



OpenDoors

Rent increase guideline set for 2016

Each year, the Manitoba government sets the rent increase guideline. This is the amount landlords can raise rents without applying to the Residential Tenancies Branch. As of January 1, 2016, the rent increase guideline is 1.1 percent.

To arrive at the guideline, the government uses a method that is set out in the Residential Rent Regulation. This method is based on the percentage change in the average annual All-Items Consumer Price Index (Manitoba only), published by Statistics Canada.

Landlords who want to increase the rent by the guideline amount must give tenants written notice, at least **three months** before a rent increase takes effect.

The guideline applies to most rented residential apartments, single rooms, houses and duplexes. Some units are exempt from Part 9 of *The Residential Tenancies Act* and do not have to follow the annual rent increase guideline. These include:

- units renting for \$1435 or more per month, as of December 31, 2015
- personal care homes
- approved rehabilitated rental units
- new buildings less than 15 years old, where an occupancy permit was first issued or a unit was first occupied, after April 9, 2001

- new buildings less than 20 years old, where an occupancy permit was first issued or a unit was first occupied, after March 7, 2005.

Tenants who want to object to any rent increase can send a letter to the branch explaining why they are objecting to the increase. If you are objecting to an increase that is at or below the guideline, *The Residential Tenancies Act* sets out the following reasons for objecting:

- The landlord is not maintaining the rental unit or the building
- The landlord has reduced or taken away a service or facility
- The landlord is not meeting any other obligation under a tenancy agreement or the act
- The tenant believes the landlord's costs have not increased.

The branch must receive any letter of objection no later than 60 days before the rent increase date.

For more information on rent increases, contact the Residential Tenancies Branch office nearest you or visit our website at www.manitoba.ca/rtb.

Fee changes effective October 1, 2015

The following fees came into effect on October 1, 2015:

Application for Rent Increase Above Amount Permitted by Regulation, Form 3	\$150 for 19 units or fewer (no change) \$500 for 20 – 49 units \$500 plus \$5 per unit to a maximum of \$1,000 for 50 units or more
Application for Approval of Rehabilitation Scheme for Specified Unit, Form 5B	\$150
Application for a Rent Status Report on a Residential Complex	\$150 for four units or fewer \$300 for five – 49 units \$400 for 50 units or more

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact us. Please make sure to use the most current version of any branch form by visiting www.manitoba.ca/rtb.

The Order Registry System

How it works and how it can help you

The Residential Tenancies Branch holds hearings on tenancy related matters, like claims for compensation, orders of possession or determinations. After a hearing is held, the branch issues an Order with its reasons for the decision. This Order is mailed out to the parties involved. Once the order becomes final, a copy is placed on the Order Registry System.

Here are some examples of the type of real-life situations where the branch might hold a hearing and issue an order afterwards:

- A tenant or landlord feels the other party owes them money. They can file a claim for compensation at the branch.
- A landlord has given a tenant a Notice of Termination to end the tenancy and the tenant doesn't leave. The landlord can file for an Order of Possession at the branch. The branch will decide if the tenant can stay or must leave.

Final Orders issued from 1999 onwards by the branch and the Residential Tenancies Commission, who hears all branch appeals, are listed on the Order Registry System.

If you're a landlord or tenant, you can use the Order Registry System to search for orders by:

- order type - orders of possession, repairs, uninhabitable
- order number – if you know a specific order you want to read

In some cases, you can also search by name or address.

If you're a landlord, you may want to use the system as part of your background check for tenant applications.

If you're a prospective tenant, you may want to use the system before entering into a tenancy agreement with a new landlord. Landlords and tenants can use the order system on a one-time basis for a small fee, or more often with a paid yearly membership.

To find out more about this service and the fees involved, go to manitoba.ca/rtb, then click on Online Tools and Orders System or contact the Residential Tenancies Branch office nearest you.



Did you know?

- Manitoba laws require landlords to install and maintain one working smoke alarm in every rental unit.
- Landlords must check smoke alarms in rental units once a year.
- It is against the law to tamper with a smoke alarm.

Escape planning – saving lives in home and apartment fires

Each year, families in Canada lose loved ones to house and apartment fires. To give you and your loved ones the best chance for survival in case of a fire, make sure to have working smoke alarms in your home and an escape plan that you practice with all members of your family.

For many people, smoke alarms are just loud signals that tell you you've burned something on the stove again. You can't imagine how anyone could sleep through the noise. However, studies have shown that children often sleep through smoke alarms, never waking or not waking for several minutes. In a fire, minutes can be the difference between survival and death.

When you are making your escape plan, remember to think about who is living in your house. Is there:

- anyone hearing impaired?
- children who may not wake to the alarm?
- someone who takes medication that causes them to sleep heavily?
- someone with a disability who may require help getting out of the home?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, you may want to designate someone who is responsible for waking and assisting those people from your home to your designated meeting place. For example, you have one child living with you and your mother who relies on a walker. When you practise your plan, have one person wake the child and help the child get out to your meeting place. Have another person help your mother out to the meeting place.

Remember:

- You must react quickly if there is a fire. Do not stop to gather belongings.
- Smoke may be very black and very thick, making it hard to see.
- Inhaling the smoke is what kills most people. Stay close to the floor.
- Know your plan and have two ways out. The heat from a fire is extreme. You may need to go out another way.
- Have a meeting place. If anyone is missing, tell the fire fighters.

For more information on fire safety, and developing and practicing an escape plan, visit winnipeg.ca/FPS/Public_Education/Fire_Pamphlets.stm





Housing Plus

Making housing first priority

The Winnipeg Rental Network has launched its Housing Plus program. This program will help people who are homeless to find housing that meets their needs.

Housing Plus is looking for landlords and property managers to work with the program and their eight partnering agencies to create successful tenancies. If you're a landlord, and you want to know more about the Housing Plus program, contact the team lead, Jason Simonson, at Jason@winnipegrentnet.ca or **204-414-8220**.

Need information?

Winnipeg
302-254 Edmonton Street
or call 204-945-2476

Brandon
143-340 9th Street
or call 204-726-6230

Thompson
113-59 Elizabeth Drive
or call 204-677-6496
Toll free 1-800-782-8403

Online: manitoba.ca/rtb
Offline: in person or by phone
Visit your branch office
Monday to Friday
from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.

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