

# Voluntary Landlord Registration Scheme - FAQs

## I am a private landlord - do I need to register on the VLRS?

At the moment there is no legal requirement to register as a landlord. The voluntary scheme, as the name suggests, has been launched for landlords of private residential properties to apply in preparation for mandatory registration being introduced in 2022.

## Why should I register on the voluntary scheme if it is not a legal requirement at the moment?

The benefits of joining the scheme while it is voluntary include:

- Free registration for the first 5 years, including automatic transfer onto the mandatory register in 2022, subject to further self-declaration within 6 months of being transferred. (Under Section 11(3) of the Landlord Registration (Private Housing) Act 2021, in order to continue to be registered after the 6 month period, the relevant landlord makes a declaration that they comply with the minimum standards for a relevant landlord and that each rented dwelling for which registration is required also complies with the minimum standards.)
- A unique registration number to assist in marketing properties, which will be essential for applying and qualifying for grant assistance through the [Green Living Grant Scheme](#) recently launched by the Department for Enterprise.
- If you are refused entry onto the VLRS (as a result of not being able to meet the required standards of the scheme), you will be able to take whatever steps are necessary to enable you to be ready to register under the mandatory requirements when the Landlord Registration (Private Housing) Act 2021 comes into operation.

## Am I exempt from registering as a landlord?

All landlords of private residential properties will be required to register when the scheme becomes mandatory, unless covered by one of the exceptions listed in the Act. **The following are a few examples of exceptions for when residential landlords will not be required to register:**

- Landlords who rent to their own employees as required for the employee to carry out their duties
- Agricultural holdings or a Farm Business Tenancy (Agricultural Tenancies Act 2008)
- Tourist accommodation (when rented for less than 6 months)
- Tenancies to close relatives (spouse, partner, parent, grandparent, siblings, aunts/uncles, nephew/nieces- by blood or half blood or step-family or adopted family)
- Shared accommodation with the Landlord (Landlord residing in the property)

The full list of exemptions are in Section 9 of the Landlord Registration (Private Housing) Act 2021.

## I cannot print off the application form as I don't have access to a printer.

Please call the Housing team on **685955** or email [landlordregistration@gov.im](mailto:landlordregistration@gov.im) to ask for a form, the team will be happy to post the necessary paperwork to your address.

We are currently developing an online application process and aim for this integrated system to be in place ahead of mandatory requirements being introduced later next year. It is anticipated that the majority of applications will be made electronically in future, avoiding unnecessary waste and driving efficiency.

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## **What are the Minimum Standards?**

The minimum standards for when registration becomes mandatory are not yet finalised. There will be a public consultation in Spring 2022 about the proposed Minimum Standards Regulations and Registration Fees. The final proposals will be laid before Tynwald for approval in the summer with registration becoming a legal requirement later on in 2022 if they are approved.

The minimum standards referred to within the VLRS application were set in 2013 and reflect good practice and existing legislative requirements, such as those set out within housing, fire safety and environmental health legislation. It is anticipated that the new standards will build on existing standards and will still require relevant landlords to comply with existing legislative requirements. If you have queries about existing requirements around fire safety or environmental health please contact the Fire Service or the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

## **Is there going to be a register of private landlords and will it be publicly available to view?**

That is the intention for the Mandatory Scheme. For now, the Department is operating a voluntary scheme only, registered landlords can share their registration number to prospective tenants but a list won't be published.

## **I am the landlord of an HMO – will I have to register?**

When registration becomes mandatory landlords operating HMOs will be required to register under the scheme unless one of the exceptions in Section 9 of the Landlord Registration (Private Housing) Act 2021 applies. You may apply to register under the voluntary landlord registration scheme before registration becomes mandatory if you wish to do so.

## **I am unsure how to answer some of the questions on the application form – what should I do?**

Our Customer Service team are available to answer any queries you may have about completing the form and supply of documentation.

## **If I join the VLRS do I need to issue a new tenancy agreement to my tenant(s)?**

You do NOT need to issue a new tenancy agreement if you join the VLRS. Simply provide a copy of the standard tenancy agreement you currently issue.

## **When is the deadline to apply for voluntary registration?**

The VLRS has no set deadline at the moment though it will be superseded by mandatory registration after the Regulations come into effect towards the end of 2022.