

Can Property Agents Resolve Landlord-Tenant Issues?

Over the course of a tenancy, landlords and tenants may run into issues that are difficult to resolve.

In such cases, both parties sometimes try to look for a third party to mediate — often one of the property agents who handled the rental transaction.

However, an agent's responsibilities typically end after the landlord and tenant sign the tenancy agreement and the property is handed over to the tenant.

Some agents do step in to help resolve landlord-tenant issues out of goodwill, but they are actually not obliged to do so.

That said, you *can* formally engage your agent to manage your property if he is keen. Remember to document the agreed terms in writing.

Also, to protect yourself during the tenancy, ensure that the tenancy agreement states the terms of the tenancy clearly. This can minimise landlord-tenant friction down the road.

Some common clauses include:

- Payment schedule of rent, and payment and return of rental deposit;
- The party to pay the utility charges, monthly maintenance, repair fees, etc.;
- Extent of the tenant's responsibility to upkeep the property, including sanitary installations, fixtures and fittings;
- The party to call and pay for servicing work on air-conditioning; and
- The party in-charge of minor repairs such as replacement of light bulbs or appliances, and plumbing work.

Your property agent should help to safeguard your interests during the rental transaction. Here's what you should expect him to do:

- Advise you on your eligibility to rent out or rent a property/room;
- Arrange for property viewings;
- Provide help and advice to you throughout the rental transaction;
- Represent you in negotiations with interested prospective parties;
- Promptly forward to you all offers or expressions of interest from interested parties or their property agents;
- Assist you in entering into a binding agreement and explain all relevant forms and documents to you; and
- If you are a tenant, he should also advise you to stamp the tenancy agreement with the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS).

Your property agent completes his services when he has fulfilled the responsibilities stated in the Council for Estate Agencies' (CEA) [Estate Agency Agreement](#) with you.

Finally, if you are a landlord, always verify the identity of your potential tenants. Under the Immigration Act, homeowners who wish to rent their premises out to foreigners are required to check the status of their prospective tenants to ensure that they are in Singapore legitimately.

You should:

- *Check* the original immigration pass or/and work pass of the foreign tenant;
- *Cross-check* particulars on these passes against the particulars on his passport; and
- *Verify* with the employer if the prospective tenant is working in Singapore.

Checking the validity status of various immigration and work passes is easy! You can either do so [online](#) or refer to [ICA's media release](#) for more information.

For more information, please refer to [CEA's consumer guide on residential rental transactions](#).



Be sure to state terms clearly in the tenancy agreement to minimise landlord-tenant disputes