

IN FORCE FROM 1 MAY 2026

Renters' Rights Act 2025 Compliance Audit Checklist

A 14-point operational audit for UK letting agents, Build to Rent operators, and private landlords. Mapped to every duty under the Act, with prescribed forms, statutory timescales, and what to keep on file.

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This checklist is operational guidance, not legal advice. For specific cases, consult a qualified property lawyer. The information is correct to the best of our knowledge as of May 2026; secondary regulations are still being laid and may amend specific timescales or thresholds. Always confirm with the most recent gov.uk and MHCLG publications before relying on this document.

1. Why this checklist

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 received Royal Assent on **27 October 2025** and came into force on **1 May 2026**. It is the largest single change to the UK private rented sector in 35 years. Section 21 no-fault evictions are abolished. Every assured shorthold tenancy converts to a periodic assured tenancy. The PRS Database is mandatory. The Decent Homes Standard now applies to private rentals. Awaab's Law extends to private landlords from 2027.

If you are a letting agent, Build to Rent operator, or private landlord with even a single property in England, every workflow in your business needs to change. This checklist walks through the 14 operational duties, the prescribed forms, the timescales, and what evidence to keep.

Procedural risk warning. The 2026 regime depends on prescribed forms, statutory notice periods, and proof of service. A defective notice, a missed Information Sheet, or a Section 8 process without the right evidence will fail at court or tribunal. Build the workflow once. Trust the audit trail.

Who this is for

- **Letting agents** managing UK lettings on behalf of landlords (single-branch through national chain)
- **Build to Rent operators** running multi-block PRS portfolios
- **Private landlords** with one or more rental properties in England
- **Property managers** at agencies, asset managers, and investment funds

What this checklist covers

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 is a long Act. This checklist is operational, not academic. It focuses on what you must *do*, with *what evidence*, by *when*. The 14-point audit is structured for you to print, walk through your portfolio, tick each item, and keep the marked-up document as your readiness record.

Rentalize ships every workflow described here as a built-in feature. The platform is the audit trail. If you would prefer to operationalise the Act in software rather than spreadsheets, see the resources page at the end.

2. Implementation timeline

The Act is being implemented in stages. These are the dates every UK letting agent, BTR operator, and landlord needs in their calendar.

27 Oct 2025

Royal Assent

Renters' Rights Bill becomes the Renters' Rights Act 2025. Secondary legislation begins to be laid.

1 May 2026

Section 21 abolished. Periodic assured tenancy regime begins.

All new and existing assured shorthold tenancies convert to periodic assured tenancies. No more fixed terms. No more no-fault evictions. Section 8 grounds become the only route to possession.

31 May 2026

Information Sheet deadline

Every existing tenant must receive the statutory Information Sheet within 30 days of 1 May. New tenancies must include it from day one. Failure to serve is grounds for civil penalty and may affect the validity of subsequent notices.

Q3 2026

PRS Database registration mandatory

Every landlord and every privately rented property must be registered on the Private Rented Sector Database. Letting agents cannot list, market, or let unregistered properties. Local authority enforcement begins.

Q4 2026

Decent Homes Standard applies to PRS

The Decent Homes Standard, in force for social housing since 2001, applies to private rented sector properties. Local authority improvement notices and civil penalties begin.

Q1 2027

Awaab's Law extends to PRS

Strict statutory timescales for investigating and remedying serious hazards (damp, mould, structural). Tenants gain enforceable rights to repair and direct compensation routes.

Note on dates. The headline dates (1 May 2026 and 31 May 2026) are fixed in the Act. The PRS Database, Decent Homes Standard, and Awaab's Law commencements are subject to secondary legislation. The dates here reflect MHCLG's published implementation roadmap as of May 2026 and may shift by one quarter either way. Always confirm with current gov.uk publications before acting.

3. The 14-point compliance audit

Walk through your portfolio with this list. Tick each box once you have evidence the duty has been discharged. Keep the completed document as your readiness record.

01 Audit your tenancy book

Identify every fixed-term assured shorthold tenancy in your managed portfolio. After 1 May 2026, all become periodic. Record the conversion date for each tenancy. Update your system of record so the new periodic status is the canonical state.

Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Section 1 — Conversion of fixed-term ASTs to periodic assured tenancies.

02 Pull every tenant contact record

The statutory Information Sheet (Item 03) must reach every existing tenant within 30 days of 1 May. Email and postal addresses must be current. Where you do not hold a current address, you must take reasonable steps to obtain one before the deadline.

Practical step: run a contact-currency check by 15 May 2026 at the latest.

03 Serve the statutory Information Sheet by 31 May 2026

Every existing tenant must receive the prescribed Information Sheet within 30 days of 1 May 2026. Every new tenancy must include it at the start of the tenancy. Track delivery, not just dispatch — keep a proof-of-service log against each tenancy record. Email open receipts, postal delivery confirmations, and signed counterparts all count.

Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Section 7. See template log on page 12.

04 Withdraw all unserved Section 21 notices

Audit any Section 21 notices that were prepared but not yet served. After 1 May, no new Section 21 notice is valid. For notices served before 1 May, transitional rules permit progression to court within their existing validity window. After that, restart under Section 8 with the appropriate ground.

Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025 transitional provisions.

05 Update all tenancy templates

Replace assured shorthold tenancy templates with periodic assured tenancy templates. Remove fixed-term clauses. Remove blanket pet bans (Item 07). Remove rent-in-advance clauses beyond one month (Item 09). Remove discriminatory clauses (Item 10). Audit existing templates and re-version with effective date of 1 May 2026.

- 06 Register every property on the PRS Database**
- Capture EPC, gas safety, electrical, deposit, and any selective or HMO licensing data per property record. Letting agents cannot market a property that is not registered. See the field reference on page 11.
- Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Section 19 — Private Rented Sector Database.*
-
- 07 Build a pet request workflow**
- Capture every tenant pet request. Issue a written response within 28 days. Document the reason for any refusal — it must be reasonable. Pet insurance can be required as a condition. Keep refusal reasoning on file as evidence in case of tribunal review.
- Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Section 11. See template response on page 13.*
-
- 08 Update marketing copy**
- Remove "no children", "no DSS", "no benefits", and similar phrases from listings, brochures, and websites. Train staff on the discrimination ban. Audit historical listings on portals (Rightmove, Zoopla, OnTheMarket, LettingWeb) and request updates from the portals.
- Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Sections 14 and 15 — anti-discrimination duties.*
-
- 09 Set advertised asking rents and lock them**
- The asking rent advertised must be the rent charged. Stop accepting offers above the asking rent. Document the policy in agency operating procedures. Train letting negotiators. The rule prohibits bidding wars on PRS lettings.
- Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Section 8.*
-
- 10 Switch rent reviews to Section 13 only**
- Plan annual rent reviews via the statutory Section 13 procedure. Use the prescribed Form 4 (or its successor). Tenants can challenge the new rent at the First-tier Tribunal. Schedule reviews to give the prescribed notice period (one month minimum).
- Reference: Housing Act 1988, Section 13 (as amended by Renters' Rights Act 2025).*
-
- 11 Map your Section 8 grounds library**
- Every possession scenario now relies on a Section 8 ground. Train staff on the grounds, the notice periods, and which is mandatory versus discretionary. The expanded grounds reference is on page 9. Pre-action: each ground requires evidence — keep the evidence pack ready before serving.
-
- 12 Stand up a Decent Homes Standard audit programme**
- Inspect every managed property against the four criteria (state of repair, modern facilities, thermal comfort, hazards under HHSRS). Create remediation plans for properties that fail. Keep photographic and contractor evidence. Local authorities can issue improvement notices and civil penalties.
- Reference: Renters' Rights Act 2025, Schedule on Decent Homes Standard for PRS.*
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13 Build an Awaab's Law response process

Define investigation and repair timescales for hazards (especially damp, mould, fire risk, structural). Log every tenant report. Notify tenants in writing at each stage. The statutory clock starts on the date of the report. See timescales on page 14.


14 Run a redress scheme audit


Confirm every property is associated with a registered landlord on a recognised redress scheme. The PRS Database checks redress scheme membership on registration. Letting agents must hold the landlord's redress reference for every property they market or manage.

How to use the completed checklist. Print, tick, sign, date. Keep one copy on file per branch (letting agent) or per portfolio (BTR / landlord). Review every six months. Re-audit on any major regulatory amendment.

4. Section 8 grounds: the new possession routes

With Section 21 abolished, every possession case must rely on a Section 8 ground from Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988 (as amended by the Renters' Rights Act 2025). Mandatory grounds give the court no discretion if the ground is proven; discretionary grounds permit the court to refuse possession even if the ground is established.

 **Mandatory** — court must order possession if ground proven

 **Discretionary** — court may order possession if reasonable

REASON FOR POSSESSION	GROUND	TYPE	NOTICE PERIOD	NOTES
Landlord wants to sell the property	1A	Mandatory	4 months	Landlord must not re-let for 12 months after sale.
Landlord or close family wants to move in	1	Mandatory	4 months	"Close family" defined in the Act. Cannot serve in first 12 months of a tenancy.
Persistent or serious rent arrears (3+ months)	8	Mandatory	4 weeks	3 full months in arrears at notice and at hearing.
Persistent late payment of rent	11	Discretionary	4 weeks	Pattern of late payment, not just arrears.
Anti-social behaviour	14	Discretionary	Immediate	Includes nuisance, illegal activity, harassment.
Breach of tenancy terms	12	Discretionary	4 weeks	Material breach of any term other than rent.
Damage to property by tenant	13	Discretionary	4 weeks	Includes deterioration of furniture in furnished lets.
False statement to obtain tenancy	17	Discretionary	2 weeks	Reliance by landlord on false statement.
Property required for an employee (worker tied to dwelling)	5C	Mandatory	2 months	Tied to employment-linked accommodation.
Redevelopment or substantial works	6	Mandatory	4 months	Works that cannot be carried out with tenant in

REASON FOR POSSESSION	GROUND	TYPE	NOTICE PERIOD	NOTES
				place.
Death of tenant (no qualifying successor)	7	Mandatory	2 months	Notice within 12 months of death.
Student accommodation let to non-students	4A	Mandatory	2 months	Specific to PBSA and similar.
Mortgagee requires possession	2	Mandatory	2 months	Lender exercising power of sale.

Procedural risk warning. Every Section 8 notice must use the prescribed Form 3 (currently). The form must state the correct ground, the correct notice period, and be served with proof of delivery. A defective notice is fatal at court — the case is dismissed, costs are not recoverable, and you must restart from a fresh notice. Use the prescribed template, not a free-text version.

Pre-action checklist for any Section 8 case

- **Evidence pack.** Photographic, documentary, witness statements as appropriate to the ground.
- **Pre-action protocol.** Where required (especially Ground 8 arrears), send a pre-action letter giving the tenant a chance to remedy.
- **Information Sheet served?** If not, the notice may be defective regardless of the ground.
- **PRS Database registered?** Possession through the PRS Database registry is checked.
- **Form 3 prescribed wording.** Use the current form. Old templates lose validity when secondary regulations are amended.
- **Service.** Personal service, recorded post, or compliant email per the tenancy agreement. Document delivery.

5. PRS Database registration: what to submit

Every landlord and every rented property must be registered on the Private Rented Sector Database. Registration is a prerequisite for marketing and letting under the Act.

Per-landlord fields

- **Landlord identity** — full legal name (or company name and registration number)
- **Service address** — for notices under the Act
- **Landlord licence numbers** — selective licensing references where applicable
- **Redress scheme** — TDS / DPS / MyDeposits / The Property Ombudsman / etc.
- **Insurance** — public liability and (where used) rent guarantee
- **Section 13 process** — agreed process for rent reviews

Per-property fields

- **Address** — including UPRN where available
- **EPC** — current rating, expiry date, certificate reference
- **Gas safety record (CP12)** — last issued date, next due date, engineer's Gas Safe number
- **Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)** — last issued date, expiry, certificate reference
- **Deposit protection** — scheme, certificate number, prescribed information served
- **Selective or HMO licence** — local authority licence number where applicable
- **Decent Homes audit** — date of last audit, outcome (pass / remediation in progress)
- **Awaab's Law trigger log** — open hazard reports, statutory clock state

Per-tenancy fields

- **Tenancy start date and rent**
- **Information Sheet served** (date, method, evidence)
- **Most recent Section 13 rent notice** served (if any)
- **Active Section 8 notice** (if any)

Letting agents: a property cannot be advertised, marketed, or let unless the PRS Database record is current. Pre-tenancy checks include verifying the registration as part of the matter-opening file. Civil penalties apply to both landlord and agent for breach.

6. Information Sheet — service template & log

The statutory Information Sheet is a prescribed document explaining tenant rights under the new regime. It must reach every existing tenant by 31 May 2026 and accompany every new tenancy at the start.

Service log template (one row per tenancy)

Tenancy reference:

Property:

Tenant(s):

Date served:

Method: Email Post (recorded) In-person Tenant portal

Evidence on file: Email read receipt Postal proof of delivery
 Counterpart signed Tenant portal acknowledgement

Served by:

Notes:

Acceptable methods of service

- **By post** — recorded delivery (Royal Mail Signed For 1st Class). Keep the proof of delivery slip.
- **By email** — only if the tenancy agreement permits email service. Keep the sent email and any read receipt.
- **In person** — to the tenant at the property. Best practice is to leave a copy and request a signed acknowledgement.
- **Via tenant portal** — if the tenant has registered for an agent or landlord portal that supports document service.

Tracking proof of delivery

For every tenancy, the file must contain (a) a copy of the served Information Sheet and (b) evidence that it was delivered. The 31 May 2026 deadline is on service and reasonable steps to deliver, not just dispatch.

If the tenant address has changed and you have not been notified: serve to the property address. Document the steps taken. The duty is to serve at the last known correspondence address, not to track tenants who have moved without notifying.

7. Pet request: response template & refusal grounds

Tenants may request to keep a pet. The landlord must respond in writing within 28 days of receipt. The landlord cannot unreasonably refuse. The landlord may require pet insurance to cover any damage caused by the pet.

Acceptance response (template)

Dear [Tenant Name],

Further to your request dated [date] to keep a pet at [property address], we are pleased to inform you that the request is approved on the following conditions:

1. The pet is described as: [species, breed, name, indicative age].
2. You will hold pet insurance with cover of at least £ [amount] for damage caused by the pet to the property and to third parties.
3. Insurance certificate (or an agreed equivalent) is to be provided to us within 14 days.
4. You will be responsible for any loss or damage caused by the pet, including odour or wear that exceeds normal use.
5. The pet will be kept in accordance with all building rules and any leasehold covenants applicable to the property.

This decision is in compliance with Section 11 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and the relevant tenancy clause.

Yours sincerely,

[Agent / Landlord]

Date: __/__/2026

Refusal response (template)

Dear [Tenant Name],

We have considered your request dated [date] to keep [describe pet] at [property address].

After consideration, the request is refused for the following reason:

[Reason – see "Reasonable refusal grounds" below].

You may request reconsideration if circumstances change.

Date: __/__/2026

Reasonable refusal grounds

- ▶ **Leasehold covenant prohibits pets** in the building (with the leasehold document referenced)
- ▶ **Property is unsuitable** for the species (e.g. studio flat for a large dog)
- ▶ **Property is shared accommodation** and an existing tenant has a documented allergy or objection
- ▶ **Specific risk of structural damage** identifiable from the species/breed (e.g. fish tank above the safe weight load)
- ▶ **Tenant has not provided pet insurance** after a reasonable request

Unreasonable refusal grounds. "Owner does not allow pets" with no other reason. Generic blanket policy. Refusal without giving a reason. Failure to respond within 28 days. Each of these can be challenged at the First-tier Tribunal and may attract a civil penalty.

8. Awaab's Law: statutory hazard-response timescales

Awaab's Law applied to social housing from 27 October 2024. Under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, it extends to the private rented sector from 2027 (subject to commencement regulations). The duties impose strict statutory timescales for investigating and remedying serious hazards.

The trigger: a tenant report

Once a tenant reports a hazard (in writing, by phone, or via the tenant portal), the statutory clock begins. The hazard categories are wide but the timescales are tighter for damp, mould, fire risk, gas leaks, electrical hazards, and structural defects.

STAGE	ACTION	STATUTORY TIMESCALE (INDICATIVE)
Stage 1	Acknowledge tenant report and arrange inspection	14 days
Stage 2	Inspection conducted; hazard categorised (Category 1 / 2 under HHSRS)	14 days from Stage 1
Stage 3	Begin remediation	For Category 1 hazards: within 7 days of categorisation. For Category 2: within 28 days.
Stage 4	Complete remediation OR provide alternative accommodation	Reasonable period given the work — but progress evidenced at every stage.
Stage 5	Tenant notified in writing that remediation is complete	Within 7 days of completion. Right of re-inspection.

Note on commencement. The exact timescales for PRS Awaab's Law are subject to the commencement regulations expected in late 2026 / early 2027. The figures above reflect the social-housing precedent and the consultation publications as of May 2026. Confirm with the gov.uk PRS Awaab's Law guidance once published.

Evidence to keep at every stage

- **Date and method of tenant report** (form, email, call log, portal entry)
- **Acknowledgement to tenant** with reference number
- **Inspection record** — date, inspector, photographic record, HHSRS category
- **Contractor instruction and dispatch dates**
- **Remediation completion record** with photographic evidence and tenant sign-off

- **Communications log** — every update sent to the tenant, with timestamps

Failure at any stage exposes the landlord to a tenant compensation order under the Act, plus potential civil penalty from the local authority. The court will look at the evidence pack first.

9. Penalty schedule (indicative)

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 introduces or amends civil and criminal penalties across the regime. The figures below are the indicative limits stated in the Act and accompanying explanatory materials. Local authorities are the enforcing bodies for civil penalties.

OFFENCE / BREACH	CIVIL PENALTY (MAX)	NOTES
Failure to register on the PRS Database (first breach)	£7,000	Per property.
PRS Database breach (repeat or serious)	£40,000	Per property. Criminal prosecution possible.
Failure to serve the Information Sheet	£5,000	Per tenancy.
Discrimination ban breach (e.g. "no DSS")	£7,000	Per advertisement / per tenancy.
Bidding-war / advertised-rent breach	£7,000	Per tenancy.
Pet request — unreasonable refusal or no response	£5,000	Per refusal. Plus tribunal review.
Decent Homes Standard — local authority improvement notice	£7,000	Per property; can escalate to £30,000 on repeat.
Awaab's Law — failure to respond within statutory timescale	To be set by regulations	Tenant compensation orders also available.
Letting an unregistered property (agent)	£7,000	Agents jointly liable with landlord.

Important. Penalty values may be amended by secondary regulations. The figures above are stated in the Act and explanatory notes as of May 2026. Always verify with the most current MHCLG guidance before relying on these specific amounts.

10. Next steps and resources

Suggested 30-day action plan

1. **Day 1 to 7.** Run the 14-point audit on a sample of 10 tenancies. Identify the gaps. Build the operational backlog.
2. **Day 8 to 14.** Update tenancy templates. Replace AST templates with periodic assured tenancy templates. Strip discriminatory clauses, fixed-term clauses, blanket pet bans.
3. **Day 15 to 21.** Bulk send the Information Sheet to existing tenants. Capture proof of service against every tenancy.
4. **Day 22 to 30.** Begin PRS Database submissions per property. Target 100% registration by end of Q3 2026.

Authoritative references

- **The Act.** Renters' Rights Act 2025, available at legislation.gov.uk.
- **Explanatory Notes.** Companion document to the Act, available at legislation.gov.uk.
- **MHCLG guidance.** Implementation roadmap and statutory guidance at gov.uk/mhclg.
- **Information Sheet.** Prescribed form available at gov.uk (search "Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet 2026").
- **PRS Database.** Registration portal at prs-database.gov.uk (live from Q3 2026).
- **Form 3 (Section 8 prescribed notice).** The current prescribed form is at gov.uk/government/publications/form-3.

Need software, not spreadsheets?

Rentalize is the UK Renters' Rights Act compliance platform. Built around the 14 duties in this checklist. PRS Database submission, Section 8 generator, Information Sheet bulk service with proof of delivery, pet request register with 28-day countdown, Decent Homes audit, Awaab's Law hazard tracker, and a tribunal-ready evidence vault. One platform, one audit trail.

Pillar page: rentalize.com/renters-rights-act-compliance-software

Demo: rentalize.com/contact

Pricing: rentalize.com/pricing-calculator

Legal disclaimer. This document is operational guidance, not legal advice. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 is a complex piece of legislation, and secondary regulations under the Act are still being laid as of publication date. Specific dates, thresholds, and prescribed forms may be amended. For specific cases, take advice from a qualified property solicitor. Rentalize Software Limited and its directors accept no liability for reliance on the contents of this document. Always verify with the most recent gov.uk and MHCLG publications before acting. © 2026 Rentalize Software Limited (CRO 765596). All rights reserved. Permission granted to print and circulate within your organisation; commercial reproduction or republication requires written permission.