



Do you want to make changes to the home you rent because of a health condition or disability?

The rules on making changes to your home depend on who you rent from. This factsheet explains if you can make changes due to a health condition or disability. A Tenant Advocate or a Disability Advocate can help.

What are my rights to make changes because of a health condition or disability?

Your Residential Tenancy Agreement states if you can make changes. Please check the section called Right of tenant to affix and remove fixtures.

You can ask the landlord for permission to attach furniture to a wall so that it doesn't fall on you. The law says that in most cases, the landlord should agree to this.

The rules for making other changes to your home are different depending on who you rent from. Check your Residential Tenancy Agreement to see if you are renting through:

- a private landlord. This could be directly through the owner or through a real estate agent;
- Department of Communities (Housing). This used to be called Homes West;

- a community housing provider. This is a type of social housing where you pay less rent because you are on a low income.

Getting approval to make changes can be hard. You can ask for support from a Tenant Advocate or a Disability Advocate.

I rent with a private landlord or through a real estate agent

Your Residential Tenancy Agreement has information about making changes. You must contact the landlord, real estate agent or Property Manager to let them know what changes you want to make. They can:

- say no to your request
- agree to your request
- agree to your request and say that you need to:
 - use a licensed tradesperson
 - provide receipts for the work that was done
 - pay a tradesperson to undo the changes when you stop renting the home
 - get approval from the local government authority.

The landlord does not have to pay any of the costs.

If you do not have a written lease, you must still contact the landlord to get permission before making any changes.

I rent with the Department of Communities (Housing)

If you need to make changes to the house because of a disability, contact your Housing Services Officer or local housing office to talk about the changes you need to make.

- They will give you a form to fill out. The form has questions to help decide what changes are needed. They may also help you to meet with an Occupational Therapist who will write a report about your needs.
- These are some examples of changes that people might need
 - Remove the shower hob and level the bathroom floor
 - Install grab rails in toilet and bathroom
 - Smooth walk up from driveway

- Ramps to entrance and exit
- Department of Communities (Housing) may cover the costs of the changes they agree to make.
- If the house you are in cannot be changed, you can ask Department of Communities (Housing) to look for another home for you.
- You can make minor changes such as adding curtains and blinds without asking.

I rent with a community housing organisation

Contact the number or email address provided in the information pack that you received when you moved into the house. Let them know you need to make changes. They can

- say no to your request
- agree to your request
- agree to your request and say that you need to
 - use a licensed tradesperson
 - provide receipts for the work that was done
 - pay a licensed tradesperson to undo the work when you leave the home
 - get approval from the local government authority.

The housing provider does not have to cover any of the costs. You can ask them to help you to apply for funding from NDIS or My Aged Care.

Who can help with the costs?

People with disability aged under 65 can apply to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). People aged over 65 can apply for funding through My Aged Care. If you have been injured in an accident you might have insurance to help cover the costs. If you live in a Department of Communities (Housing) property, they may cover the costs of changes they agree to.

Who can help?

If you would like to speak to a Tenant Advocate, you can call Circle Green on **(08) 6148 3636** or visit <https://circlegreen.org.au/resource/find-a-tenant-advocate/> to find your nearest community legal centre.

If you would like to speak to a Disability Advocate, you can call People With disabilities WA on **(08) 94207279 or 1800 993 331 or**

Department of Communities (Housing)

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments/housing-and-disability>

Financial Counsellors can assist with your payments and provide information, support and advocacy at no cost. You can find your nearest Financial Counsellor by visiting www.financialcounsellors.org or call **1800 007 007**.

The National Debt Helpline provides a free phone service, and information to assist people in financial difficulty. You can contact the National Debt Helpline on **1800 007 007**.

National Disability Insurance Scheme <https://www.ndis.gov.au/>

My Aged Care <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/>

Department of Communities (Housing)

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments/housing-and-disability>

Further information

Please contact us if you would like this factsheet in a different format such as large print or braille.

If you are Deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment, you can contact us through the National Relay Service www.relayservice.gov.au.

If you are a non-English speaker and require a language interpreter, please contact TIS National on **131 450**.

For more information visit www.circlegreen.org.au or phone us on **(08) 6148 3636**.