



The Difference

# May Newsletter 2026

## How to approach rental reviews the right way

Rental reviews are an important part of any investment strategy, ensuring the income aligns with market conditions and is fair for both landlords and tenants. While many people see this as part of the leasing cycle, any extra costs can make others anxious about affordability.

Best practice for rental reviews relies on transparency, communication and reflecting what is happening in the wider economy, said Cathie Crampton, LJ Hooker Head of Property Management for Australia and New Zealand. It is essential tenants are informed how the increase has been calculated and supported by evidence.

“One of the best ways to do this is to show tenants what comparable rental properties in their suburb are earning,” Ms Crampton said.

“Even when an increase is expected, people feel reassured when a review genuinely reflects what is happening in the local rental market and can be backed up by documentation.”

Proper notification must be also provided to prevent any unexpected surprises for tenants.

In most instances, a landlord must give at least 60 days written notice before increasing the rent. It can only occur after the first 12 months of tenancy and only once a year.

But not all state and territory legislation is the same, so it

is important to check what is permitted where your property is located.

Ms Crampton warned that pushing for the highest possible rental fee may not be worthwhile if it risks a property sitting empty. A poorly timed or any hefty rental increase could see a delayed agreement or the tenant move out.

“If you have a reliable and long-term tenant who is looking after your property like it was their own, then you have to think about the possibility they may not be agreeable,” she said.

“Sometimes a slightly lower increase provides better long-term value and doesn’t risk turnover.”

Rental reviews are also a good time to assess the property and investigate whether any upgrades could support higher rent. This may be adding air-conditioning, built-in wardrobes, updated kitchen appliances or cosmetic work such as new paint and flooring.

“Tenants are often more willing to accept an increase when they can see something for their money,” Ms Crampton said.

“Talk to your property manager about some simple changes that won’t cost a fortune but will be appreciated by tenants in your area and could potentially add value down the track.”



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# Heating responsibilities and landlords

The cooler weather has arrived and with it comes a timely reminder of a landlord's responsibility when it comes to heating their rental property.

Requirements differ from state to state, so it's important to understand regulations, especially if you own a diverse portfolio.

Heating is now mandatory in some of the southern states with colder climates. In Victoria, there must be a fixed heater in the main living area that meets energy efficiency standards. In Tasmania, some form of heating must be provided and can include a combustion fireplace – however open fires are prohibited.

In the Australian Capital Territory, where it is not uncommon for the temperature to drop below zero degrees overnight, the focus is on insulation. Since 2023, adequate ceiling insulation must be provided to keep rental homes cool in summer and warm in winter.

While there are no heating requirements in other states, a property can't be too cold. Installing a fixed heater or a reverse cycle air-conditioner helps to meet minimum habitable standards.

Cathie Crampton said heating is a sensible way to attract quality tenants and reduce vacancy periods, especially in colder locations.

"Most landlords are considerate of the temperature and don't want their tenants to be shivering through winter," she said.

"If there is any doubt, it is always best to think like a tenant and it comes down to would you want to be living somewhere that is draughty and uninsulated? Installing a safe and energy efficient heating system lessens fire hazards, while also reducing mould and dampness."

The World Health Organisation recommends maintaining an indoor temperature of at least 18 degrees to support a healthy living environment.

Always check with your local Real Estate Institute to find out more about your heating obligations, depending on where you live.



Your LJ Hooker property manager can also recommend practical heating solutions for your investment property that will suit your budget, improve tenant comfort and support compliance.

Some options include ensuring windows are properly sealed and there is proper insulation. Allowing renters to hang curtains is another good tip to keep a rental home cosy in winter. Ceiling fans with a reverse mode, used in conjunction with a heater, will push down warm air and reduce energy usage.

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