

# **Awaab's Law: Guidance for Tenants in Scotland**

**September 2026**

## Introduction



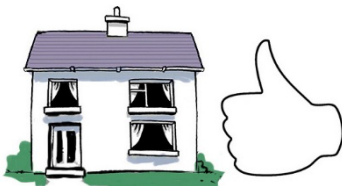
There will be a new law from 6 October 2026.  
Landlords in Scotland will have to check reports of damp or mould. They will have to start repairs quickly.



Damp and mould can be bad for people's health.



This guide is to help you understand your rights.  
It is important that landlords and tenants work together and talk to each other.



You have the right to live in a home that is:

- warm
- safe and secure



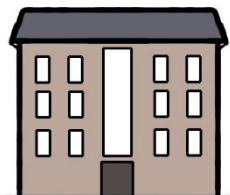
The new rules are only for **substantial** damp or mould. **Substantial** means it is large and may cause harm. This could be because:

- there is a lot of it
- it has been there a long time
- someone is at more risk because of their age or health

Landlords have:



- 10 **working days** to check the problem.  
**Working days** means not weekends or public holidays
- 3 working days after the check they must give you a written report of what they found
- 5 working days after the check to start fixing any substantial damp or mould found



The new law applies to you if you rent from a social landlord. Like a council house or housing association.



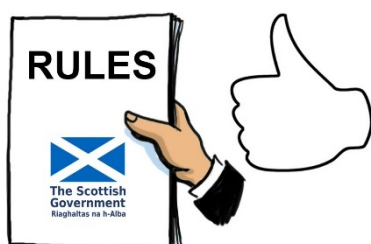
The new law also applies to most homes rented from private landlords.



If you do not know what type of tenancy you have, or if the new law applies, you can ask your landlord.



You can also look on Shelter Scotland's website: [Check what type of tenancy you have - Shelter Scotland](#)



There are similar rules if you are a Gypsy or Traveller tenant on a council site, or a site provided by a Registered Social Landlord.

## Spotting damp or mould in your home



Damp and mould can be bad for your health. It can be bad for your home and your things. It can cause:

- breathing problems
- sore skin or rashes
- stress or anxiety



These can get worse the longer damp and mould is not fixed.



It is important that you tell your landlord as soon as you think you have damp or mould.

Your landlord cannot evict you for reporting problems.



You should still report other things that need to be fixed to your landlord. This will be in your tenancy agreement.

## The signs and causes of damp



Damp happens when there is too much water in the air or walls. This can cause mould to grow. There are different kinds of damp.

- **traumatic damp**
- **rising damp**
- **penetrating damp**
- **condensation**

**Traumatic damp** is caused by a sudden bad event, like a burst pipe.



This picture shows what damp and mould might look like. It was made by a computer.

**Rising damp** comes up from the ground. It usually only affects the ground floor. The landlord must usually fix this.



This picture shows what damp and mould might look like. Not all rising damp will look like this. The picture was made by a computer.

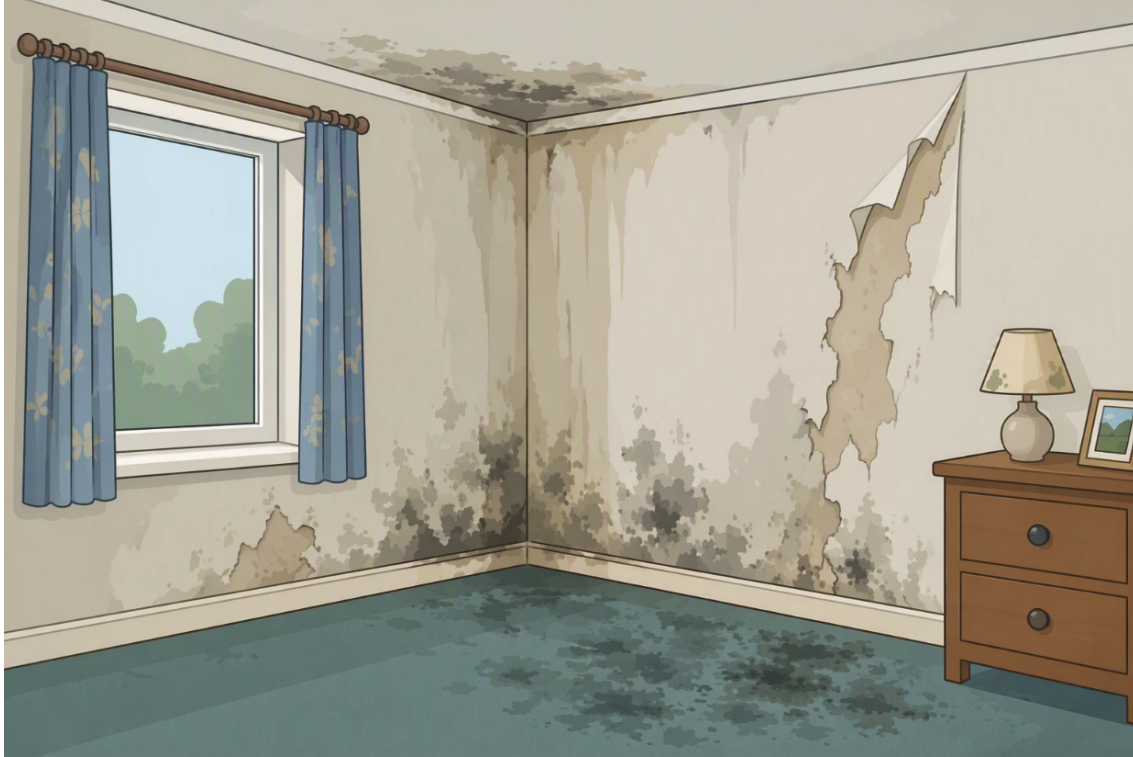
What you might see outside near the bottom of the wall:

- strange colour bricks or stone
- crumbly bricks or stone
- moss

What it might be like inside:

- a stained line going across the wall
- flakes or bubbles low down on walls
- rotten skirting boards
- damp smell, maybe from carpets
- damp carpets

**Penetrating damp** gets into a property from outside because something is wrong with part of the building. Like the walls or roof. The landlord must usually fix this.



This picture shows what damp and mould might look like. Not all penetrating damp will look like this. The picture was made by a computer.

What it might be like inside:

- damp patches on walls and ceilings
- strange coloured patches on walls and ceilings
- flakes or bubbles on walls
- rot on wood or inside the roof
- bad or mouldy smell
- mould on walls, carpets

What it might look like outside:

- dark patches or mould on walls
- plants in gutters
- plants in cracks

**Condensation** is when **humid** air touches a cold wall or window. **Humid** is when there is lots of water in the air. The water goes from the air onto the wall. This lets mould grow.



This picture shows what damp and mould might look like. Not all condensation will look like this. The picture was made by a computer.

What it might look like:

- water drops on surfaces
- visible mould

## Reporting damp or mould



You should report damp or mould to your landlord as soon as you see it. You should do this the same way you would tell them about a repair issue.

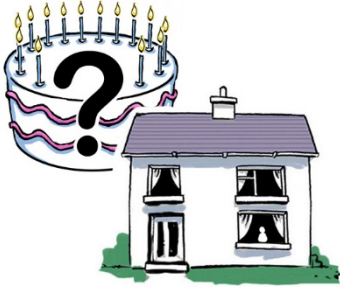


You can ask other people to help you, but only your landlord must fix it in the time rules.



Your landlord may ask you for more details to help them understand the problem and to find the right person to check it. They might ask you about:

- how much damp or mould there is
- where it is
- people who live in the home



They might ask questions to work out if anyone is more likely to be harmed by damp and mould. Like how old you are, and if you have a health condition.



You do not need to tell them personal information if you do not want to. Landlords should not ask for proof of a health condition.

## Checks and time rules



Landlords must act when they find out about damp or mould. This could be when:

- you report it
- someone else tells them
- they see it when they visit your home



The problem must be looked at by someone who is properly trained. Your landlord may ask someone from another company to check it.



Your landlord will need to get into your home to check it. Also to do repairs to make your home safe. You should let your landlord in for this.

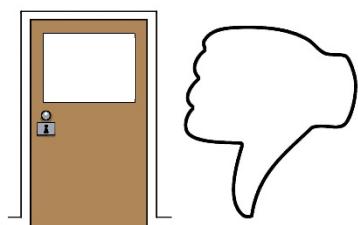


Your landlord should work with you to agree a good time to visit. They should tell you before.



They might ask for a video call or another way to look at it without a visit.

You should speak to them if you have any questions or worries about the visit or call.



If your landlord has tried to get in touch with you and you do not let them in, they may not be expected to meet the time rules.



Sometimes it can be hard to understand the cause of damp or mould and what repairs are needed. It may need to be checked more closely or by someone else. They might not be able to do all this in 10 working days.

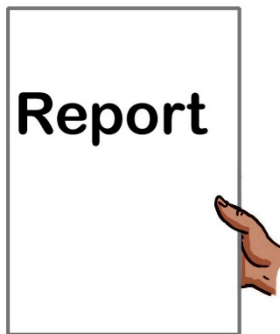


It might be that your landlord cannot check the problem in 10 working days because of something they cannot help. If this happens, they must write to tell you why they cannot do it in time. They must tell you when they will do it.



They should do what they can to help stop the damp or mould while you wait. This could be a short-term repair or keeping an eye on the problem.

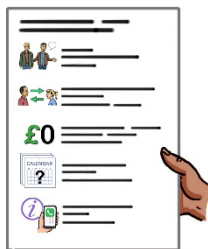
## Written report



After it has been looked at, your landlord must send you a report of what was found in the next 3 working days.



You should tell your landlord how you would like to get the report and let them know if you need it in a different way. Like:



- Easy Read
- large print
- another language



The report must include:

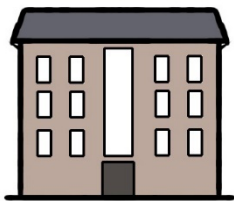
- the name of the person or group who checked the problem
- what they did to look at the problem and what they found
- if the house has substantial damp and mould, or not
- if they did anything to help fix the problem when they were there
- if there is substantial damp or mould, it has to say what they need to do and when



## What happens next



Repair work must start within 5 working days after the problem is checked.



If you rent from a council or housing association, the repair work must be finished within 20 working days.



Private landlords must complete the repair work as soon as they can.



Your landlord must make sure your home stays free from substantial damp and mould if they can. They may need to do more repairs. They must do this as soon as possible.

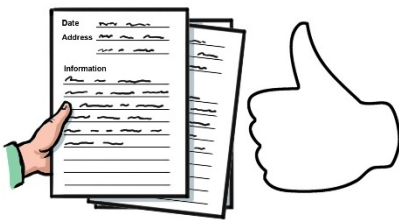


They may tell you things you can do to help stop damp and mould.

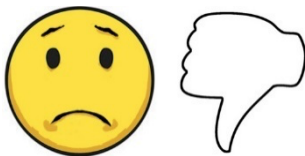
## If you do not agree with what was found



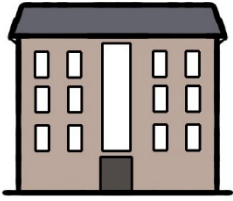
You should contact your landlord and explain why you do not agree. Your landlord will think about any new facts you gave. They will decide if another look is needed. If it does then the times under the new law begin again.



If the new law does not apply to the problem or if there is nothing a landlord can do, they should tell you. They must keep a record of what they do.



If your landlord does not follow the rules, even after you make a complaint, there are things you can do.



If you rent from a housing association or council:

- you may get compensation under the [Right to Repair Scheme](#)



- You can complain to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman who will decide whether to look into your case. You can write to the SPSO at:

Freepost SPSO

This is all you need to write and you do not need a stamp.



You can contact them by telephone on 0800 377 7330.

Or on their website [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)



If you rent from a private landlord, you can ask the **Tribunal** for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) for a decision. A **Tribunal** is like a court.

The Tribunal can order your landlord to carry out repairs.



More information is available on their website: [Repairs | Housing and Property Chamber](#)



You can also contact your council's private renting or environmental health team for help.

There are groups who can give you advice on housing repairs and problems. Like:



- Shelter Scotland – call them on 0808 800 4444 or look online [Repairs in your home - Shelter Scotland](#).



- Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) – call them on 0800 028 1456 or find your nearest office online at [Free, impartial and confidential advice for everyone | Citizens Advice Scotland](#).



- Independent Advocacy can help people understand their rights and give their views. Further information is available online: [Home - Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#).

## If the problem comes back

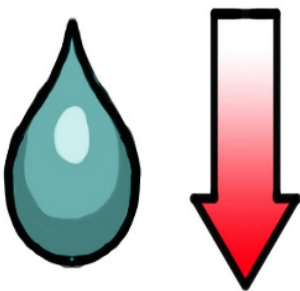


Your landlord will try to fix the cause of the problem. But damp and mould can be hard to understand.



Tell your landlord as soon as you can if the problem comes back. They will probably have to look at it again.

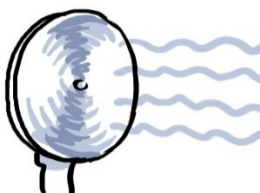
## Things you can do to help stop damp or mould

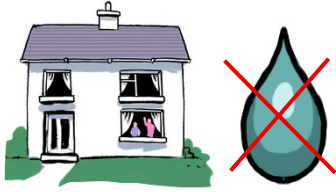


There are things you can do at home to help keep damp or mould away.

More air flow. Try to:

- keep vents open and not covered
- open windows, and use extractor fans if you have them
- leave space between furniture and the walls so air can flow





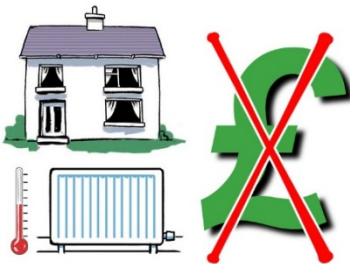
Less water. Try to:

- cover pots when cooking
- dry clothes outside when you can. If you cannot, do not dry them on a radiator. Try a rack near an open window
- wipe down walls, windows and mirrors with a cloth or towel after showering



Keep your home warm. Try to:

- keep your home around the same heat if you can. No or low heating in winter can cause condensation
- stop cold air coming in gaps at windows and doors



There is help if you find it hard to pay for heating bills. This includes payments, benefits and advice on saving energy and making your home warmer.

You can find more information at: [Energy bills - Cost of Living Support Scotland](#)

## **If you are a Gypsy or Traveller and live on a site provided by a Registered Social Landlord or council**



Your landlord must meet similar standards.  
If damp or mould is affecting your home. You should follow the same steps to report a problem.

Your site provider has:



- 10 working days to check it
- 3 working days after the check to send you a written report
- if substantial damp or mould is found, 5 working days after the check to start repairs



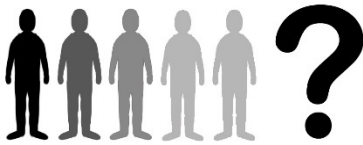
If you do not agree with the findings, you should contact them and explain why.



If you are not happy with the outcome, you should make a formal complaint.



If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can raise a complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The same way as tenants with social rent agreements.



If the problem affects a lot of people on the site you can report it to the Scottish Housing Regulator.



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