

## Healthy homes standards finalised

14 May 2019

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The standards first released in February set minimum requirements for heating, insulation, ventilation, moisture and drainage, and draught stopping in rental properties.

### The healthy homes standards (HHS)

- **Heating** - The main living room must have one or more fixed qualifying heaters, which provide at least the required heating capacity to heat the main living room to at least 18°C and be capable of maintaining this temperature during the coldest days of winter. The new regulations clarify the requirements for heating devices – some will not meet the requirements under the heating standard as they are inefficient, unaffordable or unhealthy. A heating assessment tool will be provided in July 2019, which will assist with determining the heating capacity required for the main living room at rental premises, including a boarding house. When used correctly this tool will confirm if existing heating devices will meet the standard or what heating options will meet the heating standard if installed. Landlords will be encouraged to seek professional assistance when required.
- **Insulation** - The minimum level of ceiling and underfloor insulation must either meet the 2008 Building Code, or (for existing ceiling insulation) have a minimum thickness of 120mm and be in reasonable condition with no dampness, damage or displacement. The new regulations also specify where insulation exemption applies.
- **Ventilation** - Ventilation must include openable windows or doors in each habitable space. The windows or doors must comprise at least 5% of the floor area of that space. An appropriately sized extraction fan or rangehood must be installed in rooms with a bath or shower or indoor cooktop.
- **Moisture ingress** - If a rental property has an enclosed subfloor space, it must have an on-ground moisture barrier, which will stop moisture rising into the home.
- **Drainage** - The standards reinforce existing law that says landlords must have adequate drainage and guttering.
- **Draught stopping** - Any gaps or holes in walls, ceilings, windows, floors and doors that cause unreasonable draughts must be blocked. As a part of this requirement, landlords will have to block the fireplace or chimney of an open fireplace unless the tenant and landlord agree otherwise.
- **Compliance timeframes:**
  - 1 July 2021 – From this date, private landlords must ensure that their rental properties comply with HHS within 90 days of any new, or renewed, tenancy.
  - 1 July 2021 – All boarding houses (except Housing New Zealand and Community Housing Provider boarding house tenancies) must comply with the HHS.
  - 1 July 2023 – All Housing New Zealand houses and Community Housing providers must comply with the HHS.
  - 1 July 2024 – All rental homes must comply with the HHS.

From 1 July 2019, landlords will also be required to:

- keep records that demonstrate compliance with any healthy homes standards that apply or will apply during the tenancy; and

- include a separately signed statement of intent to comply with the Healthy Homes Standards in any new, varied or renewed tenancy agreement.

The 2016 insulation requirements remain in force. From 1 July 2019, ceiling and underfloor insulation will be compulsory in all rental homes where installation is reasonably practicable.

[View the new Healthy Homes Standards Regulations](#)

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2019/0088/latest/whole.html>

[View the healthy homes standards key facts \[PDF, 298 KB\]](#) (<http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/files/healthy-homes-standards-key-facts.pdf>)

To keep up to date with important information regarding legislation changes that affect landlords and tenants, including the healthy homes standards, [sign up to our Tenancy Matters](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/#subscribe) (<http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/#subscribe>) e-newsletter, or [follow us on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/tenancynz/) (<https://www.facebook.com/tenancynz/>).