

How to remain compliant (Free Awaab's Law Checklist)

We've developed an Awaab's Law Checklist to help ensure that housing associations and other social housing providers can be ready and compliant.

Review and update current policies and procedures

- Ensure that your current/new workflows include protocols for triaging hazards, triggering investigations and repairs, all in line with the new timelines.
- Establish reporting procedures that align with guidance for resident communications and contractor reports.
- Put a plan in place for temporary rehousing of residents if repairs cannot be made within the new timescales.
- Ensure that your IT systems and software solutions are able to manage the new workflows, triggers, reports and notifications.

Proactively manage properties

- Identify high-risk properties and put in place a monitoring schedule.
- Identify and prioritise properties with vulnerable residents (e.g. elderly, young children, those with known disabilities etc).
- Carry out proactive inspections to help spot any issues early.
- Schedule preventative repairs whenever possible.

Prioritise team training

- Ensure your property teams and contractors are appropriately trained on the new legal responsibilities, assessing hazards, evaluating vulnerable residents, the documentation needed for compliance and routes for escalation when urgent issues are discovered.
- Ensure that staff are able to handle complex cases and can identify when specialist input is needed.
- Ensure that customer service teams are fully aware of the new requirements for communication of reports and next steps to residents.

Review contractor agreements

- Check that your existing contracts are compliant with Awaab's Law timescales and the reporting requirements.
- Build a network of backup contractors in the event of capacity challenges.
- Consider using a framework to simplify damp and mould procurement.

Look at resource planning

- Ensure that you're kept informed about your capacity for carrying out inspections, repairs and arranging alternative accommodation when needed.
- Assess staffing levels vs demand, especially for urgent callouts on weekends and bank holidays.

Review communication strategies

- Inform residents about the changes to the law and how it affects them and their rights, using a variety of formats to reach as many people as possible.
- Ensure that internal workflows that involve multiple steps are 'joined up' with open communication between teams so that the requirements can be met.
- Establish protocols for acknowledging reports, along with informing residents about findings and next steps.

Establish compliant reporting and governance systems

You will need systems in place to:

- Log all reports, investigations, repair works and communications
- Report performance vs Awaab's Law requirements to leadership, tenants and boards
- Maintain auditable records for regulatory scrutiny
- Ensure evidence of compliance is available
- Provide governing bodies with your plan for preparedness and progress against it