

## **Starter Tenancies – a guide for new tenants**

### **What is a Starter tenancy?**

RSMHA gives all new tenants a Starter tenancy – except those moving from another landlord who already have an Assured or Secure tenancy. The Starter tenancy usually lasts for 12 months and will convert to an Assured tenancy at the end of the period if you have conducted your tenancy satisfactorily. Your tenancy agreement explains what rights and responsibilities you have. You should read it carefully before signing it.

### **What happens during the first 12 months?**

Our housing officer will visit you within a month of your tenancy starting and again six and nine months later. These visits are to check that everything is going smoothly and there are no problems in managing your tenancy.

### **What if there are problems?**

If there are problems in managing your tenancy, RSMHA will investigate to see if things can be sorted out and work with you to resolve the situation. If the problem is serious, or if you do not co-operate with us to find a solution, we may take steps to end your tenancy and you may lose your home. However, our wish is for your tenancy to succeed and we will not take action unless there is really no alternative.

Problems that may lead us to start proceedings to end a Starter tenancy include:

- behaving in an anti-social manner e.g. excessive or persistent noise, shouting, etc
- drug dealing or illegal use of drugs
- actual or threatened violence or abuse towards any person
- domestic violence
- harassment
- damaging the property
- dumping rubbish
- unkempt gardens
- carrying out car repairs, which cause a nuisance
- causing parking problems
- keeping and allowing pets to cause a nuisance
- clear non-payment of rent.

Starter Tenants have less security than Assured Tenants and it is likely that the Court will agree to end the tenancy in such circumstances

## What happens after 12 months?

At the end of the 12 months your Starter tenancy will automatically convert to an Assured tenancy, providing we have not started proceedings to end your tenancy or decided to extend your Starter tenancy. We will write to you to formally confirm this.

If RSMHA decides to extend the Starter tenancy for a further six months, we will write to you to inform you of this decision and the reasons why before the end of the first 12 months.

## What rights do Starter tenants have?

Tenants on a Starter tenancy have broadly the same rights as Assured tenants, but do not have the following:

- right to exchange (swap your home with another tenant)
- right to take in lodgers or sub-let part of the property
- right to make improvements to their home and claim compensation for them

Nb: RSMHA will also not usually allow a tenant on a Starter tenancy to transfer to another RSMHA property.

When your tenancy converts to an Assured tenancy you will then have the above rights.

## More information?

Please contact us

RSMHA, Rosemary House, Portsmouth Road, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AA

Tel. 01372 461440

Email [enquiries@rsmha.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsmha.org.uk):

**You may also wish to seek independent advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Local Authority housing advice team**