

The Residential Tenancies Act 1986 ("the Act") regulates residential rentals in New Zealand and affects both landlords and tenants. The Act has been amended recently, and the changes are now in force. These include:

1. A landlord can end a periodic tenancy with 90 days' prior written notice without cause.
2. A landlord can end a periodic tenancy with 42 days' prior written notice if:
  - (a) The owner requires the property for them to occupy as their primary residence, or
  - (b) For their family members' principal residence, or
  - (c) If there is an unconditional sale and purchase of the property that requires vacant possession, or
  - (d) If the tenancy agreement states that the property is customarily used for employees or contractors of the landlord, and it is required for that purpose.
3. Tenants can end a periodic tenancy with 21 days' prior written notice.
4. A landlord cannot give notice to end a periodic tenancy in retaliation for a tenant exercising their rights as tenants. To do so, could result in the termination notice being set aside and damages awarded against the landlord.
5. A fixed-term tenancy ends on the expiry date, provided that either party gives notice that it will end on that date. Without that notice, it will become a periodic tenancy after the expiration date.
6. Bonds may be lodged electronically with Tenancy Services, but not by email or post anymore.
7. Landlords and tenants can give notices by email, fax, mobile phone or instant messaging, if the tenancy agreement specifies those mediums as an address for service.
8. Smoking can be banned indoors if specified in the tenancy agreement.
9. A tenant can end its tenancy with two days' prior notice due to family violence towards the tenant or the tenant's children or dependents.
10. Tenants can only have a pet if the tenancy agreement allows it or they have written consent from the landlord. Landlords can only refuse a request from a tenant to keep a pet on reasonable grounds; and
11. A pet bond of no more than two weeks' rent can be charged in addition to the general bond.

If you have any questions about your tenancy, please contact BlackmanSpargo on 07 343 9393.