

Media Release

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NEW COMPLAINT FORM TO TACKLE DODGY RENTALS

Victorians who suspect properties available for rent are being falsely advertised or do not meet minimum standards can now alert Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) directly through a new complaint form online.

Victorians looking for a rental property are urged to use the form to report concerns, a process that only takes about five minutes to complete and can be submitted anonymously.

Backed by the Allan Labor Government's \$4 million renting taskforce, the form will make it easier to report issues with properties being put up for rent – including inaccurate descriptions or images used to advertise the property, and breaches of rental minimum standards such as the lack of a functional kitchen or lockable external doors.

Significant penalties will apply to estate agents and residential rental providers who do the wrong thing, with maximum penalties for individuals exceeding more than \$11,000 and \$57,000 for businesses. Higher penalties can also apply under the Australian Consumer Law for misleading advertisements or other false representations.

Prospective renters, real estate professionals and other members of the public can all use the rental property report form after inspecting a property in person or online, allowing them to provide evidence of their complaint including uploading photos to show the difference between the property advertisement and the property at inspection.

Allowing a new renter to move into a rental property that doesn't meet minimum standards is a criminal offence and evidence in the form will support the renting taskforce's work to monitor compliance with the law and target inspections and enforcement action.

The renting taskforce will be embedded within CAV, with recruitment currently underway for extra intelligence analysts, investigators and lawyers.

The new reporting form builds on the Labor Government's Housing Statement, which pledges to ban all types of rental bidding, restricting rent increases between successive fixed-term rental agreements, and delivering the recently announced \$7.8 million Rental Stress Support Package to support tenants doing it tough.

To access the advertised rental property report form, visit consumer.vic.gov.au/rental-listing.

Renters wanting to raise issues with their current rental properties can continue to use the general enquiry form at consumer.vic.gov.au/contact-us/resolve-your-problem/general-enquiry.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"Anyone with concerns that a property up for rent is not being advertised fairly or does not meet the legal minimum standards for a safe and secure home can now more easily alert Consumer Affairs Victoria."

"The rental complaint form is backed by our renting taskforce and rental minimum standards campaign. These measures are making our rental market fairer for all Victorians and ensuring that all rental properties can be called a home."

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