

Tenancy law changes

Recent updates to tenancy law affect landlords and tenants. The following amendments came into force in August 2019:

■ **Tenant liability for damage.** If tenants (or their guests) damage a rental property as a result of careless behaviour, the tenant will be liable for the cost of the damage up to a maximum of four weeks' rent or the landlord's insurance excess, whichever is lower.

Landlords now need to provide a statement in any new tenancy agreement about whether the property is insured and, if so, what the excess amount is for any relevant insurance policies. The statement must also inform the tenant that copies of these policies are available on request.

■ **Contamination of premises.** Landlords can now test for methamphetamine (meth) in rental properties while tenants are living there. They must provide 48 hours' notice to tenants before entering the property. For boarding house tenants they must provide 24 hours' notice before entering the boarding house room.

■ **Unlawful residential premises.** Under the Residential Tenancies Act, landlords must comply with all legal requirements relating to buildings and health and safety that apply to the premises. They must also ensure that the premises can legally be lived in at the start of a tenancy.

Full information about how this new law affects tenants and landlords is now available. View the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2019 Brochure:

www.tenancy.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/files/residential-tenancies-amendment-act-2019-brochure.pdf