

Certificates and safety checks

This information is for private landlords. Private tenants can find information and advice [here](#).

Your property must meet [fitness and safety standards](#). Keep your records up to date to show that your property meets these standards.

This page explains the certificates and safety checks you may need.

Fitness certificate

If your property was built before 1945, you must apply for a fitness certificate to prove it meets these standards, unless:

- the Housing Executive gave you a renovation grant within the last 10 years, or
- your property is a registered or licensed [house in multiple occupation \(HMO\)](#)

In these cases, your property is a 'prescribed dwelling' and you do not need a fitness certificate.

To get a fitness certificate, [apply to your local environmental health department for a fitness inspection](#). [The law says](#) you must do this within 28 days of starting a tenancy.

Fitness inspection

An environmental health officer will check the property to make sure it meets basic fitness standards.

If the property passes the inspection, the officer issues a certificate of fitness.

If the property fails the inspection, you will:

- receive a notice of refusal
- be [unable to charge the full amount of rent](#)
- need to carry out repairs to meet fitness standards

After you finish the repairs, you can apply for re-inspection.

Gas safety record

If your property has any gas appliances, you are [legally required](#) to:

- maintain these appliances and fittings
- get them inspected every year by a [Gas Safe registered engineer](#)
- give tenants a copy of the gas safety record within 28 days of starting a new tenancy
- keep the gas safety record (and records of any gas-related works) for at least two years

You must have a valid gas safety record. [Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland](#) (HSENI) can prosecute landlords who do not meet gas safety standards.

Carbon monoxide detectors

If your property is a HMO, you must fit a carbon monoxide detector in any room with a fuel-burning appliance.

Non-HMO properties must follow [building regulations](#). This means that from 31 October 2012, you must fit a carbon monoxide detector when you install a new or replacement fuel-burning appliance.

HSENI recommends installing a carbon monoxide detector in all rooms that have:

- a gas boiler
- a gas or wood-burning stove
- an oil-burning heater
- an open fire

Make sure your tenants know where the detectors are, how to use them and [what to do in an emergency](#).

Fire safety responsibilities for landlords

If your property is a HMO, you must provide [specific fire safety equipment](#).

Currently, there is no legal requirement for landlords of non-HMO properties to install fire or smoke alarms. However, you should install fire alarms to:

- protect your tenants
- comply with your insurance policy
- comply with building regulations for newly built and converted properties

Any furniture you provide must have a label to show that it meets [fire safety standards](#). These standards only apply to furniture included in a tenancy after 1993.

Energy performance certificate (EPC)

Before marketing your property, you must have a valid energy performance certificate (EPC). [The law says](#) you must show any prospective tenants a copy of the EPC so they can see how energy efficient the property is.

First, [check if your property has a valid EPC](#) before applying for a new one. Failing to comply with these regulations can lead to prosecution and a fine.

Electrical safety requirements for landlords

If your property is a HMO, you must:

- test electrical systems and appliances with a qualified electrician every five years
- keep a copy of the [electrical installation condition report \(EICR\)](#)

Currently, there is no legal requirement for landlords of non-HMO properties to carry out regular electrical safety checks. However, you should arrange regular inspections to:

- protect your tenants
- prevent damage to your property
- comply with your insurance policy

Electrical Safety First has [an electrical safety checklist for landlords](#) for checking electrical systems and appliances between tenancies.

Upcoming changes to laws on safety in the private rented sector

[The Private Tenancies Act \(NI\)](#) became law in April 2022. This legislation aims to improve safety standards for fire and electrical safety, and energy efficiency.

Changes will only come into effect once further regulations are issued.

More advice

- [Rental property standards](#)
- [Landlord registration](#)

Footnotes