

# Renting Through



# Real Estate GC



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## Welcome

Congratulations! The owners approved you, as they are confident that you will maintain their property as if it were your own. As per the Residential Tenancy Act you will pay rent on time, keep the inside of the property clean and maintain the lawns and garden if applicable. We have made this booklet to help you with your tenancy and also help assist you with having the right expectations during your tenancy with us.

## Before you move in

Make sure you have pre-scheduled for your electricity, phone, gas, Internet, contents insurance etc to be connected on the day you move into the property. You should call your provider and inform them when you are moving. Please let the provider know the correct move in date and the correct address of the property.

**Gas and Power** – when inspecting the rental property, you will need to take a note if you will need electricity, gas or both.

**Telephone, NBN and Internet Connection** – under QLD legislation, the landlord does not have to provide an active line. The installation of NBN phone line requires a battery; this battery will need to be replaced at the end of the tenancy, approximately \$45.

**Pay TV** – you must receive approval from the landlord if a satellite dish is to be installed. If you are about to rent a unit you will need both the landlord and Body Corporate approvals.

**Contents Insurance** – why do you need your own insurance? The landlord has their own insurance but this insurance does not cover your own personal belongings. Should your belongings be damaged or destroyed by circumstances affecting the owner's property (storm, fire, flood etc) then your possessions are NOT covered by the owners insurance. For example: if an electrical fault within the building triggers a fire and the property is destroyed. Your possessions will not be covered by the owners insurance. Quality Tenant Contents Insurance should cover your goods and we recommend you check with your insurance company. It is your responsibility to ensure your possessions are adequately insured and the owner/agent will not be liable for damaged or destroyed tenant possessions.

**The owners building or landlord insurance does not cover fire damage to your possessions.**

## Appointment to Sign Paperwork

You have received the phone call or email to say the owner has approved your application. To ensure you have the right expectations regarding the start of your tenancy and the induction process, we ask you to observe the following important points:

**Keeping your Appointment Time** – Property Managers are not always in the office as they are often performing inspections and can therefore not always reschedule at short notice.

**Appointment Time Allocation** – as we need to explain all of your tenancy details thoroughly, please allocate up to one hour.

**All Persons to be Present** – unless otherwise pre-organised or pre-advised, please ensure all applicants are available to sign the paperwork.

**Initial Payment** – the minimum of one weeks rent will need to be receipted immediately after you have signed and agreed to all terms and conditions in the tenancy agreement. We will not accept a personal or business cheque, however, money orders or bank cheques – made out to Real Estate GC, will be accepted. If you opt to pay by cash, please ensure you have the correct amount, as we do not offer change.

During this appointment we will be going through the following:

**Tenancy Agreement** – we will ask you to double-check your personal information (spelling, mobile numbers etc) and ensure all details are correct. We will explain each section of the tenancy agreement.

**Payment of Rent** – we will provide you with our Trust Account details and the reference that you must use. It is extremely important that you don't make up your own reference.

**Invoices from us to you Process** – for example, if you are charged water, we will invoice you for your usage. Under the legislation you have up to 30 days to pay this invoice in full. It is extremely important that you do not pay these invoices with your rent. When you receive an invoice, you will receive a reference. We have zero tolerance for late payments.

### **Can I pay my 2<sup>nd</sup> weeks rent and bond prior to picking up the keys?**

You can pay the full amount at this appointment. If you are not picking up your keys for a few more days you can pay the 2<sup>nd</sup> weeks rent and bond by bank transfer, please ensure you inform your property manager of this, as they will need to give you a reference for the bond. If your deposit has not shown up in our Trust Account on the day you are due to pick up the keys, you will not be handed the keys. Please ensure your bond is receipted into our trust account prior to coming to pick up the keys. Call the office and we can give you this information.

**Rental Arrears Process** – we have zero tolerance for late rent payments; please see our rental arrears process.

## Rental Arrears Process

Rent arrears are one of the most contentious issues between agents and landlords. Most agents will NOT address tenants arrears until they have the legal obligation to do so on the eighth day. Real Estate GC begin the arrears process on the first day from the tenants due date for payment. This process allows our office to keep rental arrears at an industry low of between 1%-2%.

### **Extract from the Residential & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008**

S280 Notice to remedy tenants breach

- (1) This section applies if the lessor believes on reasonable grounds that –
- (a) The rent payable under the agreement has remained unpaid in breach of the agreement for at least 7 days

#### **Day One, Two and Three**

(From the date the rent was due)

A gentle reminder is sent via SMS to the tenant

#### **Day Four**

(From the date the rent was due)

A phone call is placed to ascertain the reason for non-payment

#### **Day Five**

(From the date the rent was due)

This matter is now serious

#### **Day Six**

(From the date the rent was due)

A phone call is placed to the tenant reminding them of their obligations under the Tenancy Agreement and how it affects their rental history records

#### **Day Seven**

(From the date the rent was due)

A phone call is placed and sms sent advising the tenant that a Notice to Remedy Breach will be issued unless rent is paid in full by the start of the business the following day.

#### **Day Eight**

(From the date the rent was due)

Owner is contacted for approval to commence with procedure. Tenant is issued a form 11 – Notice to Remedy Breach for failure to pay rent giving them 7 days to remedy the breach. If payment is made in full, the Breach is deemed remedied and tenancy continues as normal. This remedy will stay as a black mark against the tenant's records and show on the tenant ledger.

#### **Day Sixteen**

(From the date the rent was due if tenants are on email)

Should the tenant reach this day without making full payment of outstanding rent, a Form 12 – Notice to Leave is issued giving them 7 days to vacate the premises. If full payment is made during this notice period the Lessor is notified of the situation seeking their instructions. If the tenant does not make full payment and fails to vacate the premises, an application to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal is lodged seeking a Warrant of Possession.

**Disclaimer:** Real Estate Gold Coast strictly adheres to the above procedure, however, in the event of unforeseen circumstances or where the allocated days fall on a weekend or public holiday, there may be some variation in the service days.

## Picking up the keys

A set of keys will be provided for each tenant that is legally responsible for this tenancy. Please do not ask for a set of keys prior to your tenancy start date as keys will not be handed out for legal and security reasons.

**Appointment Time Allocation** – an appointment is required, as we need to explain the entry condition report, explain why we do routine inspections and how often we perform these inspections, provide you with keys, provide you with documentation and a copy of the “Pocket Guide for Tenants – Housing and Units”. Please allow up to 20 minutes.

**Phone numbers** – please add to your contacts in your mobile phone: Real Estate GC Katrina Morris 0488212167.

**Tenancy Start Date** – your tenancy start date has commenced as per your tenancy agreement

**Balance of Payment** – Rent and Bond – the balance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> weeks rent will need to be receipted. This is not entered in as being 2 weeks in advance. Depending on when you next pay your rent will determine if you stay in advance. Generally, tenants will pay the following week and have therefore used 1 week’s rent. Four weeks rent will need to be receipted for your bond. Your bond will be lodged with the Residential Tenancy Authority (RTA). The RTA will issue you a bond number in due course.

**We will not accept a personal or business cheque however, money orders or bank cheques – made out to Real Estate Gold Coast will be accepted. If you opt to pay by cash please ensure you have the right amount, as we do not offer change.**

## Moving In

**Changing Address** – you will need to advise your financial organisations. Transport Department, Electoral Commission, etc.

**Keys, Remotes and Locks** – we do have another set of keys at our office. If you have misplaced your set of keys, you may pick up our set and go get a new set cut at your cost. If you lock your keys inside your property, you can pick up our set and retrieve your keys. Our office set **MUST** be returned within 24 hours. If you wish to copy your keys, it is important to note we will need back all keys given to you at the start of your tenancy and all extra copies made during your tenancy period. You are not permitted to change any locks within the rental premises without approval. If approval has been organised, you must provide our office with a key. Garage remotes given to you will only equate to the number of parking spaces. For example, if you rent a property with a 2-car garage then you will receive 2 remotes. The remotes must be in working condition when returned at the end of your tenancy.

**Entry report** – before moving items into your new premises, please take the time to audit the entry report. Please do not add maintenance items to this report. This report is a record of the condition of the property when handed to you. If you add a comment onto the entry report, please provide your property manager with a photo. All maintenance is to be in writing, please complete a maintenance form. You only have 3 days to make any additional comments, sign and return to our office. If we do not receive your entry report by the close of our business on the third day, your report will not be valid.

## During your Tenancy

**General Repairs** – We insist that all maintenance is in writing. You can email your property manager at [rentals@regc.com.au](mailto:rentals@regc.com.au) and complete a maintenance form.

**After Hours** – if the repair is urgent and requires after hours attention, please text your name, address and a brief description to the after hours number 0488212167, or contact the after hours repair people listed on your tenancy agreement.

**Emergency items are generally those that could cause injury to the tenant or damage to the property and may include:**

- Water pipes – burst or broken
- Water pooling outside the property. Please always check the water meter at the property. If the water meter is not ticking over then it becomes a GCCC issue. Please report this to GCCC. When checking the meter, please ensure no water is being used in the property.
- Blocked or broken toilet (only if there is no other toilet)
- Serious roof leak or gas leak
- Dangerous electrical fault, dangerous PowerPoint, loose live wires etc.
- Flooding, rainwater inundation inside the property or serious flood damage
- Serious storm, fire or impact damage (i.e. impact by a motor vehicle)
- Failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the premises. If you have no water going to your home, please double check with the GCCC, as there could be work in your area. This is the same with power, check with Energex as there could be works in your area.
- Hot water service failure. Please advise if your hot water is Solar (tank and panels on the roof), electric or gas. Please refer to the checklist for hot water. We need to know if the issue is electrical or plumbing.
- Fault or damage that makes the premises unsafe or insecure
- Fault likely to injure a person, cause damage or extreme inconvenience

If the above happens during work hours, please contact the office to let them know you have lodged a maintenance request, as your property manager may not be in the office to attend to the issue. **NB: if it is found that the maintenance / repair is a result of the occupant, you will be charged instead of the owner, e.g. a blocked toilet due to using wipes etc.**

## Hot Water Checklist

Follow this checklist before you contact the office.

### **If you have no hot water at all:**

Please check the meter box to ensure the hot water is switched on. If on an off-peak tariff 33, you may need to wait until you have power supply to reheat it. If you are on solar hot water, you may have an internal “booster switch”. This switch could just look like a normal light switch or it may have a red light. If your booster switch does have a red light and the light is off it means there is no power getting to the system.

- Check the hot water system to ensure it does not have a leak – plumber may be required
- If the fuse keeps tripping in the meter box this generally indicates there is a leak around the element of the hot water system – an electrician may be required
- If you can release the HT55 valve (a valve with a lever) and the water is hotter than the water coming out of your taps, this generally indicates fault with the tempering valve. This valve will generally have a black, yellow, blue or red plastic knob – plumber may be required

If none of the above is applicable it could be a faulty thermostat – electrician may be required

Call our office on 0488212167 and we will arrange for an electrician or plumber to attend. If after hours, please refer to your tenancy agreement for emergency repairs and trades people contact numbers.

If there is physically no water coming out of your taps this would indicate the water is turned off or if this happens during winter it could be frost. If it is frost related, continue to run your hot water and eventually the pipes will unfreeze OR the mains water supply could be temporarily turned off due to works in the area.

### **Hot water but short supply**

This can be due to any number of things but the most common problem is steam build up in the unit. Please follow the instructions below. If the problem persists, please call us and we may need to have the thermostat or element checked.

- Please locate the pressure relief valve on the hot water service
- When you have located this you will need to grip the small handle and pull it firmly up to release the pressure inside the hot water unit

- There will be an outlet pipe from the hot water unit to the ground, please watch this pipe, steam and then water will flow from this pipe. When this happens, keep pulling the lever until water flows freely from the pipe, this will allow the unit to fill with water
- You will need to repeat this for a couple of days to ensure the tank fills to the top with water to enable the unit to operate correctly.
- Please be extra careful when you release the relief valve (HT 55) the water coming out can be very hot.
- Units will quite often have the HWS in a cupboard, please be aware of where it is situated and check it is not leaking. Please also check the tray underneath to ensure there is no water sitting there.

## Routine Inspections

We will conduct a routine inspection every 3-4 months. The purpose of this inspections is to: provide a written report to the owner on the condition of the property, report any maintenance, check on previous repairs and to make sure you are looking after the property.

Photos – we will be taking photos of the routine inspections. Photos are mainly of the walls, ceilings, floors, gardens, showers, vanities, kitchen bench tops, cabinetry, appliances, pool, pool fence, fences etc. and maintenance items. It is legal to take photos as they are used to show the owner maintenance and that the property is being maintained.

### Routine Inspections Guide

What we look for inside the property:

- Walls/doorways and doors are clean from marks and free of damage
- The carpets are clean and stain free and free of damage
- The windows and screens are clean and free of pet damage (e.g. claw marks from cats on screens)
- The kitchen area is clean and the oven/stove is free of burnt food or build up of grease
- Shower, bathroom and toilet, laundry and all tiling is clean and free of damage
- All areas and rooms are full accessible (not locked)

### What we look for on the outside of the property:

- The lawns and hedges are to be maintained and gardens to be tidy and weed free – please refer below on maintaining lawns and gardens – if your tenancy includes monthly maintenance, it is still your responsibility to maintain between mows
- Lawn clippings are not to be placed in the garden beds
- All droppings and rubbish needs to be removed from the property
- No unregistered cars to be on the property or on the road
- Oil stains removed from carports, garages and driveways
- All areas, garages, store rooms etc are all accessible
- Swimming pool/spa – water and sides/bottom are clean – if your tenancy includes monthly maintenance, it is still your responsibility to maintain between cleans

If you have an approved pet, ensure the pet is restrained during the inspection

## Maintaining Gardens & Lawns

- Water the gardens and lawns weekly, more in summer conditions. The best time to do this is in the morning.
- Mow the lawns at least 1-2 times a fortnight.
- Weed and fertilise the garden and lawns regularly.

Special Terms as set down by the RTA in your Tenancy Agreement, Standard Term 46 Care of the Premises by the Tenants Section (d): maintain the lawns and gardens at the premises having regard to their condition at the commencement of the tenancy, including mowing the lawns, weeding the gardens and watering the lawns and gardens (subject to council water restrictions).

## Taking Care – Inside of the Property

**Property Damage** – if property damage occurs during your tenancy you are obligated to let us know immediately or on the next business day if occurring on a weekend or public holiday. Send an email and photos to your property manager.

**Noise/Disruption** – in the case of unit complexes, particular care must be taken with respect to noise due to the close proximity of other properties, usually located on the other side of the wall. This also includes your obligation to ensure that your visitors are not disrupting neighbours when walking from your premises to their parked vehicles.

**Air conditioning** – please regularly clean any filters and intake vents to ensure there is no build-up of dirt and dust and that the unit is able to draw in air effectively, not hindering performance or in the worst case scenario, causing the unit to break down resulting in costly repairs and/or replacement. Please also note that if an air conditioner breaks down due to filters and vents not being kept clean, costs to rectify the damage or even replacement will be charged to the tenant.

**Pot plants** – if there is any damage to the flooring from the pot plants e.g. circular indent, water stains etc you will be responsible for the repair/replacement.

**No smoking within the property** – all properties have a strict “No Smoking Inside” policy. If you are a smoker, you can smoke outside. Please note, some unit complexes may have a no smoking policy and you will therefore need to smoke in designated areas set out by Body Corporate.

**Tenant Painting** – it is company policy that tenants do not paint any part of the property themselves. We have found in the past that some tenants have not painted the property to a professional standard, resulting in a professional painter being called in to rectify work. It is a policy that any painting can only be carried out by experienced professional painters with our written permission.

**Fixtures and Fittings** – if you wish to install or remove any fixtures or fittings, you must request approval prior, in writing. E.g. installing your own dishwasher if the property does not have one. If approved, you will be responsible for any damage (flooding) caused by your appliance.

**Smoke Alarms** – if you feel the smoke alarms are not functioning correctly, please contact our office immediately in writing. The Smoke Alarms are serviced upon each lease renewal.

**Picture Hooks** – if you want to install new picture hooks, please submit your request in writing, you must nominate the type of hooks, location of hooks and number of hooks. Picture hooks can only be nailed into the wall upon the owner's permission. The owner may stipulate that upon you vacating, the holes must be filled and the wall must be painted to a professional standard, as we do not accept patch painting. Alternatively, you can use the stick on hooks but keep in mind that if the paint is damaged upon the removal of these hooks, the wall must be repaired and painted to a professional standard.

**Washing Curtains** – most curtains and netting is machine washable but it is vitally important that this be established before any washing occurs. Drapes may only be suitable for dry cleaning, so please check all labels first. Sun damage, brittle curtains or netting may disintegrate while being washed. Please notify your property manager if you are concerned about the condition of the curtains in writing.

**General Cleaning** – it is expected that the property be kept reasonably clean and this is also a tenancy agreement requirement.

Pay attention to:

- Walls, switches, power points, skirtings, doors and doorways – please keep these free from marks and dirty fingerprints
- Cobwebs/dust – please remove cobwebs from windows, walls and ceilings. Keep vents dusted. Light fittings and ceiling fans need to be dusted regularly.
- Curtains/blinds – keep these cleaned and dusted
- Windows/sills/window tracks and flyscreens – keep regularly cleaned and dusted
- Floors – please keep regularly swept and mopped. Floors in the kitchen and wet areas may need to be scrubbed to keep the surfaces and grout looking clean.
- Wet areas, bathroom, toilets and laundry grouting/tiles – please ensure all tiles are kept free from grime, soap scum and mould.

**Carpet Cleaning** – all carpets should be cleaned every 6 – 12 months simply because of general living. The best time is after winter or at the end of a wet period.

**Flea Control** – an internal and external flea control should be performed every 6 – 12 months if you have a pet.

## The Kitchen

**Chopping Boards** – please ensure chopping boards are used to avoid unnecessary cut marks, pot marks and associated damage.

**Bench Top Joins** – please be on the lookout for joins in the bench tops that have gaps and the surface laminate has started to bulge or lift at a join. Please let us know if this is starting to occur as this may indicate moisture has seeped into a join and is swelling the chipboard or MDF underneath.

**Oven and Stove Tops** – please ensure that stovetops, grillers and ovens are kept free of burnt food. Food crumbs and spills, when left long enough become burnt on, blackened and carbonised, making them very difficult to remove.

**Range Hoods** – please ensure filters are kept clean and free of oil

**Cupboards/Drawers** – most drawers and shelves are melamine and easy to keep clean, however, they can stain. We recommend you line the shelves and drawers.

**Dishwashers** – if you have a dishwasher it needs to be cleaned on a regular basis to reduce blockages and any build of food. Put one cup of bi-carb of soda in the bottom on the dishwasher. Then pour two litres of vinegar in and put it on the longest, hottest setting.

## Bathroom, Toilet & Laundry

**Shower Screens** – if you notice cracking in the glass of the shower screens and/or the door becomes difficult to slide, please advise your property manager in writing. If the shower screen is cracked due to impact damage, then this will be the tenant's responsibility. The shower screen must be cleaned regularly to prevent shower scum from staining the glass.

**Blocked Sinks/Drains** – if a sink or basin becomes blocked, first try a drain-cleaning product like Draino or bi-carb soda followed by white vinegar and hot water. If the sink or basin is still blocked after treatment, please let us know so we can arrange for a plumber to attend, however, if there is a foreign object in the drain, this will be the tenant's responsibility.

**Toilets** – if you notice your toilet is not flushing, please use a cup of bi-carb soda followed by white vinegar, close the lid for 15 minutes and flush (ok to do with septics). If the toilet appears to be blocked, please email your property manager. If using wipes or too much toilet paper causes the blockage, then this will be the tenant's responsibility. It is important to regularly clean the internal bowl to prevent urine build-up/staining. If it is left for a period of time without cleaning, acid may be required (this can not be used in septic). If your toilet appears to be refilling constantly or running, please email your property manager.

**Properties with Septic or Bio-cycle** – many popular detergents and cleaners can upset the delicate biological balance, which is essential for your Home Treatment Plants efficient operation. They can damage the bacterial processes within the system, resulting in odours and other potential problems. As a toilet and surface cleaner, hot water has been proven to be the most effective as a disinfectant. Where possible, use it, as it is ideal for the system.

## Water Damage/Leaks

**Water damage (walls)** – if you notice water damage to a wall that backs onto the bathroom, please email your property manager immediately. Bubbling or peeling paint, wet carpet, or mould on the lower part of the wall can identify this.

**Taps leaking** – please report any taps dripping in writing to your property manager. If the washer machine taps are leaking please ensure it is not your hose. When connecting your washing machine hoses to the taps, please use plumbing tap. If the washing machine taps are leaking as a result of your washing machine, the tenant will be responsible.

**Hot water tank leaks** – if you notice any water around the base of your Hot Water System, please email your property manager.



## Taking Care – Outside

**Lawn maintenance** – please ensure your lawns are regularly mowed and edges are done. Should you wish to have someone regularly maintain your lawn please let us know and we can provide you with the phone number of our main contractor.

**Gardens** – weeding of garden beds is the tenants responsibility

**Supplied Hoses/Fittings** – the landlord does not have to supply a hose or fittings; however, if they have supplied a hose/fittings then these must be left at the property upon vacating.

**Paved Areas** – we recommend you regularly spray this area with weed killer to prevent weeds overtaking.

**Oil Spills** – it is your responsibility to ensure all areas are degreased and all steps are taken to reduce staining.

**Lawns** – it is important that at no time should cars or any types of vehicles be parked on the lawns. Damage to lawns and landscaping can be costly and will be the tenant's responsibility.

**Gutters and External Drains** – if a drainpipe is blocked as a result of the tenant e.g. a child puts a toy down the pipe, then the tenant will be responsible. The landlord is responsible for cleaning the gutters.

## Swimming Pool Maintenance

**Pool Cleaning** – if your tenancy includes a monthly service, it is your responsibility to clean the pool between services. It is also your responsibility to keep the chemicals up to date. Below is a list of tips to keep the pool well maintained at all times.

- Check and empty skimmer and pump baskets regularly
- If your filtration system begins to make an abnormal sound or do anything unusual, switch it off and contact your property manager
- Keep your pool water level half way up the skimmer box flap.
- Place a small weight or rock in the skimmer basket to prevent it from tipping over when the pump switches on or off.
- Turn off the pool pump before operating the multiport valve
- If your pump becomes noisy or doesn't seem to be running right, switch it off and contact your property manager.
- Learn to use a test kit and test your water regularly
- Use quality chemicals
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**Automatic Pool Cleaners** – do not leave these out of the pool and in the sun on a regular basis. If left out of the water, UV damage will occur and this will be the tenant's responsibility. Pool cleaners are very expensive pieces of equipment.

## Vacating Process

**Wanting to Vacate Early** – this is known as “breaking lease” and there will be fees. You will be charged 1-week's rent plus GST and advertising of \$110 including GST. You will also be responsible for rent up to the day before a new tenant moves in or to when your lease expires, whichever takes place the earliest. Please contact your property manager for the paperwork.

**Vacating at the End of your Tenancy** – we require a minimum of 2 weeks written notice and we also request open homes until a suitable tenant is found. We will work out suitable times and dates with you. Please contact your property manager for the paperwork.