Housing Rights

https://www.housingrights.org.uk/landlords/tenancy-issues/hoarding

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Hoarding

This information is for private landlords of properties in Northern Ireland.

If you are a tenant, you can find advice here.

If you are a landlord or letting agent in Northern Ireland seeking advice, you can:

- send a message to Landlord Advice, or
- call 028 90 245 640 (Option 1)

You might be concerned about a tenant who has a lot of clutter. You may think that they have too much stuff and are guilty of hoarding.

Not all clutter is hoarding. But whether it's hoarding or not, it's important to get the matter sorted before it gets worse.

People can live with a lot of things in their home, without it amounting to hoarding. Many people collect things, and it is not hoarding.

But collecting a lot of things can amount to hoarding when it becomes:

- unmanageable due to the number of items
- difficult (or impossible) to let anything go or
- it interferes with a person's day-to-day living, e.g. washing, cooking, sleeping

Hoarding and mental health

Hoarding is not antisocial behaviour. Hoarding Disorder is a mental health condition. It can lead a person to collect lots of things, which they then find

difficult to let go of.

There are some mental health and neurodiverse conditions that can lead to hoarding. These include

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- ADHD

Someone who has Hoarding Disorder may:

- find it difficult to stop getting more items, even though it appears that they have more than enough
- become emotionally attached to what they have collected
- find that their quality of life is deteriorating because of the amount of stuff they have
- find it difficult to use some of the rooms or facilities in their home
- feel prevented from letting go of their items
- cause a risk to themselves and others with whom they live, or with neighbours

If you think that your tenant has a hoarding problem, they need help. This is an issue that goes beyond just clearing the property. Clearing the property will not necessarily solve the issue.

You could suggest to your tenant that they contact their GP in the first instance. Their GP might refer them to a mental health specialist.

Ending the tenancy

If the condition of the property gets to the point where you want to end the tenancy, it's important to do it the right way. You must follow the proper process for evicting the tenant.

Housing Rights has a mediation service for private landlords and tenants. This can help resolve housing disputes. Contact us if you think mediation might help in your situation.

More advice

- How to end a tenancy