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# VICTORIAN TENANCY ADVOCACY SYSTEM

Complete Renter's Toolkit — 13 Bundles, Legally Verified  
Victoria, Australia

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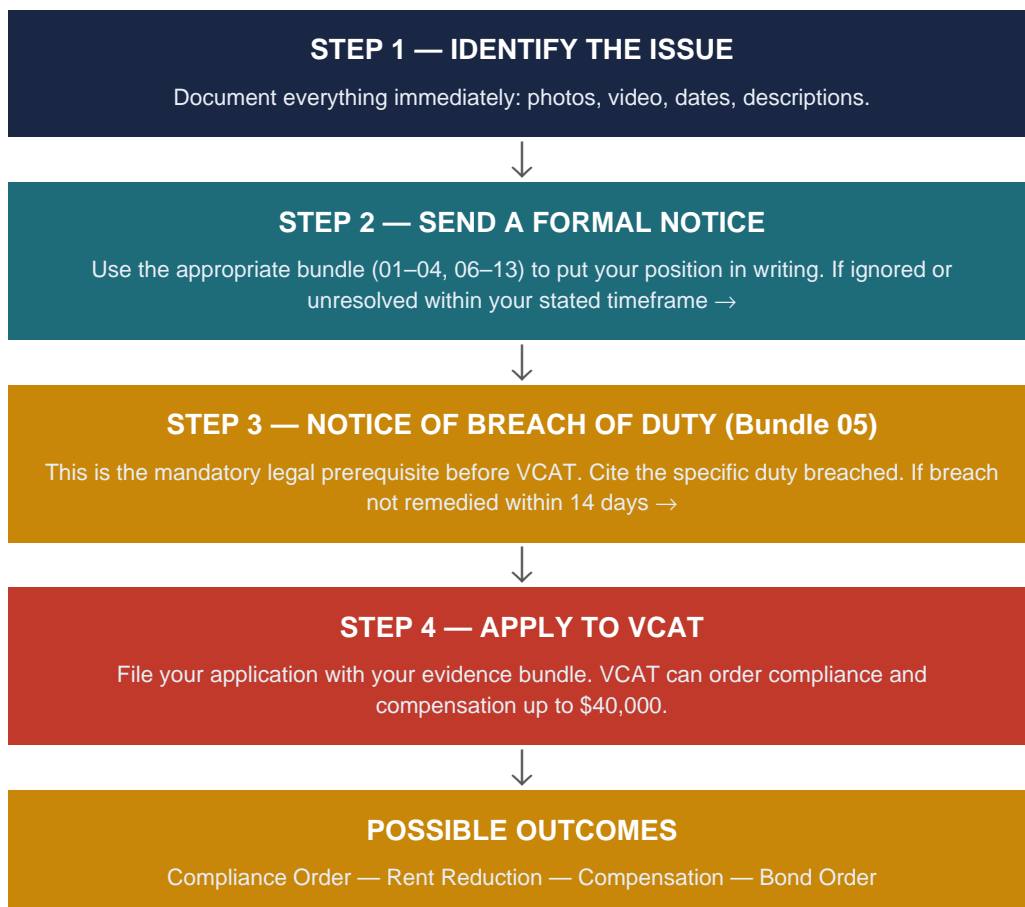
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Complete Renter's Toolkit — 13 Bundles, Legally Verified — Victoria, Australia

You now hold a complete tenancy advocacy system built for Victorian renters. Every template, tracker, and section reference in this bundle has been verified against the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 as amended by the 2021 reforms. Use it systematically, document everything in real time, and you will have the strongest possible position — whether you're dealing with a negligent landlord, a stonewalling agent, or heading to VCAT.

## HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS — THE ESCALATION LOGIC

Every tenancy dispute follows the same path. The bundles in this system are designed to move you through it in a logical sequence.



## WHAT'S IN YOUR SYSTEM — 13 BUNDLES, IN TENANCY ORDER

#	BUNDLE	USE WHEN	KEY LAW
01	Condition Report Dispute	Move-in discrepancies between the report and the actual property	ss.35, 35A
02	Noise and Quiet Enjoyment	Persistent noise from landlord-controlled sources — diary-based evidence	s.67
03	General Repair Request	Non-urgent maintenance — appliance, plumbing, structural damage	s.68
04	Urgent Repair Notice	Health/safety emergency — burst pipes, gas leak, heating failure	ss.72–73
05	Notice of Breach of Duty	Escalation when prior requests ignored — VCAT mandatory prerequisite	ss.208–209
06	Entry & Inspection Notice Response	Deficient entry notice — inadequate notice, wrong hours, no purpose	ss.85–91, 67
07	Rent Payment Protection	Real-time payment ledger — your defence against arrears allegations	s.91ZM
08	Rental Increase Contest	Rent increase that is excessive or inconsistent with the market	s.46(1)
09	Pet Consent Request	Pet request with the 14-day deemed-consent clock on the provider	s.71A
10	Lease Assignment & Subletting	Formal request to transfer your lease or sublet to a new occupant	RTA 1997
11	Termination Notice Challenge	Notice to Vacate received — test its validity before doing anything	Pt 6, s.91ZZI
12	Pre-Vacate Cleaning Dispute	Agent demands professional cleaning beyond your legal obligations	s.63
13	Bond Return Request	End of tenancy — formal demand for bond release via RTBA	ss.63, 419A

Each bundle contains two files: A Bundle Guide PDF (instructions on page 1, ready-to-send template on page 2) and an Evidence Tracker XLSX (How to Use tab + colour-coded Evidence Log). Bundles 01, 08, and 13 include additional specialist sheets.

## THE FIVE GOLDEN RULES OF TENANCY ADVOCACY

01

### **If it isn't in writing, it didn't happen.**

Every request, every response, every phone call — put it in writing and keep a copy. A verbal promise to fix something is worthless. An email confirming that promise is evidence.

02

### **Never, under any circumstances, withhold rent.**

Withholding rent — even during an unresolved urgent repair — gives the rental provider grounds for a Notice to Vacate and destroys your VCAT position. Pay rent in full, always.

03

### **Update your Evidence Tracker in real time.**

Log every interaction the moment it happens — not from memory two weeks later. VCAT requires specifics: exact dates, exact times, exact words. Your tracker is your witness.

04

### **Always follow a phone call with an email.**

After any verbal conversation with your agent, send an email: 'Further to our phone conversation today, you confirmed [X]. Please reply to confirm.' This converts a verbal agreement into written evidence.

05

### **Cite section numbers when you escalate.**

Agents deal with tenants who don't know their rights every day. Quoting the correct section of the Act immediately signals you are informed and serious.

## HOW TO RUN YOUR EVIDENCE TRACKERS

1

### **Open one tracker per issue**

Open the relevant bundle's Evidence Tracker the moment you send your first notice. Log that send as entry 1.

2

### **Let the Status column drive your follow-up**

Use the colour-coded status dropdown: Outstanding → In Progress → Escalated → Resolved. Anything Outstanding for more than 14 days needs escalation.

3

### **Name your Evidence References consistently**

Name every photo, screenshot, and email consistently: e.g., Photo\_Bathroom\_01\_15Mar25.jpg. Log the filename in the tracker.

4

### **Set a Follow-Up Required By date — every time**

Set this the moment you send anything. If no response by that date, escalate.

5

### **Print your tracker before you file**

Your Evidence Log becomes your Chronological Evidence Index — the first document you present at VCAT.

## QUICK DECISION GUIDE — WHICH BUNDLE DO I NEED?

I NEED TO...	USE BUNDLE
Dispute discrepancies in my condition report	01 — Condition Report Dispute
Document noise affecting quiet enjoyment	02 — Noise and Quiet Enjoyment
Report a non-urgent repair (appliance, plumbing, damage)	03 — General Repair
Report an urgent/emergency repair (gas, heating, flooding)	04 — Urgent Repair
Formally escalate after being ignored (VCAT prerequisite)	05 — Notice of Breach of Duty
Respond to a deficient inspection notice	06 — Entry & Inspection Notice
Keep a payment ledger / dispute an arrears allegation	07 — Rent Payment Protection
Challenge an excessive rent increase	08 — Rental Increase Contest
Request consent to keep a pet	09 — Pet Consent Request
Request permission to assign or sublet	10 — Lease Assignment & Subletting
Challenge a Notice to Vacate / termination notice	11 — Termination Notice Challenge
Push back on professional cleaning demands	12 — Pre-Vacate Cleaning Dispute
Request my bond back at end of tenancy	13 — Bond Return Request

## APPLYING TO VCAT — WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### What is VCAT?

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal is a low-cost, accessible tribunal that resolves tenancy disputes without needing a lawyer. Applications can be made online at [vcat.vic.gov.au](http://vcat.vic.gov.au).

### What VCAT can order:

- Compliance order (landlord must fix the issue by a set date)
- Compensation up to \$40,000 (s.209)
- Rent reduction (applied retroactively)
- Bond order (full or partial release)
- Rent increase disallowed (s.46(1))

### Before you file, you must have:

- A Notice of Breach of Duty (s.208) on record
- Your chronological evidence index (tracker printout)
- Copies of all formal notices sent
- Dated photos / video evidence
- For rent disputes: a CAV rent assessment report (s.46(1))

### Check VCAT's website for current filing fees.

Low-income concessions may be available.

## KEY SECTION NUMBERS — RTA 1997 (VIC) AT A GLANCE

When you apply to VCAT, citing the correct section number signals you are prepared and serious. These are the sections most commonly used in residential tenancy disputes.

SECTION	WHAT IT COVERS	RELEVANT BUNDLE
s.35	Condition report — renter must return within 5 business days	Bundle 01
s.35A	VCAT application to amend inaccurate condition report (within 30 days)	Bundle 01
s.46(1)	Excessive rent increase — requires CAV assessment report first	Bundle 08
s.63	Renter's duty to keep premises reasonably clean	Bundles 12, 13
s.67	Quiet enjoyment — rental provider must not unreasonably interfere	Bundles 02, 06
s.68	Rental provider's duty to maintain premises in good repair	Bundle 03
ss.72–73	Urgent repairs — renter's rights, \$2,500 self-repair limit	Bundle 04
s.75	Non-urgent repairs — renter VCAT application	Bundle 03
ss.85–91	Entry to rented premises — notice periods and permitted times	Bundle 06
s.91ZM	Rent arrears Notice to Vacate — 14 days unpaid; pay-and-stay defence	Bundles 07, 11
s.71A	Pet requests — provider must go to VCAT within 14 days or consent is deemed	Bundle 09
s.91ZZI	Retaliatory Notice to Vacate — VCAT challenge within 30 days	Bundle 11
s.208	Notice of Breach of Duty — mandatory VCAT prerequisite	Bundle 05
s.209	Compliance order and/or compensation up to \$40,000	Bundle 05
s.419A	Bond disputes — VCAT application for bond order	Bundle 13

### ■ CRITICAL — THE MOST IMPORTANT HABIT

The single most important habit in any tenancy dispute: open your Evidence Tracker the moment an issue arises and log every interaction as it happens. Tenants who document in real time win at VCAT. Tenants who reconstruct from memory rarely do.

## FREE RESOURCES FOR VICTORIAN RENTERS

ORGANISATION	ROLE	CONTACT
Consumer Affairs Victoria	Free conciliation, rent assessment reports, official guidance	1300 55 81 81 — <a href="http://consumer.vic.gov.au">consumer.vic.gov.au</a>
VCAT Residential Tenancies	Tenancy dispute hearings, bond orders, compliance orders	1300 01 8228 — <a href="http://vcat.vic.gov.au">vcat.vic.gov.au</a>
RTBA Online	Bond lodgement, bond return claims	<a href="http://rtba.vic.gov.au">rtba.vic.gov.au</a>
Tenants Victoria	Free advice, factsheets, advocacy support	<a href="http://tenantsvic.org.au">tenantsvic.org.au</a>
RDRV	Free dispute resolution before VCAT	<a href="http://rdv.com.au">rdv.com.au</a>
Victorian Legal Aid	Free legal advice for eligible renters	1300 792 387 — <a href="http://legalaid.vic.gov.au">legalaid.vic.gov.au</a>
Community Legal Centres Vic	Free legal help across Victoria	<a href="http://fclc.org.au">fclc.org.au</a>
Safe Steps (Family Violence)	24/7 family violence safety planning support	1800 015 188 — <a href="http://safesteps.org.au">safesteps.org.au</a>
Housing Victoria	Public and community housing, crisis and homelessness accommodation	<a href="http://housing.vic.gov.au">housing.vic.gov.au</a>
National Debt Helpline	Free, independent financial counselling if rent arrears stem from financial hardship	1800 007 007 — <a href="http://ndh.org.au">ndh.org.au</a>
Translating and Interpreting Service	Free phone interpreting for renters who need support in another language	131 450 — <a href="http://tisonational.gov.au">tisonational.gov.au</a>