

**I need to know  
how renters'  
rights are  
changing from  
1 May 2026**



**Southwark  
Private Renters  
Support Project**



# The Renters' Rights Act introduces new protections and rights for renters in the UK.

The new law will come into force from **1 May 2026**, so it's important that renters are aware of how their tenancy rights are going to change before and after this date.

## End of Section 21

Landlords can no longer use Section 21 notices to pursue a 'no fault' eviction. They must have a valid reason or 'ground' to evict you from the property, and pursue the legal process to do so.

If you have received a valid Section 21 notice before 1 May, your landlord must begin possession proceedings by 31 July 2026, or within 6 months of the notice being served, whichever comes first.

If you receive a Section 21 notice after 1 May, it is automatically invalid. You have a right to remain in the property and your landlord will need to use the Section 8 procedure, and provide a valid reason for evicting you.

## Tenancy relations

If you need help managing your relationship with your landlord or letting agent, you can contact [Southwark Council's tenancy relations service](#).



**tenancyrelations@southwark.gov.uk**



**020 7525 4113** (Mon to Fri 9am-4pm, Wed 10am-4pm)

Before 1 May 2026	After 1 May 2026
Eviction without reason is permitted, allowing landlords to evict tenants outside a fixed term without cause.	Section 21 eviction is banned. Landlords must now have a valid, legal reason to evict a tenant.
Fixed-term tenancies are standard, typically lasting 6 or 12 months with a set end date.	All tenancies will be rolling (periodic), meaning they have no fixed end date.
Tenants are often locked into a fixed term, usually having to wait until the end date to leave, or pay a fee to break the contract early.	Tenants can leave at any time by providing the landlord with 2 months' notice.
Rent increases can occur more than once a year, often threatened alongside a Section 21 eviction if challenged.	Rent increases are limited to once a year and must be implemented using a formal Section 13 notice.
Challenging rent increases at a tribunal carries a risk of the rent being set higher than the landlord proposed, and the increase can be backdated.	The tribunal can't set the rent higher than the landlord proposed and the new rent will only take effect from the date of the tribunal's decision.
Rental bidding wars are permitted, allowing landlords to accept offers above the advertised price.	Rental bidding wars are banned. Landlords will not be able to ask for or accept rent over the advertised price.
Landlords can demand multiple months' rent as an upfront payment.	Landlords can only ask for a maximum of 1 month's rent in advance.
Landlords can refuse tenants based on receiving benefits or having children.	It is illegal to refuse tenants because they receive benefits or have children.
Landlords can outright refuse requests from a tenant to keep a pet.	The right to request a pet is established. Landlords must consider a tenant's pet request fairly.
Consequences are limited if landlords misuse eviction grounds.	Stronger penalties for landlords who break the rules. You may be entitled to a rent repayment if your landlord doesn't follow the rules.

**Learn more about your rights as a private renter, and support available to you by visiting our website:**



**[southwarkprivaterenters.org.uk](https://southwarkprivaterenters.org.uk)**

 **[privaterenters@citizensadviceSouthwark.org.uk](mailto:privaterenters@citizensadviceSouthwark.org.uk)**

**Report a private rented housing disrepair issue to the Council:**

