



# Reviewable tenancies for social housing tenants

Reviewable tenancies will be introduced for all social housing tenants from 1 July 2014. This includes Housing New Zealand tenants and people renting from housing providers registered to receive the income-related rent subsidy.

People who started their tenancy with Housing New Zealand after July 2011 have already been told about tenancy reviews.

## Why have reviewable tenancies?

The Government wants to ensure social housing is available for people and families most in need, for the time they need it.

Tenancy reviews will help make sure people living in state or other social houses are still eligible to be there and that the house still meets their needs.

It's important that people who have benefited from social housing, but whose situation has largely improved, are given the support to move into the private rental market or home ownership, if they're able to.

## Who will have their tenancy reviewed and when?

All social housing tenants may be reviewed from 1 July 2014. However, in the first year, only people who are paying a market rent or

near a market rent, and live in areas where other housing is available, will be reviewed. With help they may be able to move into the private rental market.

This is a new process for the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and we expect to complete up to 800 reviews in the first year.

There is no need to contact MSD or HNZ about tenancy reviews now.

If you're not paying a market rent or near to a market rent, you won't have your tenancy reviewed before July 2015, unless your circumstances change.

## Who will do tenancy reviews and how will they be done?

Tenancy reviews will be done by MSD's Housing Assessment service.

These will be done with care and will consider the household's individual circumstances.

Tenancy reviews will be based on much of the same information covered by the initial assessment for eligibility for social housing, including things such as:

- accessibility – how difficult is it for the household to find accommodation in the private market and are there personal or financial barriers that could stop this happening?
- affordability – can the household afford to move into accommodation in the private rental market?

- sustainability – can the household keep accommodation in the private market long term.

If a review finds that a tenant is no longer eligible for social housing and can move, MSD will work closely with them to help them make the move.

If a review finds that a tenant remains eligible, they will be able to stay in social housing.

There are several steps in the review process. When the time comes for a review, MSD will be in contact to explain how this will happen and what support MSD will provide.

If tenants don't agree with the decision made about their eligibility for social housing they can ask for it to be reviewed.

If they don't agree with the result of that review, the decision can be taken to an independent appeal authority.

### **How long is the review process?**

A tenancy review will generally take about six months to complete or it could be longer depending on the tenant's circumstances.

### **What should tenants do now?**

Tenants don't need to do anything now.

MSD will be in contact from 1 July 2014 with tenants who are to be reviewed in the first year to discuss their tenancy review.