

# MANAGING TENANT DAMAGE

## BEST PRACTICE GUIDE



This guide explains the approach landlords within the CEHL Co-op Housing program will take in order to prevent damage to a property and resolve any damage caused by a tenant, household member, pet or visitor.

The tenant, the co-op and CEHL all have roles to play in making sure that properties are well maintained and free from damage. The best approach to help achieve this is to follow processes that embed a culture of caring for the property, minimising the potential for damage and monitoring and acting on damage as quickly as possible.

If, during the tenancy, damage is caused by the tenant, a household member, pet or visitor, this document outlines the actions required by both Landlords and Tenants to repair the damage.

### LANDLORD ACTIONS

#### At the beginning of each tenancy the Landlord will:

- Ensure the property is reasonably clean and in good repair, with all appliances in working order
- Document the condition of the property on a Condition Report and take photographs
- Ensure new tenants are informed about how to operate and maintain appliances (eg: cleaning filters)
- Give clear information about how to lodge maintenance requests

#### During the tenancy the Landlord will:

- Respond to maintenance requests in appropriate timeframes
- Inspect the property on a regular basis and draw up maintenance plans

### Preventing property damage

[inspections fact sheet](#)

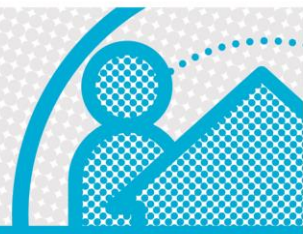
### TENANT ACTIONS

#### At the beginning of each tenancy the Tenant will:

- Confirm and sign the Condition Report
- Report any repairs identified during the move-in period
- Ensure that all household members are aware of how to operate and maintain each appliance (eg: cleaning filters)

#### During the tenancy the Tenant will:

- Ensure routine cleaning and maintenance is kept up to date
- Ensure that all rooms are free from clutter that might promote mould growth, and windows and blinds are opened each day.
- Take measures to minimise risk of damage by children or pets (eg: plastic mats under high chairs, scratching posts for cats)
- Ensure that the Landlord can access the property for routine inspections as required



## LANDLORD ACTIONS

**If a Landlord identifies property damage during a routine inspection, the Landlord will:**

- Discuss concerns about the damage and possible solutions with tenant during inspection
- Document damage on an Inspection Sheet and take photographs
- Refer the tenant to the “Referral to Support” service for assistance in meeting their tenancy obligations.
- Where the damage is considered urgent, conduct repairs within 24 hours
- Discuss repayment arrangements for the cost of urgent repairs
- Send a letter to the tenant describing how the tenant should remedy the damage including specific tasks, payments and timeframes
- Send a notice of a follow-up Inspection

## Reporting property damage

[inspections fact sheet](#)

## TENANT ACTIONS

**If a tenant or their visitor causes property damage, the Tenant will:**

- Report the damage to Landlord immediately
- Make arrangements with the Landlord to remedy the damage, which may include asking the Landlord to arrange repairs and set up a repayment plan
- Provide a police Report when reporting the damage to the Landlord which is a result of criminal activity by someone who is not a household member
- Ensure all repairs required are carried out in the agreed timeframe and in a professional manner

### **If damage by a tenant is not resolved:**

A Breach of Duty Notice ([here](#)) may be issued in accordance with the Breach of Duty Procedure ([here](#)) if a solution is not reached, accompanied by a permission form to be referred to the Referral to Support Service.

A compliance order will be sought on the first VCAT hearing and a Referral to Support offered made to assist the tenant to comply.

A possession order will only be sought if the damage reported is malicious, repeated or the result of using the property for illegal activity. In this case the Program Policy for Ending a Tenancy (Landlord Initiated) would be followed.