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Yorkshire's Legal People

COMPLETE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

Proposed Renters (Reform) Bill – 2024 Update

The private rented sector has long been anticipating the Renters (Reform) Bill which is to set out significant reforms affecting tenants, letting agents and landlords.

The majority of the changes are being introduced to provide further security to tenants. Landlords are hoping for a more streamlined and defined system which is currently fraught with procedural difficulties.

It was first introduced to Parliament in May 2023 and has been the subject of a number of debates due to its headline proposal to abolish the Section 21 (“no fault”) evictions. It has now finally entered the report stage with some key amendments which we have summarised below. It will then await its third reading in the House of Commons before moving to the House of Lords.

Proposals :

- Section 21 "no fault" evictions to be abolished. The proposals are that landlords will only be able to evict tenants under reasonable circumstances. In October 2023 this was stalled by the suggestion by the government that this would only be possible once significant progress has been made to improve the courts. This is an wide statement however, for those unfortunate enough to have experienced the court possession system, will be welcomed if at all possible. The currently system is subject to ambiguous procedural guidelines and extensive delays. The improvements have been outlined as follows :
 - o Digital platform for issuing and managing possession claims
 - o Priority system for when anti-social behaviour is involved

How and when these ‘improvements’ are to be implemented is yet to be seen.

- Section 8 evictions to be ‘strengthened’ as follows :
 - o A ground for if a landlord wishes to sell the property
 - o A ground if the landlord requires the property to rent to a family member, and;
 - o A mandatory ground for repeated rent arrears. This would enable a landlord to obtain possession if a tenant has been in at least two months’ rent arrears three times within the previous three years irrespective of what is outstanding at the date of the possession hearing.

For more information about how we can help you please contact:



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There are also proposals regarding extended notice periods for proposed rent increases, increased rights for tenants wishing to keep pets in properties and an new ombudsman to cover all private landlords.

When?

There is still a long way to go and the suggested 'court improvements', whilst necessary, have effectively kicked the matter into the long grass for the time being. The government has committed to passing the Bill by before the next general election but this is looking increasingly unlikely.

For now, the current procedures remain and require careful consideration from the outset of a tenancy, whether you are a landlord seeking possession of a property, or a tenant who has received a notice and is unsure as to whether this has been served correctly, or wishes to dispute the eviction.

Our Complete Property Solutions team has experience from both the landlord and tenant perspective. If you wish to discuss with us further, please contact our Property Litigation team on 0800 015 0340 or send details to:

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