

Tenants' guide to the healthy homes standards



Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
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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.

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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.

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

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 current 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 need to be met

All rental properties will need to meet the healthy homes standards by 1 July 2025, if they haven’t already done so. The deadline date for your rental will depend on the type of tenancy it is, and when it started or was renewed.



Use our decision tool to find out when your rental must meet the standards.
tenancy.govt.nz/hhs-timeframes-tool

Once your rental meets the standards, your landlord will need to make sure it continues to meet them. You can help your landlord do this by telling them as soon as possible about any maintenance issues.

Since July 2021

Boarding houses

If you’re living in a boarding house, it must already comply with the healthy homes standards.

Private rentals

If you’ve signed a new or renewed tenancy, your landlord must comply within certain timeframes.

Tenancies started or renewed between 1 July 2021 and 27 August 2022 must have complied with the healthy homes standards within 90 days.

Tenancies started or renewed between 28 August 2022 and 2 March 2025 must comply with the healthy homes standards within 120 days.

Tenancies started or renewed on or after 3 March 2025 must comply with the healthy homes standards by 1 July 2025.

From 1 July 2024

If you’re living in a Kāinga Ora or a registered Community Housing Provider home, your landlord must comply with the healthy homes standards.

From 1 July 2025

Expect your home to be healthy.
All rental homes will need to comply with the healthy homes standards.



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

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.

What to do if your rental doesn’t meet the standards

If your rental has not met the standards by its deadline, talk to your landlord. There may be reasons beyond their control why they haven’t been able to meet the deadline – for example, supply issues.

If you reach an agreement as to when this work will be done, write down what you’ve agreed, 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.

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.

Let your landlord know about any problems

Once your rental meets the standards, your landlord will need to make sure it continues to do so. You should 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, or prepare to comply, with the healthy homes standards, they must still 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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