

# Safety at properties



There are rules that let people make changes to their rental agreements if they are experiencing violence by someone who is on the rental agreement.

Renters' rights and responsibilities in a family violence situation:

## Changing the locks

If you are a protected person and have a safety notice or intervention order protecting you, and it says the renter who was violent cannot enter the rental property, you can change the locks. You do not need permission from the rental provider (landlord or agent), and your name does not have to be on the lease. If you do not have a safety notice or intervention order excluding the renter who was violent, you will need the rental provider's permission to change the locks.

## Leaving the rental property (breaking the lease)

If you are a protected person under an intervention order and want to leave the property to ensure your safety or the safety of your children, you can apply to VCAT to end the lease early.

## Staying in the rental property

If you want to stay in the property without the excluded tenant, you can apply to VCAT to end the existing lease and start a new lease with

the landlord with the same conditions and rent. The new lease would be for the remaining lease period.

## Property damage and repairs

If the rental property gets damaged because of family violence, it is important to get this repaired. If the damage is not repaired when you leave the property, you may lose part or all of your bond money. You may be able to get help with repairs from a family violence support service.

## Installing safety features in the property

If you need extra security devices to stay safe in the rental property – for example, an alarm system or security screen door – discuss this with the rental provider (landlord or agent) first. You will need the rental provider's permission to make changes to the property. A family violence support service may also help you get security features installed, as part of a safety plan.

## Rental provider ending an agreement

A rental provider (landlord or agent) cannot make you move out just because you are experiencing family violence. They can only end your rental agreement for specific reasons.