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The Renters Rights Act was granted Royal Assent recently, and while detailed guidance is awaited, the first stage of changes will take effect from 1 May 2026.

Tenancies

All existing assured shorthold tenancies in England will automatically convert to periodic tenancies, and only the new type of tenancy will be permitted for any new tenancies signed on or after 1 May 2026. To summarise:

- Landlords will not need to change or re-issue existing written tenancy agreements but will instead only have to provide tenants with a copy of the government's information sheet.
- Landlords will no longer be able to remove tenants on a no-fault basis, although an eviction notice served before 1 May 2026 will remain valid.

Under a periodic tenancy, tenants can stay in the rented property for as long as they want and will be able to end the tenancy by giving two months' notice.

In future, landlords may want to take out rent guarantee insurance to cover the risk of a tenant defaulting. The average rent lost when a tenant is evicted is estimated at more than £12,000 outside of London, rising to over £19,000 for a London property.

Rent

Only one rent increase will be permitted a year, with tenants notified at least two months in advance:

- Tenants will be able to challenge rent increases where they consider the rent to be higher than the open market rate.
- A term in a tenancy agreement that automatically raises the rent will no longer be effective from 1 May 2026.

Given the changes, landlords may prefer to increase rent annually, rather than trying to catch up after several years with no increase.

Discrimination

Landlords and letting agents will not be allowed to discourage a potential tenant who has children or receives benefits from renting a property.

For example, landlords will have to consider requests to keep a pet:

- A valid reason must be provided if the tenant's request is refused, such as the property is too small for a large pet or several pets.
- Landlords will not be allowed to ask for pet insurance to cover property damage, so landlords might want to pay for this themselves and uplift rent accordingly.

The Government's roadmap for reforming the private rented sector can be found [here](#).

We Can Help

For more information, please contact us, email us at info@nhllp.com or call us on **01753 888 211**, we are here to help.