

Tenancies in Writing: Your Right to Clear Terms

Tenant FAQ

Q: Am I entitled to a written tenancy agreement?

A: Yes. Since the 1st of May 2026, every new tenancy must come with a Written Statement of Terms - a document setting out key details like your rent, the date your tenancy started, your deposit, and your legal rights, including your right to request a pet and how rent increases work. Your landlord must give you this before you sign, either as a standalone document or built into your tenancy agreement.

Q: I already had a written agreement in place before the 1st of May 2026 - do I need anything new?

A: Yes, but not a new tenancy agreement. Because your tenancy already had a written record before the 1st of May 2026, your landlord doesn't need to issue a new Written Statement of Terms. Instead, they're required to give you a copy of the government's Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet, which explains how the new law affects your existing tenancy. This was due by the 31st of May 2026. If your landlord hasn't given you this, they may be in breach of the Act.

Q: What happened to the "How to Rent" guide?

A: It was withdrawn on the 1st of May 2026, and landlords no longer need to provide it. What replaces it depends on your situation: if your tenancy already existed before the 1st of May 2026, you should instead have received the Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet; if your tenancy started on or after the 1st of May 2026, you should have received a Written Statement of Terms covering your rights and the terms of your tenancy.

The one exception is where your landlord had already served a Section 21 notice on you before the 1st of May 2026 - in that specific ongoing situation, the old How to Rent guide can still be relevant.

Q: What if I never received a written agreement?

A: Your landlord is still required to give you something in writing. If your tenancy started before the 1st of May 2026 and was never put in writing at all, your landlord should have served you a Written Statement of Terms by the 31st of May 2026 setting out the key terms. If your tenancy started on or after the 1st of May 2026, you should have been given a Written Statement of Terms before you signed.

Not doing this is a breach of the Act, and your local council can fine your landlord - typically starting around £4,000, up to £7,000 for a first breach. Not having anything in writing doesn't affect your rights: your tenancy is still valid, and you're still fully protected by law either way. If you haven't received anything, contact your local Winkworth office, who can help make sure it's put right.