

Repairs

The law requires your landlord (legally called the rental provider) to ensure that your rented home remains in 'good repair' and 'in a reasonably fit and suitable condition' for living. This applies regardless of the age and condition of the home or how much rent you pay.

If it is not in good repair you have the right to ask for repairs, and to apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to make the landlord follow the law and get it fixed. See the [Repairs Toolkit](#) on our website for help with this.

The landlord must use a 'suitably qualified person' for repairs. Generally, this means a tradesperson licensed for the work.

The landlord cannot evict you for asking for repairs. If they give you a notice to vacate and you think it is because you asked for repairs, you may be able to challenge it at VCAT. Get advice from Tenants Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, or a community legal centre.

The law prohibits future landlords and agents from asking you if you have been involved in any legal action with another landlord.

Continue to pay rent, even if you have a difficult landlord. If you apply to VCAT to get repairs done you can ask VCAT's permission to pay your rent to Consumer Affairs Victoria instead of the landlord until the repairs are fixed. This is called the 'rent special account'. You can request this on the application to VCAT.

There are 2 types of repairs under Victorian rental laws – urgent and non-urgent repairs.

Urgent repairs

The law outlines the repairs that are considered urgent. These include pest infestations, mould caused by the building structure, and a faulty heater, oven, hot water service or air-conditioner. If you think your home is unsafe, treat it as an urgent issue. See the full list on the [repairs and maintenance](#) page on our website.

Get urgent repairs fixed: report and document

Call the landlord or agent to report the issue.

Use the emergency contact number that should be in your lease and check if the agent can approve urgent repairs without contacting the landlord and for how much.

Keep notes and copies of all contact. Keep a copy of your phone log, any text messages and written communication. This evidence is important to show that you gave the landlord the opportunity to act immediately, and that you are entitled to make an urgent repairs application to VCAT.

If urgent repairs are not fixed

If the landlord does not respond, refuses to do repairs or unreasonably delays them, you have 2 options. These are to apply to VCAT for urgent repairs, or in some cases pay yourself and seek reimbursement.

Apply to VCAT

Tenants Victoria recommends this approach in most cases. Use the [General application – residential tenancies](#) form on the VCAT website and attach your evidence to your application.

Your application must be heard within the next 2 business days. Find out more about the process on the [applying to VCAT](#) page on our website.

For help writing the application, use the [Repairs Toolkit](#) on our website.

Pay for the repairs yourself

If you pay for the repairs yourself the cost must be less than \$2500, including GST. Ensure you have evidence of contacting the landlord and an invoice from a suitably qualified tradesperson once the repairs are done.

The landlord is only required to reimburse you for what is 'reasonable', so try to get up to 3 quotes to show the cost was reasonable. Take before and after photos of the repairs.

To be reimbursed, use the [Notice to rental provider of rented premises](#) form on Consumer Affairs Victoria's website to request payment from the landlord. Describe the repairs and costs, and attach a copy of the invoice.

The landlord then has 7 days to reimburse you. If they do not, you can apply to VCAT for an order that they pay you.

Non-urgent repairs

Non-urgent repairs are all repairs that are not listed as urgent. Generally, you cannot arrange and pay for non-urgent repairs yourself.

Non-urgent repairs should be done within 14 days of you reporting them in writing.

We recommend reporting the repairs using the [Notice of breach of duty to rental provider of rented premises](#) form on Consumer Affairs Victoria's website. For help to draft the notice, use our [Repairs Toolkit](#).

Consumer Affairs and VCAT will also often accept as sufficient written notice emails and notes on the condition report outlining the repair issues.

If the repairs are not done, or are not done properly within 14 days of you reporting them, you have these options.

Apply to VCAT for an order to fix the problem. This is the better option if the problem is obvious.

Request a free inspection from Consumer Affairs Victoria. This is useful if the problem is not obvious, such as a bad smell. Once you receive the inspection report from Consumer Affairs, you can then apply to VCAT for an order. VCAT must hear your case within 7 days.

Request a free inspection

Complete the [Request for repairs inspection or rent assessment](#) form on Consumer Affairs Victoria's website. Send this to Consumer Affairs with copies of your written notice about the repairs that you sent to the landlord. The inspector will come to your home and shortly after send you a written report. They may also negotiate with the landlord on your behalf for the repairs to be completed.

Apply to VCAT

If the repairs are not done, you can apply to VCAT for an order for non-urgent repairs. Attach the inspection report to your application. Provided you or your visitors did not cause the damage, VCAT will order that the landlord do the repairs.

Find out the details of the process on our website on the [applying to VCAT](#) page.

Compensation

If repairs are delayed, you can usually claim compensation. You can make a compensation claim during or after your lease. Telling the landlord about a potential compensation claim might also help to speed up repairs. Find out more on our [compensation](#) page.

Useful links

Tenants Victoria:
www.tenantsvic.org.au

Consumer Affairs Victoria:
www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Victoria Legal Aid:
www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

Federation of Community Legal Centres:
www.fclc.org.au

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT):
www.vcat.vic.gov.au

This information is a guide and should not be used as a substitute for professional legal advice.