

# **Renting Homes (Wales) Act and Renters' Rights Act - What does it mean for social renters in Wales?**

May 2026

## **What is the Renters' Rights Act?**

The Renters' Rights Act is a UK Government-led change of law to improve tenants' rights. There is currently media coverage of this new Act and we want to explain how it impacts you as renters in social homes in Wales.

In Wales, the Renters Rights Act changed the Welsh renting legislation - 'the Renting Homes (Wales) Act'. As a result of this, 2 things are changing for you as Welsh Social renters (and Private renters). These changes come into effect from June 1st 2026.

### **So what are the changes?**

The contract for your rental property is changing.

Your contract must contain new information ('terms') that means a landlord cannot discriminate against you if you claim benefits or have a child live with you or visit your home.

Key points:

- Landlords may continue to limit children in properties in some circumstances, for example if it would mean your home would be overcrowded. This is no different than current practice - if you're able to have children live with or visit you now, this will not change.
- Landlords must contact you to let you know by 14th June 2026, in person, by post or by email (where you've said it's ok to email you). If you have not heard from them by this date, you should contact them.
- When they contact you, they will give you either a new copy of your contract or a written statement of what has changed.
- These changes apply to all existing and new contracts.

- For most people, these changes won't really impact you but will ensure you have new legal rights.

More detailed information from the Welsh Government can be found [here](#).

Key to note: 'child' in this context means a person under the age of 18

## So what does that mean for you?

The new terms in your contract are unlikely to change anything for you immediately, but it does mean it's now protected in law. Landlords are not allowed to discriminate against you if you claim benefits or have a child live with you or visit your home.

As standard practice, social landlords are already committed to treating people claiming benefits and with children fairly and without discrimination. If there are currently restrictions on children in your accommodation, these are likely to still apply. For example, if you currently cannot have children at the property because of the size of the property or the type of property - such as accommodation for older people - this would continue to be the case when your contract changes too.

This is because the law says any restriction must be a "proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim".

Examples of 'legitimate aim' may include:

- Overcrowding
- Health and safety concerns
- The type of accommodation being unsuitable e.g. older people's housing
- Specialist accommodation, such as for those being treated for substance misuse.

If in doubt, speak to your landlord.

## FAQs

### **Do I have a choice about these new contract changes, and do I need to do anything to confirm it?**

The changes apply to all occupation contracts for all renters. They are designed to protect tenants from discrimination. The law only allows them to be removed or modified, with both landlord and tenant permission, if it would leave the tenant better off. This is unlikely to be the case for most tenants. If you are unsure, please speak to your landlord. You will not need to do anything, such as sign anything, to confirm it.

**Can my children or step children move in with me now? Can I adopt or start fostering?**

**Will I need to formally notify landlords if children begin living with me?**

This will depend on your specific circumstances. If there was a legitimate reason that was in place before through your contract or the landlord's policy (e.g. size of property or type of housing) then this is likely to continue to apply even with the new legislation. Under most occupation contracts, you are expected to tell your landlord about any significant changes to your household, including if children, stepchildren, foster children, or other family members begin living with you on a permanent or long-term basis.

You should refer to your contract and your landlord's policies and ask them for help if you're unsure.

**Could I be downsized as a result of this change?**

No, your contract will have the same protections as it does now.

**Can I bid for a social housing property, or apply for houseswap, if I have children?**

Yes, this is standard practice. Restrictions only apply if the property is unsuitable e.g. too small or specially built for older people.

**What if I live in sheltered accommodation?**

If you live in sheltered accommodation for older people, and children are not currently permitted to live in your property, this is likely to continue to be the case. This is because your landlord may consider this necessary to ensure a suitable environment for all the residents or due to legal requirements. If you have any concerns, you should contact your landlord.

**How are social landlords communicating these changes to tenants, especially those with additional needs?**

Landlords will give you written confirmation of these changes by 14th June, confirming what is changing and why and, where relevant, signposting additional resources that are available. Tenants with particular needs will continue to be supported as appropriate.

**What should I do if I believe I am being discriminated against despite these new rights?**

You should raise these concerns with your landlord in the first instance. For further advice, the Welsh Government guidance suggests you contact Shelter Cymru.

**Are there any scenarios where benefit claims could still indirectly affect tenancy decisions?**

A landlord cannot discriminate against you on the basis of being a benefit claimant. They are still able to undertake affordability assessments to ensure you can afford to pay the rent. These checks should consider all sources of income fairly, including wages, pensions, maintenance payments, and benefits.