

A guide to property licensing for tenants and neighbours

If you rent your home from a private landlord, or you live in an area where there are privately rented properties, then recent changes in the law for Croydon will be of interest to you. This guide will tell you how these changes may affect you and what you need to know about property licensing.

There are privately rented properties in most areas and whilst many are well managed and don't cause problems in local communities, sometimes anti-social behaviour or a general lack of property management raises concerns for local residents and also private tenants.

Changes in the law now mean that Croydon Council can provide better regulation of private landlords. Landlords will obtain more support and advice to manage their properties well and problems with poor tenancy management will be tackled.

What is Croydon Private Rented Property Licensing?

Croydon Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme (CPRPL) was introduced in October 2015 and requires all landlords operating in Croydon to licence their properties in order to rent them out. This is in addition to the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licence that was already in operation in Croydon.

What areas does it include?

This mandatory licensing scheme encompasses the whole borough and every privately rented property in Croydon.

What standards will a landlord have to meet to obtain a licence?

The licence holder must pass a "fit and proper" test, detailed in the Housing Act 2004. This involves the council looking at any convictions which a landlord may have and their past history as a landlord.

The property must be well maintained. The landlord must deal fairly with tenants and comply with the laws on renting out properly.

The licence holder must take appropriate action when informed of any anti-social behaviour by their tenants.

A copy of the licence conditions, issued to licence holders can be found in selective licensing guide online at www.croydon.gov.uk/betterplacetorent

What should I do if I am a private tenant?

It is in your interest to find out if your landlord has obtained a licence. You can do this by visiting our dedicated webpage or contact our Property licensing team at propertylicensing@croydon.gov.uk or 0208 726 6103

What if I think the standards are not being met?

You can make a complaint about a privately rented property or landlord at any time. If there are problems at the property or you believe the owner or landlord is not a “fit and proper” person, please contact us at propertylicensing@croydon.gov.uk and we will investigate your complaint.

If I make a complaint, do I have to give my details?

The team will need to take some details from you otherwise we will not be able to deal with your complaint. However, all information you give to us, will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be passed on without your permission.

Will the landlord be able to evict me if I complain?

The landlord cannot evict you illegally if you make a complaint to the property licensing team. Furthermore if you make a complaint about disrepair in your property and an improvement notice has been served by the council, a Section 21 Notice cannot be served for 6 months and the landlord is obliged to carry out the works.

If this happens, you must contact the council immediately, who will provide help and support. If your landlord does not have a licence and should have one, then the law states that they must not serve you with a notice to terminate your assured shorthold tenancy.

What happens to my tenancy if the landlord is refused a licence or has their licence taken from them?

Nothing. Your tenancy is not at risk just because of action taken against your landlord. An interim Management Order may be made against the property if the landlord cannot be licensed and this means that a suitable landlord (likely a registered social landlord or the council) may take over management of your tenancy. If you are worried please contact the property licensing team for advice.

What do I do if I live near to a privately rented house and I want to find out if the landlord has a licence?

Members of the public are entitled to find out if a property has a licence and you do this by emailing our property licensing team.

What should I do if I suspect a landlord is operating without a licence?

You should contact our property licensing team as soon as possible who will take the details and investigate.

Where can I find more information about Croydon Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme?

Please visit our dedicated webpage www.croydon.gov.uk/betterplacetorent which contains full information about the scheme and useful downloads.