

Property Alterations

Churches of Christ Housing Services has responsibility as landlord for managing the various compliance requirements of our properties. Tenants also have responsibility for ensuring compliance with these obligations—in particular when altering a property.



Tenants have the option to improve their home but only once written approval has been provided by Churches of Christ Housing Services and all necessary approvals (for example; planning permission or building approval) have been considered.

Alterations undertaken without approval or certification are considered a breach of the tenancy agreement and may result in the need to remove the fixture at the tenant's cost.

Alterations can be defined as, but not limited to, any modification or installation such as:

- security screens
- fencing or privacy screens
- sheds and carports
- disability modifications
- picture hooks and shelving
- air-conditioning and ceiling fans
- security alarms.

What is the process for applying to make an alteration to my home?

1. Complete a '*Property Alterations and Improvement Application*' and return it to our office. The application must be completed in full and include supporting documents such as plans and quotes from contractors or product brochure. It is a requirement to provide details of the:
 - proposed alterations to be made at the property
 - reason for the alterations
 - specifications and quotes provided by the contractor
 - contractors' professional details (e.g. BSA number and insurance details)
 - building and plumbing approvals must also be provided before any work commences.

2. We will then assess your application in consideration of the:
 - necessity and appropriateness of the alteration, including the impact on neighbours
 - future implications of the alteration, including ongoing maintenance and the capacity to remove it at the end of the tenancy if required
 - response from the owner of the property (if not Churches of Christ Housing Services).
3. An outcome will be provided in writing once all required specifications and documents are received and your application has been assessed. Tenants are not permitted to commence any work or make any alterations until written approval is provided.
4. If your application is declined, you have the right to lodge an appeal, as detailed in our 'Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Brochure' provided in your Tenant Start-up Pack.
5. If your application is approved, the conditions or guidelines to proceed will be outlined in an approval letter, including the timeframe in which work must be complete.

What type of work requires assessment and certification?

An appropriately qualified contractor with the necessary licences and insurance must carry out building work, including minor alterations. Licensed contractors must carry out all plumbing and electrical work.

It is your responsibility as the owner of the alteration, to adhere to the applicable local council rules when undertaking the work to your home. Contact your local council to check what rules will apply.

It is good practice to request a response in writing for future reference and to attach to your application.

What else do I need to know about the alterations process?

Any alteration made to the property must either be left intact or removed and the property reinstated to its original condition at the end of your tenancy. All costs associated with reinstating the property to its original condition will be your responsibility.

Tenants are also responsible for the following:

- ongoing maintenance of alterations made to the property
- ongoing legal compliance of the alteration
- any damage caused to the property, or neighbouring property, as a result of the alteration.

If you are approved to make alterations to your home, an inspection may be required before work can commence.

All work must be completed within the time frame provided from the approval date. An extension may be granted if there is a delay due to unforeseen circumstances.

During the project while work is being undertaken, you will be deemed the “Owner” and as such, must ensure local council regulations and legislative requirements are complied with. Tenants must also be aware of the obligations under workplace health and safety legislation and ensure all necessary safety procedures and practices are met when making alterations.

Once works are complete, an inspection will be carried out by Churches of Christ Housing Services to ensure work is to the required standard and in accordance with the approval conditions.