

## Renters' Rights Act 2025 Update:

Section 21 no-fault evictions and  
fixed-term tenancies banned  
from 1 May 2026

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 ("the Act") came into force on 27 October 2025 and will implement the most significant changes to the rental market and the private rented sector in over 30 years.

The Government has now confirmed the implementation date for stage one of the Act. From 1 May 2026, Section 21 no-fault evictions and fixed-term tenancies will be abolished. This means that, from that date, landlords will no longer be able to serve a Section 21 notice on their tenants to commence the no-fault eviction process. As a result, landlords must be aware of and pay particular attention to the following dates outlined below, if they are considering serving a Section 21 notice on their tenant, or they have already served a Section 21 notice and are wondering what this change means in terms of issuing proceedings.



### **Thursday 30 April 2026**

This is the last date a landlord can serve a Section 21 notice on their tenant. If you are a landlord considering serving a Section 21 notice, you should serve it as soon as possible to ensure it is served effectively on the tenant before the deadline.

The usual rules around service of a Section 21 notice will continue to apply, however, so, for example, you won't be able to give notice in the first four months of a new AST – landlords should bear this in mind and ensure no new ASTs are granted after 30 December 2025.

### **Sunday 31 May 2026**

The government plans to publish an official "Information Sheet" in March 2026, before the reforms come into effect on 1 May 2026, and will explain the timeline set out in this article and other changes.

Landlords with existing written tenancies must serve their tenants with the government information sheet on or before 31 May 2026.

However, if a landlord has agreed an existing tenancy verbally with a tenant, they will need to provide a written summary of the main terms. Again, a landlord will need to do this on or before 31 May 2026.



## Friday 31 July 2026

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This is the last date a landlord can serve a Section 21 notice on their tenant. If you are a landlord considering serving a Section 21 notice, you should serve it as soon as possible to ensure it is served effectively on the tenant before the deadline.

The usual rules around service of a Section 21 notice will continue to apply, however, so, for example, you won't be able to give notice in the first four months of a new AST – landlords should bear this in mind and ensure no new ASTs are granted after 30 December 2025.

## Fixed-term ASTs

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This is the last day a landlord can issue possession proceedings under section 21. Landlords who have served a Section 21 notice before 30 April 2026 (see above) in relation to a fixed-term AST and want to issue proceedings in respect of that notice, they must issue a claim within 6 months of the date the notice is served on the tenant or by 31 July 2026, whichever comes first.

Let's look at an example:

If, as a landlord, you served your tenant with a Section 21 notice in relation to a fixed-term AST on 1 January 2026 to expire on 2 March 2026, but the tenant has failed to vacate the property by 2 March 2026, and you decide to issue court proceedings, the claim must be served by 30 June 2026 (6 months from the date of service of that notice).

However, if you served the Section 21 notice on 1 March 2026, with the notice expiring on 2 May 2026, and the tenant fails to vacate the property on that date, the last day you could issue a claim would be 31 July 2026, as the new statutory deadline for issuing proceedings under Section 21, calculated in accordance with the timeline outlined above, falls earlier than six months from the date of service of the notice (which would otherwise be 31 August 2026).





## **Periodic ASTs**

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Landlords who have served a Section 21 notice in relation to a periodic AST before 30 April 2026, which requires more than 2 months' notice to coincide with the end of a period, will need to issue the claim for possession within 4 months of the expiry of the Section 21 notice or by 31 July 2026, whichever comes first.

Let's look at an example:

If, as a landlord, your Section 21 notice in relation to a periodic AST expired on 1 January 2026, you will have until 30 April 2026 to issue proceedings in respect of this notice.

However, if your Section 21 notice expires on 1 April 2026, you will need to issue proceedings in respect of that notice by 31 July 2026, in accordance with the applicable deadline, as this date falls earlier than the four-month notice period.

## **Conclusion**

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The timeline detailed above will affect all landlords. It is recommended that all landlords review their property portfolios as soon as possible to assess and determine which properties they may consider evicting a tenant on a 'no-fault' basis under Section 21; whether that be to serve a Section 21 notice or issue proceedings on an already existing Section 21 notice before these deadlines pass. Once these deadlines have passed, that will be the end of Section 21.

Unfortunately, there is no replacement for Section 21. Once Section 21 is abolished, landlords will only be able to rely on the existing Section 8 notice to commence possession proceedings, which requires a valid statutory ground under Section 8. For this reason, it is essential that any landlord intending to rely on Section 21 to obtain possession on a no-fault basis do so before its abolition on 1 May 2026.

Don't delay – we often see matters where the Landlord or agent has not ticked every box required to validly serve a Section 21 notice. Often these issues can be "fixed" retrospectively before a Section 21 notice (or a second Section 21 notice) is served on the tenant, but if you leave it too late you may run out of time to fix any issues, invalidating your Section 21 notice and you may lose the opportunity to serve another due to these timescales. Seeking early advice from specialists is key in light of the impending changes.

## How can Lightfoots Solicitors help?

Our Litigation team at Lightfoots specialises in landlord and tenant matters. If you are a landlord, agent or tenant and you are concerned about how these changes in legislation might impact you, seek expert advice at the earliest opportunity. Get in touch with our team of specialists,



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