

Tenancy paperwork

This information is for private landlords. Private tenants can find information and advice [here](#).

Once you've found tenants, you'll need to get documents ready to confirm the tenancy details. Some of these documents must be given to tenants within 28 days of the tenancy starting.

Make sure you know which [certificates and safety checks](#) you need. You'll need to give your tenants copies of some of these documents.

Tenancy information notice

From 1 April 2023, [the law says](#) you must give tenants a tenancy information notice. You must give this notice to the tenant within 28 days of granting the tenancy. Granting means the date you agree to the tenancy or sign a tenancy agreement.

A tenancy information notice must contain specific information including the:

- tenant's name(s)
- rental property address
- landlord's name, address, email address and phone number
- name, address and phone number of the letting agent (if any)
- amount of rent and rates the tenant must pay
- period covered by each rent payment
- amount and purpose of any other payment (for example, utilities)
- date the tenancy starts

You can use a [free tenancy information notice template](#) made by the Department for Communities. You cannot charge a fee for providing this notice.

Not providing tenancy information notice within 28 days is an offence. Environmental health may take legal action against you, and you could get a fine.

Landlords no longer need to provide their tenants with a rent book.

Notice of variation

If any details on the tenancy information notice change, you must give your tenant a 'notice of variation'. You must provide this notice within 28 days of the change.

You can use the notice to tell your tenant that your phone number or email address has changed. You must still [follow the correct process for increasing rent](#)

You can use [a free notice of variation template](#) made by the Department for Communities.

It is best practice to give your tenants 28 days notice before making any changes to the tenancy. If you have a fixed-term contract with your tenant, you cannot make significant changes to the tenancy until it is time to renew the agreement.

Deposit protection confirmation

Within 28 days of taking the deposit, you must [protect it in a deposit protection scheme](#).

Within 35 days of taking the deposit, you must give the tenant written proof that the deposit is protected.

This is called 'prescribed information' and must include:

- the deposit amount and rental property address
- landlord or estate agent contact details
- deposit protection scheme contact details
- returning your deposit and when deductions can be made
- how to use the scheme's dispute resolution service

- what happens if a tenant does not engage with the landlord about a deposit dispute

Guarantor agreement

If your tenant provides a guarantor, you need a contract between you and the guarantor.

The contract should clearly state what the guarantor is responsible for if the tenant breaks the tenancy agreement.

It should include the:

- names of the tenant, landlord and guarantor
- rental property address
- start and end date of the tenancy
- amount of rent due
- terms of the guarantee
- obligations of the guarantor

If tenants are joint and severally liable, the guarantor agreement must state if this extended liability also applies to the guarantor.

If you change the tenancy agreement terms (such as increasing rent or creating a new tenancy), it invalidates the guarantor agreement unless the:

- guarantor agreement states it will continue despite such changes, or
- guarantor agrees in writing to the change(s)

Inventory

It's in your interest to complete an inventory at the start and end of a tenancy. This helps prevent disputes over deposits.

When completing the inventory, you should:

- inspect the property with the tenant
- record the condition and cleanliness of every item
- be specific and avoid vague terms such as 'some damage'
- give tenants the chance to see the inventory and make necessary changes
- ensure that you and the tenant sign the inventory and each keep a copy

If your tenant causes damage, it's not enough to provide photos of the damaged item to claim from the deposit.

Unless you provide clear evidence to show you're entitled to compensation, the deposit will be returned to your tenant.

You can use the [free inventory template](#) made by the Department for Communities.

More advice

- [Setting up a tenancy](#)
- [Finding tenants](#)