

OPERATING A ROOMING HOUSE



What is a rooming house?

A rooming house is a building in which there are individual rooms available for rent, to four (4) or more people. Each resident pays rent for their own room to the rooming house operator, with the rest of the house considered a communal area.

Registration

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* requires that all rooming houses be registered with Council. It is an offence to operate a rooming house without registration.

Prior to registration being granted, Council officers must inspect the premises to ensure that it complies with all relevant health, building and planning requirements.

Inspections

Council's Environmental Health Officers may enter a rooming house at any reasonable hour in the daytime for the purpose of monitoring compliance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*. The inspecting officer will document any issues and set a time-frame for them to be rectified.

Facilities and Living Conditions

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*, a rooming house must have:

- At least one toilet, one bath/shower and one wash basin for every ten (10) residents;
- a continuous and adequate supply of drinking water and hot water to the relevant facilities; and
- a sufficient number of waste bins to contain the garbage generated by the premises.

All bedrooms, toilets, bathrooms, laundries, kitchens, living rooms and any common areas must be kept:

- In good repair and working order; and
- in a clean, sanitary and hygienic condition.

Room Sizes

A bedroom in a rooming house must have a minimum floor area of 7.5m². If a room is to accommodate two (2) people, it must have a floor area of 12m² or more. An additional person may be accommodated in a room for every 4m² over 12m².

Fire and Building Safety

All rooming houses must be fitted with stand-alone, hard wired smoke alarms in every bedroom and every hallway associated with a bedroom, and smoke alarm activated lighting to assist in evacuation. For detailed information on fire and building safety requirements for your particular property, contact Council's Building Department on 8290 3218 or building@stonnington.vic.gov.au.

Tenancy Issues

Consumer Affairs Victoria can provide information and advice regarding tenancy issues and disputes like bond lodgements, notice periods, rent increases, goods left behind and more. They can be contacted on 1300 558 181 or consumer@justice.vic.gov.au.

Where can I get further advice or apply for registration?

Contact Council's Environmental Health Unit on 8290 3393 or health@stonnington.vic.gov.au.

Useful Links

Consumer Affairs Victoria – www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Registered Accommodation Association of Victoria (RAAV) – www.raav.org.au

Tenants Union of Victoria (TUV) – www.tuv.org.au

Disputes Settlement Victoria – www.disputes.vic.gov.au