

Managing Mould and Damp

Purpose

This policy outlines responsibilities of Bridge Housing and our tenants in managing mould and damp issues in a property we own or manage.

Scope

This policy applies to all Bridge Housing tenants. It should be noted that maintenance services delivered under fee for service programs and in our leasehold portfolio are subject to negotiation with the property owners, which can impact on the delivery of services.

Policy Overview

The responsibility for preventing and treating mould depends on the causes of the mould. This policy provides an overview of the responsibilities of Bridge Housing (we, our us) as the landlord and tenant's responsibilities in regard to mould. The policy outlines a number of preventative measures that can be taken to avoid mould. Finally, the policy outlines the process we will follow when mould is reported in a property.

Landlord Responsibilities

As a landlord, we have a responsibility to ensure the property meets health and safety laws. We have a responsibility to ensure that the property is 'fit for habitation' and for repairing and maintaining the property so that it is in a reasonable state of repair, considering the age of the property, the amount of rent being paid, and the prospective life of the property.

In relation to mould, we are generally responsible for treating any mould caused by structural issues in the building, such as roof leaks, bathroom leaks and rising damp.

Tenant Responsibilities

Tenants must keep the property in a reasonable state of cleanliness, including avoiding excessive clutter and ensuring adequate ventilation to the property.

Tenants must notify their landlord as soon as possible if they see any signs of mould or damp developing during the tenancy. Tenants can let us know about mould or damp by contacting their Housing Manager or our Repairs Team.

Preventing Mould

What is mould?

Mould has been associated with respiratory illness and can cause serious health problems. Mould may grow indoors in wet or moist areas lacking adequate ventilation, including walls/ wallpaper, ceilings, bathroom tiles, carpets (especially those with jute backing), insulation material and wood.

If moisture accumulates in a building mould growth will often occur. Many different types of mould exist and all have the potential to cause health problems.

Things that help stop mould

There are a number of steps you can take that will prevent mould growing in your home.

- Open windows and doors to let fresh air in and reduce humidity
- Open blinds and curtains during the day to let sunlight in
- Turn on the exhaust fan or open a window in the bathroom, laundry and kitchen to get rid of steam
- Wipe down tiles to clean off soap scum that mould feeds on
- Wipe away any moisture on your windows and walls to keep the inside of your home dry
- Dry your clothes and shoes before you put them away
- Air out wardrobes and cupboards regularly
- Use moisture absorbers in basements, wardrobes and closed-off rooms
- The best way to stop mould from growing is to let in fresh air and light, clean regularly and control moisture in your home.

Things that help mould grow

Below are a few tips to help prevent mould from growing:

- Indoor plants like ferns need moist air, so choose low-water varieties like succulents for around the house
- Fish tanks add moisture to the air, especially tropical fish tanks
- Portable heaters (kerosene or unfluted gas heater) give off moisture and gas, always ventilate the area
- Leaking taps, roofs and pipes encourage mould.

How We Manage Mould

We identify mould and damp issues through our regular inspections or reports from our tenants. Where an issue with damp or mould is identified, we will:

1. **Investigate** – we will contact you within 7 days of reporting the mould to arrange a time to visit the property and inspect the mould. If we can't identify the cause of the mould at this inspection, we will engage an expert to follow up and identify the cause of the mould.
2. **Act** – we will write to you within 21 days summarising the outcome of the investigation and the actions required to address the mould. If the mould is due to an issue with the property, we will arrange and pay for the work. If the mould is due to poor ventilation or cleaning, we will outline the steps you need to take as a tenant to remove the mould in line with your responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act.
3. **Review** – we will follow up with you one month after sending the outcome letter to ensure that agreed actions have been completed and that the issue has been resolved.

Where mould is identified in a leasehold property and we are unable to rectify the problem with the landlord we will seek to relocate you to another property.

Compliments, Complaints and Appeals

Tenants can appeal decisions made under this policy. If a tenant is not satisfied with a service provided by Bridge Housing or does not agree with a decision it has made, they can ask for a formal review. Bridge Housing's Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy outlines how we will undertake a review of our decision. A copy of our policy and information leaflet, is available from Bridge Housing's office or downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Act 2010
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Regulations 2019
Fact Sheet	Managing Mould
Policy	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy
Form	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals form

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131450 and ask them to contact on 8324 0800 for you at no cost. You can also come to the Bridge Housing office and ask for assistance in your language.

Simplified Chinese

如果您理解这封信有困难, 请拨打电 话传译服务 131450 要求电话传译 服务替您拨打 Bridge Housing, 电话 8324 0800。这项服务是免费的。您也可以到 Bridge Housing 的办公室来。要求用您的语言来协助您。

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda para entender esta carta, por favor comuníquese con el Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131450 y solicite que lo contacten sin cargo con Bridge Housing al 8324 0800. También puede dirigirse a las oficinas de Bridge Housing y solicitar asistencia en su idioma.

Russian

Если для понимания содержания этого письма Вам необходима помощь, свяжитесь, пожалуйста, с Телефонной переводческой службой по номеру 131450 и попросите соединить Вас с Bridge Housing по номеру 8324 0800. За соединение платить не нужно. Кроме того, Вы можете лично посетить офис Bridge Housing и попросить об услугах переводчика.

Greek

Εάν χρειάζεστε βοήθεια για να κατανοήσετε την παρούσα επιστολή, παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με την Υπηρεσία Τηλεφωνικών Διερμηνέων στο 131450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 8324 0800 για εσάς χωρίς καμία χρέωση. Μπορείτε επίσης να επισκεφθείτε το γραφείο Bridge Housing και να ζητήσετε βοήθεια στη γλώσσα σας.

Vietnamese

Nếu cần người giúp để hiểu thư này xin quý vị liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Thông Ngôn Điện Thoại số 131450 và nhờ họ liên lạc với Bridge Housing qua số 8324 0800 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-ngữ của quý-vị.

Arabic

إذا احتجت إلى مُساعدة في فهم هذه الرسالة رجاء الاتصال مع خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم 131450 واطلب منهم أن يتصلوا لك بمكتب على رقم 8324 0800 بدون تكلفة عليك. ويُمكنك أيضا الحضور إلى مكتب Bridge Housing وطلب المُساعدة بلُغتك.