

Security of tenure



What is Fairer Safer Housing?

Fairer Safer Housing is the Victorian Government's plan to ensure people across the state have access to safe, affordable and secure housing.

The government is reviewing the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* to make sure it balances the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

Security of tenure has been identified as an issue in the review given the importance of stable housing. With a growing population, access to rental housing is increasingly relevant for more Victorians than ever before.



What is security of tenure?

Security of tenure means how certain someone is about their renting situation. Someone with high security of tenure is likely to:

- have a choice to stay or leave
- have legal protections over their tenancy
- pay rent they can afford
- know that the property will be maintained appropriately.



Why is it important?

- Security of tenure can provide the stability that people need to stay involved in education, work and their local community.
- The Victorian Government has committed to strengthening security of tenure, in particular by examining the feasibility of long term leases (of up ten years), annual rent increases, and increased protection for residents of caravan parks and moveable dwellings.

What is the problem at the moment?

There are numerous reasons why the market may not meet the needs for tenure security of all tenants. These include that:

- there are costs and risks to private individual landlords of entering into long term agreements
- there are risks and uncertainties for tenants entering tenancy agreements about the long term suitability of the property and the arrangement
- power imbalances between tenants and landlords may pose obstacles for some tenants to maintaining stable tenancies.



What do tenants and landlords want?

Both tenants and landlords have a range of needs and preferences in relation to tenancy arrangements.

Tenants	Landlords
While some tenants are looking for secure, long-term housing, others seek short-term and flexible arrangements for reasons such as work or study.	For landlords, a stable tenancy can provide continuous income, overall lower wear and tear, letting costs and stress.
Low-income and disadvantaged tenants who rent privately are most at risk of insecure tenure, and can be hit hardest by unplanned moves.	However, landlords can prefer shorter tenancy agreements if they are unsure about their long-term plans for the property, or want to limit the impact of a tenancy that turns out to be problematic.

What aspects of the regulation have the greatest influence on the level of security of tenure that tenants have in rental accommodation?



Security of tenure is influenced by a range of market and non-market factors, as well as by regulation. Aspects of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* that are most relevant for security of tenure are:

- lease terms
- tenancy terminations
- rent increases
- repairs, maintenance and modifications.



Stakeholder views on security of tenure

Stakeholders' insights into the current issues and challenges for security of tenure in the residential rental market, and their underlying causes, will help to identify areas for reform and how the regulation can best respond to the needs and preferences of the Victorian community.

