



Media release

Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport
The Honourable Mick de Brenni

Sunday, April 19, 2020

Fair middle ground reached on COVID-19 guidelines for property owners and tenants

The Palaszczuk Government has worked with industry stakeholders to establish Guidelines to support Queensland's approach to implement the moratorium on evictions decided by National Cabinet.

Minister for Housing and Public Works Mick de Brenni said that the government had taken into account concerns from Queensland property owners and tenants; and was bolstering its support to make sure that everyone could get through this difficult time.

"The Palaszczuk Government is a government that listens and will be there for those who need us most when times are tough.

"Queensland has published a framework on the government's new www.covid19.qld.gov.au (<http://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/>) website, setting out the process for interaction pending the development of an implementation Guideline which has been fleshed out with stakeholders this week.

"Working with industry stakeholders, a Residential Tenancies Practice Guide COVID-19 for property owners and tenants has been developed.

"The Guide will support owners on a range of COVID-19 issues along with free, impartial and expert conciliation from the Residential Tenancies Authority if parties need additional support to reach agreement.

"Tenants and property owners in significant financial distress are also being supported through a \$20 million rental grant package, announced with the framework over a week ago.

"As a final step, amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act will be introduced in Parliament to enable the emergency measures.

Mr de Brenni announced that the Residential Tenancies Authority, Real Estate Institute of Queensland, QShelter, Tenants Queensland and QCOSS will form a new COVID-19 Housing Security Sub-Committee.

"The Palaszczuk Government has established the COVID-19 Housing Security Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Housing Council to oversee the implementation of the response measures."

A summary of the Guidelines includes:

- Threshold criteria to qualify for the application of the COVID-19 rental response, that includes a 25 per cent reduction in income, or where rent exceeds 30 per cent of the tenant's income.

- Tenants can be asked to provide the same proof of finances to property managers just as they would when starting a tenancy.
- Clear guidance on access for the sale of the property, virtual rental inspections and access for essential repairs and maintenance.
- A 75 per cent income loss threshold before a tenant can end a tenancy with a 7-day cap on break lease fees.
- Limiting any extension on the term of a tenancy agreement during the COVID-19 period to September 30, 2020 unless agreed otherwise by the owner and tenant, or there is an appropriate ground to end the tenancy.

ENDS

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