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# Covid19 - Information for tenants/landlords in the private rented sector

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The current Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the economy, including housing and the private rented sector.

To support both landlords and tenants, temporary measures have been published by central government in relation to the private rented sector. Key information is:

## Increased protection against evictions

Current government guidelines provides increased protection against evictions to enable tenants to remain secure in their home:

- Since 26 March 2020 most tenants have been entitled to a 3 month notice period.
- From 29 August most notices will have to be at least 6 months, including section 21 evictions and rent arrears under 6 months. This doesn't affect notices served before 28 August (notice period must be at least 3 months)
- For tenancies which are not covered by these guidelines (lodgers and those on Licenses), landlords are encouraged to follow similar processes and ensure any action taken is in line with correct procedures

All tenants, to the best of their ability, must continue to abide by the terms of their tenancy agreement, including the payment of rent. Tenants experiencing difficulties with rental payments must raise this matter with their landlord at the earliest opportunity. Landlords are encouraged to develop a payment plan which is manageable giving due regards to current circumstances. This process is expected to be formalised and we await further guidance from central government.

Illegal evictions remain a criminal offence and landlords must follow correct procedures.

Please note, depending on developments of the virus, central government may extend the periods listed above).

If there are [concerns your landlord may evict you from your property](#) then please contact Housing Options on 01253 477760.

## Financial support for landlords and tenants

The economic impacts of this pandemic are enormous and measures for landlords and tenants include:

1. 'Mortgage holidays' available for up to 3 months for landlords with a 'buy to let' mortgage who are unable to make payments due to a loss of financial income. Landlords will be expected to offer 'rent holidays' to these tenants
2. Residents can access financial support if they're experiencing financial hardship. Support includes,
  1. receiving upto 80% of their salary for those who have been furloughed (this includes self employed staff) and
  2. increase in benefit payments to be used towards rental payments. Tenants can also access financial support towards utility bills

It is important for tenants to note that there is no rent free holiday entitlement over the coming months and therefore should continue to make regular payments. If tenants experience any difficulties they must contact their landlord as soon as possible.

Landlords should also engage with tenants to agree a realistic and affordable repayment plan. Further government guidance is expected in due course.

# Landlord responsibilities

All health and safety obligations still stand to ensure properties meet the required standards.

Urgent, essential and health and safety repairs must be made given due regard to current government guidelines (new working practises, social distancing).

## Further information

For further details can be found here:

- [The government's guidance for renting, incorporating new legislation and advice about Covid-19](#)
- [Advice from Shelter for tenants relating to Covid-19](#)
- [Entitled to offer online benefit calculators, including specific advice on help available from benefits if you are affected by coronavirus](#)
- [Tenants Union UK](#) and [ACORN](#) work on behalf of tenants and others to improve the quality of life for renters
- [Housing and accommodation during coronavirus](#)

## For landlords

The [National Residential Landlords Association websites](#) offer detailed specific advice for landlords.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a tenant who you think might be vulnerable and in need of additional support, details of support services can be found [here](#)

[Further details of the Blackpool Council's response to Covid-19](#)

## Additional information

Information for tenants living in private rented homes

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