



TENANTS VICTORIA

Our tenancy
resources &
programs + key
changes to
tenancy law

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Overview

- Who are we?
- How can we help?
 - Website resources
 - International student outreach program
 - Tenant advice services
 - Worker advice line
- Key upcoming changes in tenancy law

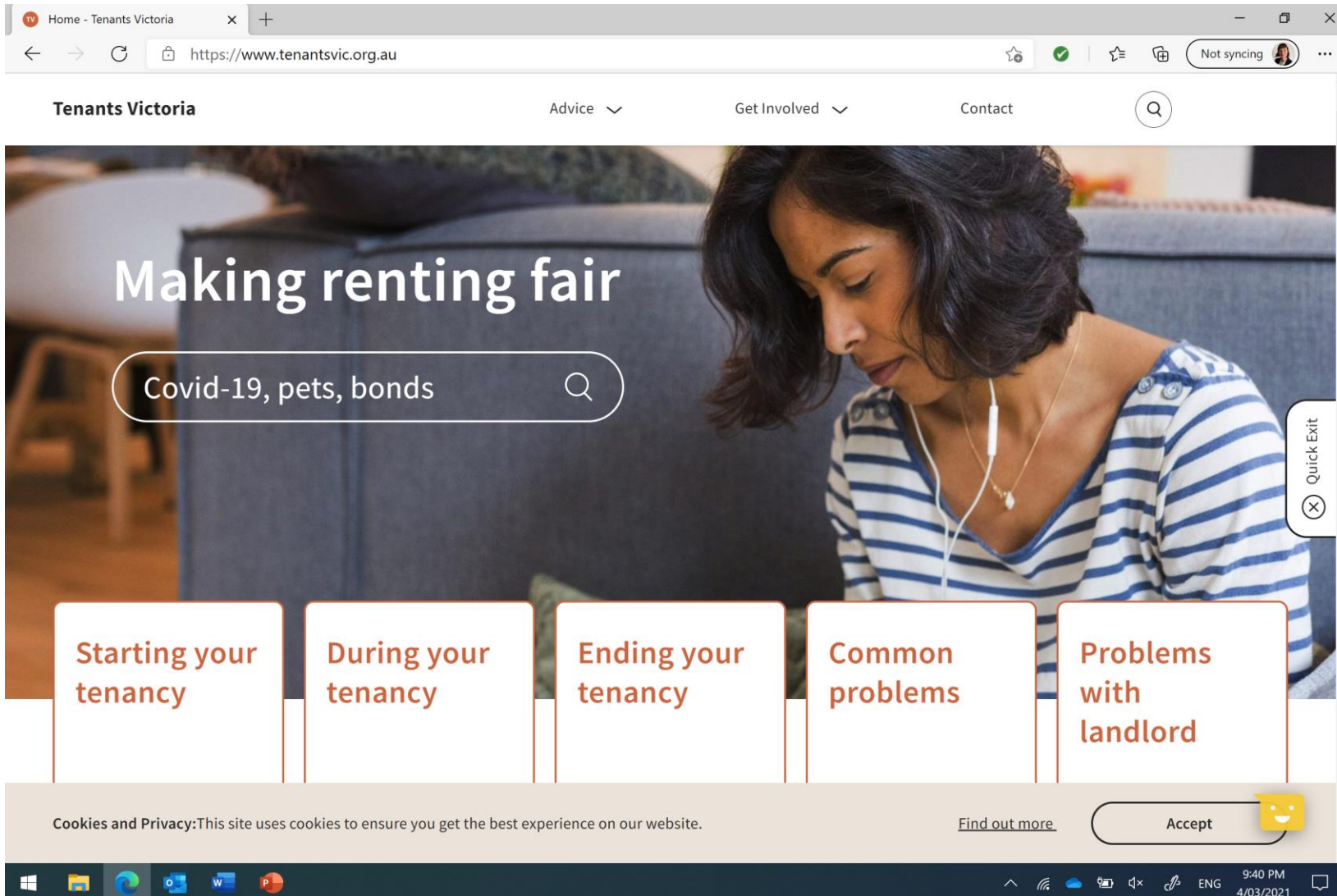


Who are we?



- Specialist tenancy law community legal centre and peak body for renters
- Our vision is: *A safe, secure and affordable home for every Victorian renter in a fair housing system.*
- We aim to achieve this by:
 - Supporting renters to help themselves, where possible
 - Providing legal and non-legal assistance to renters with a tenancy problem
 - Educating community workers, and the broader community, about tenancy law
 - Advocating for change to the law or housing system to make them fairer and improve conditions for renters and residents

Website resources



Home - Tenants Victoria

https://www.tenantsvic.org.au

Tenants Victoria

Advice Get Involved Contact

Making renting fair

Covid-19, pets, bonds

Quick Exit

- Starting your tenancy
- During your tenancy
- Ending your tenancy
- Common problems
- Problems with landlord

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International student outreach program

- Focus on students living in rooming houses
- A rooming house = a building where one or more rooms are available to rent, and four or more people in total can occupy those rooms
- Outreach during COVID included virtual outreach (via webinars) and attendances at food banks
- Our outreach worker undertakes a holistic needs assessment and makes referrals to support agencies (including legal) as required
- For more information: contact **Julie Hoang**, International Student Outreach Worker, Julie.hoang@tenantsvic.org.au

HELP FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RENTERS

STUDY MELBOURNE



DID YOU KNOW?

If your accommodation has one or more rooms for rent to four or more tenants, and you share common facilities such as the bathroom and kitchen, you could be living in a **rooming house**.

Rooming house residents are protected by Victoria's Residential Tenancies Act. It covers tenancy issues such as:

HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOU?



WELFARE AND WELLBEING SUPPORT

Our Outreach Worker can visit you or give you a call to talk about what you need and suggest some options available to you.



FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL LEGAL ADVICE

We can provide referrals for legal advice, such as about housing repairs, getting a rent reduction and work rights.



INTERPRETERS AVAILABLE

If English is not your preferred language, we will arrange for an interpreter.



Advice service



- Phone advice service – 9416 2577, 10am – 2pm, Mon-Fri
- Email advice service – available online at: [Contact us - Tenants Victoria](#)

BUT – very high demand for these services currently!

If you have a student who needs assistant, please contact:

- Julie, International Student Outreach Worker
- Our **worker advice line** on (03) 9411 1444, 9am-4pm, Mon-Fri



Key changes to tenancy law: A small thing – language changes



- ***Tenant*** will now be ***renter***
- ***Landlord*** will now be ***rental provider*** or ***residential rental provider (RRP)***
- ***Tenancy agreements*** will now ***be rental agreements***

Key changes to tenancy law: 1 – transition from COVID laws



- On 29 March (a Monday) the new RTA starts, with over 130 changes.
- This means that on **26 March** (a Friday) the following changes occur:
 - The end of the ‘eviction moratorium’
 - The end of rent reductions and the Rent Relief Grant
 - The end of the Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Scheme
 - The end of the ability to apply to leave your lease after 14 days due to hardship caused by COVID, and to be protected from lease-break costs
.... among other things.

Therefore – if one of your students needs to apply for a rent reduction due to COVID, or a Rent Relief Grant, they must do this **before 26 March 2021**.

Key changes to tenancy law: 2 – rent arrears



- New ‘five strikes and you’re out’ rule in relation to rent arrears
- If a renter receives a Notice to Vacate (**NTV**) for rent arrears, and pays the arrears before the vacate date, it becomes invalid (for the first 4 NTV within a 12 month period)
- If there have been 5 such NTVs issued within 12 months, then the renter is at risk of eviction

If a student is facing eviction – ensure they seek advice urgently!

Key changes to tenancy law: 3 – minimum standards



New requirements re:

1. locks
2. vermin proof bins
3. toilets
4. bathroom facilities
5. kitchen facilities
6. laundry facilities
7. structural soundness
8. mould and dampness
9. Window coverings
10. Windows
11. lighting
12. ventilation
13. Heating
14. Electrical safety





Key changes to tenancy law: 4 – duty to maintain in good repair

- The current law only requires the landlord to ‘maintain the premises in good repair’ without anything further.
- The **new law** will now make clear that the RRP must ensure that the rented premises are **provided** and **maintained**—
 - (a) in good repair; and
 - (b) in a **reasonably fit and suitable condition for occupation**.

AND ‘urgent repairs’ now clearly includes: air conditioning repairs, mould, pest infestation, safety devices, non-compliance with minimum standards

Must be energy efficient and done by a suitably qualified person.

Key changes to tenancy law: 5 – new discrimination provisions



- Discrimination in tenancy will be prohibited, including in relation to:
 - Refusing to let a property to an applicant
 - Refusing modification to property
 - Refusing to assign or sublet
 - Issuing a Notice to Vacate on certain grounds
- Renters will be able to claim compensation for discrimination
- Proof of direct discrimination will also operate as a defence to some Notices to Vacate

Contact

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