

This fact sheet has information to help you if you have left your rental house for good:

- ◆ during the tenancy agreement and left things including papers like your marriage certificate at your house after you move out, or
- ◆ you have moved out at the end of the tenancy agreement and left things behind.

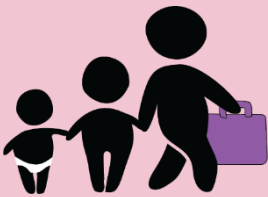
## What happens if I abandon my house?

If you stop paying rent and leave your rental house for ever during the tenancy agreement you will finish your tenancy agreement when you leave. This is called abandonment.

### What happens if I leave without telling Housing?

If you leave your rental house for good without telling Housing, they will not know the tenancy agreement has finished.

The law says if Housing believes for good reasons that the rental house has been abandoned because you have stopped paying rent and because of things like the electricity being disconnected, or neighbours say you have left for good, they are allowed to give notice to you. The notice will say that they want to go into the house to inspect and make it secure so people can't break in. The Housing has to leave a copy of the notice at the house and the last place you worked. If you don't get in contact with the Housing within 24 hours of when they leave the notice they are allowed to go into your rental house.



If Housing has good reasons to think you have abandoned the rental house, they are allowed to send you a notice about finishing the tenancy agreement because you have abandoned the house. Housing might also ask the court to make an order that the house was abandoned on the day stated in the order. Then the house can be given to someone else to rent.

## What happens if I leave things at the house when I leave?

When you move out of your house at the end of the tenancy agreement don't leave things behind.

If you abandon or leave your house before the end of the tenancy agreement don't leave things including papers behind.

# Abandoned rental houses and goods

Sometimes these things are called your property, or belongings or goods. It might cost you money to get some things back. Some things you might not get back.

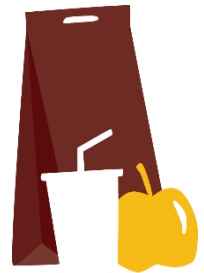
If you abandon your house and you leave any of your belongings, or your tenancy agreement finishes and you leave things behind, Housing must follow the law to store, sell or throw your belongings away. The law is different for some papers you leave at your house.

## Things you won't get back

The law says Housing is allowed to get rid of or destroy:

- ◆ anything that will not last like fresh food or milk, and
- ◆ any belongings that aren't worth much. These are things that have an estimated value less than the estimated cost of removal, storage and sale

2 days after the end of the tenancy agreement.



## Things you can get back

Housing might ask Consumer Protection for a certificate that Consumer Protection agrees that the particular things can be thrown away.

If valuable things have been left behind Housing must store them in a safe place for at least 60 days after the tenancy agreement is ended. Housing must:

- ◆ Tell you which of your things have been stored.
- ◆ Tell you by a notice to you within 7 days of when the things were stored, or
- ◆ by a public notice including on a website within 7 days of when the things were stored, and a notice in a place you would see at the house you lived at within 9 days of when the things were stored.

For papers like:

- ◆ an official paper like your passport or driver licence, marriage certificate, or
- ◆ a photograph, or
- ◆ letters, or
- ◆ any other paper which it would be fair to expect you to want to keep, like documents stored on a computer hard drive, USB, CD or DVD



Housing must store these papers for 60 days and do what they reasonably can to contact you to:

- ◆ let you know you left a paper at the house, and
- ◆ how and when you can pick the paper up.

## What do I do to get my things or papers back?



You must get your things or papers back within 60 days of being put in storage. This is called reclaiming them.

To do this you must contact Housing and pay the fair costs for the removal and storage of your things or papers to Housing.

If you pay this money you must get your things or papers back.

## What happens if I don't pick up my things or papers within 60 days?

The law says if you don't reclaim your things within 60 days, Housing is allowed to sell things at a public auction. Housing is allowed to keep the fair costs of removing, storing and selling your things from what they get at the auction.



The law says Housing can then also get a court order in the Magistrates Court to take out of the money left from the from the auction any money owed by you under the tenancy agreement, like for unpaid rent. Housing must pay the money left from the auction into court first.

The law says Housing are allowed to destroy or get rid of papers if you do not pick them up within 60 days. So act quickly to get your things back!

## What if I don't agree with Housing's decision to get rid of or destroy my things or papers?



The laws says if you and Housing don't agree on the decision to get rid of your things you are allowed to ask for compensation like the payment of money from Housing.



You must ask the Magistrates Court for an order to get this compensation. The magistrate might say yes. The magistrate might say no.