

14 April 2020

An Open Letter to Landlords from The Real Estate Institute of Queensland

Will the Palaszczuk Government's Special COVID-19 Protections for Residential Tenants protect you?

As the owner of an investment property in Queensland, if you are not already aware of the Palaszczuk Government's proposed *Special COVID-19 Protections* for residential tenants and landlords, The Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) wants to ensure you understand them. As the peak body for real estate in Queensland, we support the need for tenant protection during COVID-19 however, we are fundamentally opposed to some of the proposed measures. You should be too. As a landlord, you will ultimately foot the bill if the following proposals are introduced:

- **Your tenant/s will NOT have to pay back any rent.** Put simply, a rent reduction negotiated with your tenant/s is a permanent rent waiver meaning you, as the landlord, will be out of pocket, with no means of recovering any unpaid rent in the future post COVID-19.
- **You CANNOT ask your tenant/s for formal financial information if they claim they cannot pay some or all of their rent due to COVID-19.** This potentially exposes you to false claims and exploitation of the proposed protections for those who genuinely need it.
- **Your Landlord Insurance will NOT cover you for rent in arrears*.** The normal terms of your policy won't cover the rent reduction as this is a mutual agreement between you, as the landlord, and your tenant and you cannot follow the necessary rent default process as this is prohibited. (*Please contact your relevant insurer for individual policy conditions)
- **Your tenancy agreement WILL immediately extend by 6 months if it expires during the 6 month freeze on evictions.** Tenants will be automatically entitled to a 6-month extension of the tenancy agreement meaning any protections may last up to 12-months.
- **Your tenant/s can REFUSE ENTRY for anything other than emergency repairs.** Not only can your tenant refuse access, they don't have to participate in virtual property inspections either. There's also no clarity as to whether prospective purchasers can inspect a property that is for sale.
- **Your tenant/s can BREAK A LEASE with only 7 days' notice.** To make matters worse, you cannot recover any lost rent or costs associated with finding a new tenant as would normally apply.

Now you understand how the Palaszczuk Government's proposed *Special COVID-19 Protections* favour tenants at the expense of landlords, The REIQ needs your urgent help before Parliament sits to pass these protections on **Wednesday, 22 April 2020**. For our voices to be heard, complete your details in the template letter to Premier Palaszczuk provided in the enclosed link and press send. It's that simple. Together we can make a difference and achieve a more balanced outcome for landlords.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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