



# A TENANT'S GUIDE TO RENTING

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## The Application Process

A holding deposit may be required to secure a property, subject to contract, while your references are verified.

Should your application be successful the holding deposit usually forms a proportion of the first month's rent. This payment does not oblige a landlord to let the property concerned or any other property to you.

References may include a bank reference, employer's reference, suitable character reference and previous Landlord's reference. It may be necessary, if any of your reference replies are not satisfactory as security for you to supply a Guarantor who will also need to be referenced.

Once you have passed references the balance of the first month's rent and security deposit will need to be transferred to the agent's client account prior to the commencement of the tenancy.

You should be given the opportunity to read a draft tenancy agreement and the beginning of your application.

An inventory and schedule of condition should be compiled and agreed on the day of occupation.

## Security Deposit

Under The Housing Act 2004 your landlord or agent is required to protect your security deposit within thirty days of the commencement of the tenancy.

There are three schemes, The Deposit Protection Service (Custodial), Tenancy Deposit Solutions – Insurance Scheme (Stakeholder) and The Tenancy Deposit Scheme (Stakeholder).

You should also be provided with prescribed information at the commencement of the tenancy informing you how and where your security deposit has been protected including details of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Service.

When you have received the relevant information from your landlord you will be able to contact their chosen scheme to check that your deposit has been protected.

At the end of the Tenancy the Landlord or the Agent and tenant should agree any deductions from the deposit in addition to any pre agreed contracted deductions and request disbursement of funds. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached within 30 days the case should be referred to an Alternative Dispute Resolution Service.



## **SAFETY REGULATIONS**

### **The Furniture And Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (As Amended In 1989 And 1993)**

The original regulations introduced in 1988 ensured that all manufacturers, importers, suppliers and upholsterers of soft furnishings and furniture only supply items that use fire-retardant filling materials and fabrics. In addition, all furnishings sold or supplied must carry a permanent label. The amendments in 1993 included furniture supplied in rented accommodation. The regulations apply to the following items: beds, mattresses, sofas, armchairs, nursery furniture, cushions, seat pads, pillows and loose and stretch covers for furniture. Items of furniture made prior to 1950 are termed as antiques and as such are excluded from the regulations.

### **The Gas Safety (Installation And Use) Regulations 1998**

These regulations apply to all domestic properties and make it mandatory for Landlords to have all gas pipe work, equipment and appliances safety checked annually by a CORGI registered gas engineer on an annual basis. This includes such items as Gas Fires, Central Heating boilers, Gas cookers and other gas appliances. It also insists that flues and chimneys are clear of obstructions and in the correct place. A Landlord's Gas Safety Record must be provided to the Tenants prior to the tenancy commencement. In addition these documents and details of any work carried out must be recorded and kept. Any items that fail to comply with the regulations must be fixed or removed immediately.

### **The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994**

These regulations require that all Electrical equipment left at the property be "safe and of no risk or injury to people or pets".

They should be checked that flexes, fuses and electrical output are safe and correct. Items that must comply are all portable electrical items such as electric cooker, fridge's, washing machines, kettles, toasters etc.,

### **Energy Performance Certificates 2008**

From the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2012 prospective Tenants must have the opportunity to see a valid Energy Performance Certificate prior to agreeing and signing a new Tenancy.

The Energy Performance Certificate will be valid for 10 years.



## Once Your Tenancy Has Commenced

Any queries or problems you may encounter during the term of the tenancy or any repairs or maintenance that need to be carried out, should be directed to your Landlord or agent as soon as possible.

The Landlord or Agent may agree with you periodic inspection visits while you are a tenant.

Besides these agreed formal visits and maintenance inspections, the Landlord must not disturb you or breach your legal entitlement of quiet enjoyment of the property during the tenancy.

## When Your Tenancy Expires

Before vacating the property you should check that any breakages or items damaged during the tenancy are replaced or repaired before the final check out. A professional clean may be required.

A check out should be arranged against an inventory

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Tenant's Insurance

Your landlord is responsible for providing building contents and indemnity insurance, but this insurance will not include tenant's personal belongings, which need separate cover to be arranged by the tenant.

### Rent Payment

All rent is payable in advance, whether demanded or not, normally by standing order.

In the event that you fall into arrears on payment of rent during your tenancy, appropriate steps will be taken to recover all outstanding monies. This could involve action being taken against you in a Court of Law and may result in you being served by the Judge with an Order for Possession, which will result in you being required to vacate the property. In addition, if legal action is taken against you, legal costs may be incurred by you.

### Keys

All named tenants should receive a set of keys and fobs and should be detailed in the inventory.

### Television License

It is your responsibility to obtain a television license.



## **Mail Redirection**

The Post Office offers a service to redirect your mail, which we recommend you arrange prior to vacating the property for the term of the Tenancy.

You should also inform your bank, employers, friends and family who are likely to write to you and inform them of your new address.

## **Burglary**

Should the property be burgled during the tenancy you should immediately contact the police, make a note of their Crime Reference Number and contact your Landlord or agent at the first possible opportunity.

## **Repairs**

These guidelines provide basic details on what is considered to be an emergency fault, which should be dealt with immediately.



## **EMERGENCY GUIDELINES**

An emergency shall be deemed to have occurred when an unforeseen situation arises which, if not dealt with quickly, would:-

1. Damage or cause further damage to the home.
2. Render the home unsafe or unsecure.

### **Burst Pipes**

Turn off the water supply at the stopcock and use containers to try and catch the water. If the water is affecting the electricity, switch off the supply at the mains. Contact an emergency plumber.

### **No Water Supply**

The water authority may have turned off the supply in your area. Quite often the cold water tap in the kitchen is linked directly to the mains, so try running it.

If there is no supply from this tap then it is likely the supply has been stopped and you should contact the emergency authority number.

### **Gas Leaks**

If you can smell gas, switch off the supply at the mains or meter, contact Transco on 0800 111 999 immediately and follow their advice.

### **Fire**

In the event of a fire, contact the Fire Brigade without delay and follow their advice.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

**The information contained in this document is intended only as a guide and is by no means exhaustive. If you have any questions about renting a property please do not hesitate to contact your local Fisks branch.**