



What to do when the tenant terminates the tenancy

Tenancies are lawfully terminated either on expiry of the fixed-term or for periodic tenancies, upon the expiry of proper notice to terminate.

When your tenant lets you know they want to terminate the tenancy, you should ask them for a written form of notice that records:

- they are giving you 21 days notice to terminate (for periodic tenancies only)
- their new address and new telephone number (so you can forward correspondence)
- their confirmation that they will close any accounts with utilities, such as power, on leaving
- they agree to leave the property in a reasonably clean and tidy condition
- a final property inspection will be done at the end of the tenancy
- they consent to reasonable access for the landlord to show any prospective tenants the property before the expiry of the tenancy
- the arrangement for return of the keys.

Be prepared when you meet the tenant

You should always keep a file of key documents and correspondence for the tenancy of your property. When you meet the tenant you should take copies of:

- the tenancy agreement with the property inspection report (noting chattels provided and the general condition of the property at the start of the tenancy)
- the bond acknowledgment letter, and a bond refund form (provided by the Department when the bond was lodged and available at www.dbh.govt.nz)
- recent utilities accounts, such as water rates, for any apportionments you need to do

Arrange a final inspection

Some landlords will ask the tenant to consent to a quick inspection after they give notice to terminate the tenancy, and another inspection just before the notice period expires. The first inspection allows the landlord to identify any issues (such as damage) the tenant may need to address before the tenancy ends.

Always use a property inspection report to record the condition of the property, reclaim any chattels you have loaned, and check for damage. Be prepared to shift furniture or mats to check for hidden damage.

Damage is a matter of degree. A few chips of paint might be considered fair wear and tear, which is the landlord's responsibility.

Need more information?

For tenancy advice and information call 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62), visit our website www.dbh.govt.nz or email us at info@dbh.govt.nz

