

Getting Help

You may be able to obtain free legal advice and representation from a law centre (who employ housing solicitors) or a housing aid centre. If you are on a low income you may be able to get free help from a local firm of solicitors. It is always best to get help as soon as possible.

If you live in Govanhill you may be able to get free help from Govanhill Law Centre.

Contact Details

Govanhill Law Centre
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Glasgow
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HOUSING RIGHTS: PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION



Govanhill Law Centre is part of Govan Law Centre Trust, an independent community controlled organisation. Registered Charity No. SCO30193. It's legal work is undertaken by the independent legal practice of Dailly & Co. Solicitors, a partnership between Mike Dailly and Iain Nisbet. It is funded by the Scottish Government and receives financial support from Govanhill Housing Association, Govanhill Community Development Trust, Oxfam and UNISON.



PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING - YOUR RIGHTS

If you rent your property from a private landlord (for example an individual, agency or private business and not a council or housing association) you will most likely have what is called an “assured” or “short assured” tenancy.



The following is a brief summary of your rights:

- You have the right to a written lease, drawn up at your landlord's expense. The lease must contain the terms of your tenancy, e.g. the length of the tenancy, the rent you must pay, how rent increases will be calculated and who is responsible for internal and external maintenance.
- You have the right to a rent book if you pay rent weekly.
- You have the right to written information of the name and address of your landlord. It is a criminal offence for your landlord to fail to supply this information within 21 days of your request. All private landlords should be registered. You can search for the owner and/or agent at: www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk
- The law states that your home should meet a certain level of repair. This is known as the “repairing standard”. It is your landlord's duty to ensure that your home meets this standard at the start of your tenancy and throughout (*for more information, please read our leaflet “Private Rented Housing- Disrepair”*).
- Your landlord is normally responsible for keeping your accommodation wind and watertight and reasonably fit for you to live in. He cannot transfer this responsibility to you without the permission of the court and your agreement.
- Your landlord is also normally responsible for keeping in proper working order any basins, sinks and baths; installations that supply water, gas and electricity; and installations for water heating and space heating.
- You have the right to at least 24 hours notice, in writing, of any request to enter your accommodation to inspect its condition. You must give your landlord reasonable access to carry out repairs.
- Eviction of a residential occupier without a court order is generally a criminal offence. You have the right to seek compensation for unlawful eviction and you should seek legal advice if you wish to do this. You should also seek advice if your landlord harasses you (for example by cutting off your water or electricity supply) as this may also be a criminal offence.
- It is unlawful for your landlord to charge you a premium (“key money”) for granting you the tenancy — he/she can be fined for doing so.
- Your landlord cannot require a deposit more than the equivalent of two months rent. Charges for things such as “inventories”, “inspections” and “references” are likely to be unlawful premiums, which you have the right to have refunded.