



New protections for renters during COVID-19 response

The New Zealand Government has made some laws that give some new protection to renters during the lockdown. These laws apply for the next three months and they can go for longer if the government decides they should.

Rental increases are illegal for the next six months. If the landlord has told you about an increase that would start during the lockdown, this rental increase will not happen.

Tenancies cannot be terminated without any reason during the lockdown unless the renter and the landlord agree. This includes tenancies that would normally end during this period. Tenants can still terminate their tenancies as normal.

If you were moving into a new house, but now you can't because the previous tenant can't move out due to the lockdown, then you do not have to pay any money to that landlord even if you have signed a contract.

You can stay in your house during the lockdown even if you have told the landlord you would move out. You must write to your landlord to tell them that you are going to stay.

While tenants still need to try their most to meet their obligations under their tenancy agreements, you now need to be at least 60 days in arrears before a landlord can apply to terminate a tenancy, not 21 days.

There have been media reports of some property managers writing to people to say that if they are late with their rent they will be evicted. This is not legal. If this happens to you, please contact IHC and we will advise the government.

Landlords can be ordered to pay \$6,500 if they try to evict you during this period. This is unless you haven't paid your rent for more than 60 days when they try to evict you, or you have damaged property, assaulted someone or have been breaking laws and acting anti-socially while in the house.



If your landlord tries to evict you during this time you can contact IHC on 0800 442 442 or the Citizens Advice Bureau on 0800 367 222 for help. Landlords are not able to personally evict people. If they come to your house to do this, you can call the police. If you are having trouble paying your rent talk to your landlord first to try to figure out a plan that works. You can also contact Work and Income to see if they can help with finances.