# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Implementation of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016** |
| **DATE**  | **12 January 2022** |
| **BY** | **Julie James, Minister for Climate Change** |

Today, I am announcing our intention to implement the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 on 15 July 2022. This is in line with the commitment to implement the 2016 Act in the first year of this Senedd, as set out in the Counsel General’s statement on the legislative programme last July. I acknowledge that it has taken longer than expected to implement the 2016 Act, but it has required the development of many statutory instruments, some of which have required separate consultation. In order to avoid confusion, we also decided to deliver on our commitment to increase security of tenure prior to implementation of the 2016 Act, which we did by bringing forward the Renting Homes (Amendment) (Wales) Act 2021.

The 2016 Act represents the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. It increases protections for tenants and licensees, who are termed ‘contract-holders’ in the legislation, in a number of ways. It introduces a six-month notice requirement for a landlord to end a contract where the contract-holder is not at fault. In addition, as landlords will not be able to issue such a possession notice during the first six months of occupation, contract-holders will have a minimum security of tenure of one year from the date of moving in. This means that contract-holders in Wales will have the greatest protection from the start of their contract than in any other part of the UK.

The Act also provides protection against retaliatory eviction. If a landlord responds to a request for repair by issuing a possession notice, they will no longer be automatically entitled to possession if the Court is satisfied the landlord issued the notice to avoid carrying out the repair. In addition, joint contract-holders can be added or removed from occupation contracts without the need to end one contract and start another. This will make managing joint contracts easier and help those experiencing domestic abuse by enabling the perpetrator to be targeted for eviction.

I also made a commitment that the key information that landlords will need to comply with their obligations under the Act will be available six months in advance of implementation. Therefore, I am also announcing today that I have made regulations on: the default supplementary terms to be included in the new occupation contracts; the explanatory information to be included in occupation contracts; the model written statements of contract; and the fitness for human habitation obligation. Further information is available on the Welsh Government’s Renting Homes’ webpages ([www.gov.wales/rentinghomes](http://www.gov.wales/rentinghomes)), from Friday 14 January. A communications campaign to raise awareness amongst landlords and tenants will also commence from that date.