **harm** the other people that live in the building or near by.



You must **not** create noise that will **disturb** the other people that live in the building or near you.

Moving out



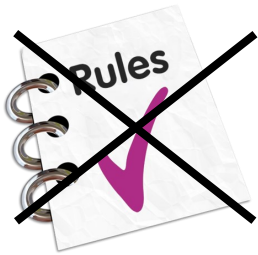
You must send your landlord a letter if you want to leave your home for good.



You must send the letter at least one month before you want to leave your home.

What happens if you do not stick to the rules in your tenancy agreement?

Your landlord might ask you to leave if you break the rules.



For example, if you

- do not pay your rent
- damage your home, furniture or fittings **on purpose.**



Before you are asked to leave, there would need to be a meeting about this.



If your landlord wants you to leave because you have broken the rules, they will have to prove this in a **court of law.**

The court must agree with the reasons why your landlord thinks you should leave.

Different types of tenancy agreement



The next pages tell you about different types of tenancy agreement.

This information will help you to understand your rights.

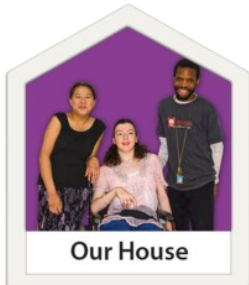


Tick the box next to the type of tenancy agreement you have.



This will help you remember which tenancy agreement you have.

1. Licence Agreements



Licence Agreements are usually used in shared homes.

This could mean that you have your own bedroom but share the other rooms.



In Licence Agreements, landlords can ask someone to leave at any time.

The tenant would get a special letter called 'Notice to Quit' from their landlord.

2. Introductory Tenancies



These are sometimes called 'Probationary' or 'Trial' Tenancies.



You would move into the property for a year.

After 10 to 12 months there is a meeting to check you are:



- settling in well and want to stay
- paying the rent
- keeping to the rules of the agreement



If there are no problems and both you and the landlord are happy, an assured tenancy will begin.

3. Fixed Term or Flexible Tenancies



Councils and Housing Associations are able to give you a tenancy agreement that lasts for 2 or 5 years.

4. Assured Shorthold Tenancies



The tenancy agreement says what rules you and the landlord must keep to, for example, paying the rent and taking care of the property.

Every 6 to 12 months the landlord will check you are:



- settling in well and want to stay
- paying the rent
- keeping to the rules of the agreement



If everyone is happy then the tenancy can be **renewed**.

This means it can carry on for another 6 or 12 months.



In a Shorthold Agreement the landlord can ask you to move out at the end of the 12 months if they wish, even if rules are not broken.

You do not have the right to stay.

This is different to an Assured Tenancy where you have the right to stay as long as you keep to the rules.



Some Housing Associations use Assured Shorthold Tenancies for example, if tenants are going to move on after a time of learning to live more

independently.

5. Assured Tenancies



Assured Tenancies say what rules you and the landlord must keep to.

For example, paying the rent and taking care of the property.

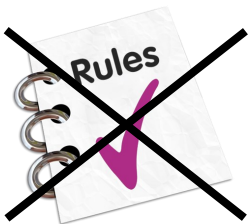


If no rules are broken, you can keep on living in the home for as long as you both agree.

You have the right to stay.



If you want to leave the home you must tell the landlord 4 weeks before you plan to go.



If the landlord wants you to leave, they will have to prove that you have broken the rules in a court of law.

6. Secure Tenancies



Secure Tenancy Agreements are used by the Council.

The rules are the same as in 'Assured Tenancies'.

Glossary 1 (explaining words)

Word	Meaning
landlord	the person or company that you rent your home from
written	words in writing
agreement	everybody involved has said yes
legal	allowed by law
contract	an agreement that is supported by the law
right	things that you are allowed by law
expect	to know that something should happen
repair	fix
complain	to say that you are not happy with something

Word	Meaning
decorate	to make things look nice
notice	tell you before something is going to happen
respect	treating others well
damage	to break or harm something
harm	to hurt something or someone
disturb	to interrupt
on purpose	not by accident
court of law	the place where judges or other people hear and decide legal cases
renewed	to begin again
independently	by themselves or with less support

