

The 14 Minimum Standards for Victorian Rental Properties

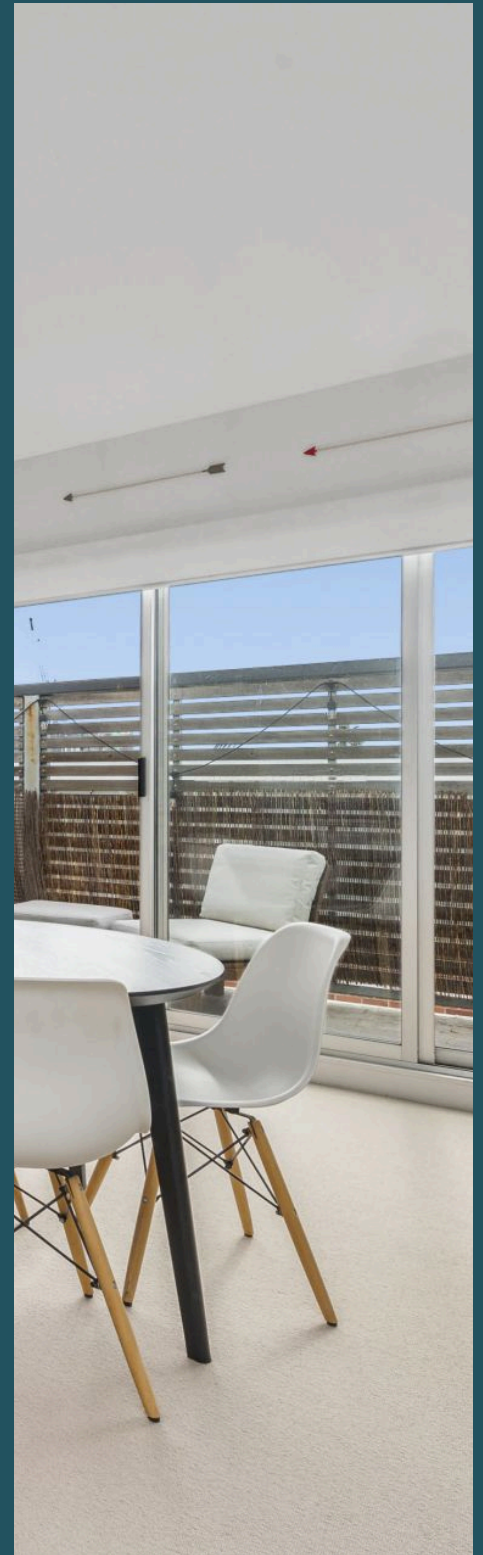
GUIDEBOOK



By Ham Kerr
Property Management Experts

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01 INTRODUCTION

The landscape of Victorian rental properties has undergone a significant transformation with the introduction of minimum standards under the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021. As of March 2025, these standards aren't just guideline, they're legal requirements that must be verified before a property can even be advertised.

At Ham Kerr Property, with over 40 years of experience in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, we've guided countless property investors through regulatory changes. This concise guide cuts through the complexity to deliver exactly what you need to know about the 14 minimum standards.

Whether you're preparing a new investment property or ensuring your existing portfolio remains compliant, this guide provides the essential knowledge you need to navigate Victoria's rental standards with confidence.

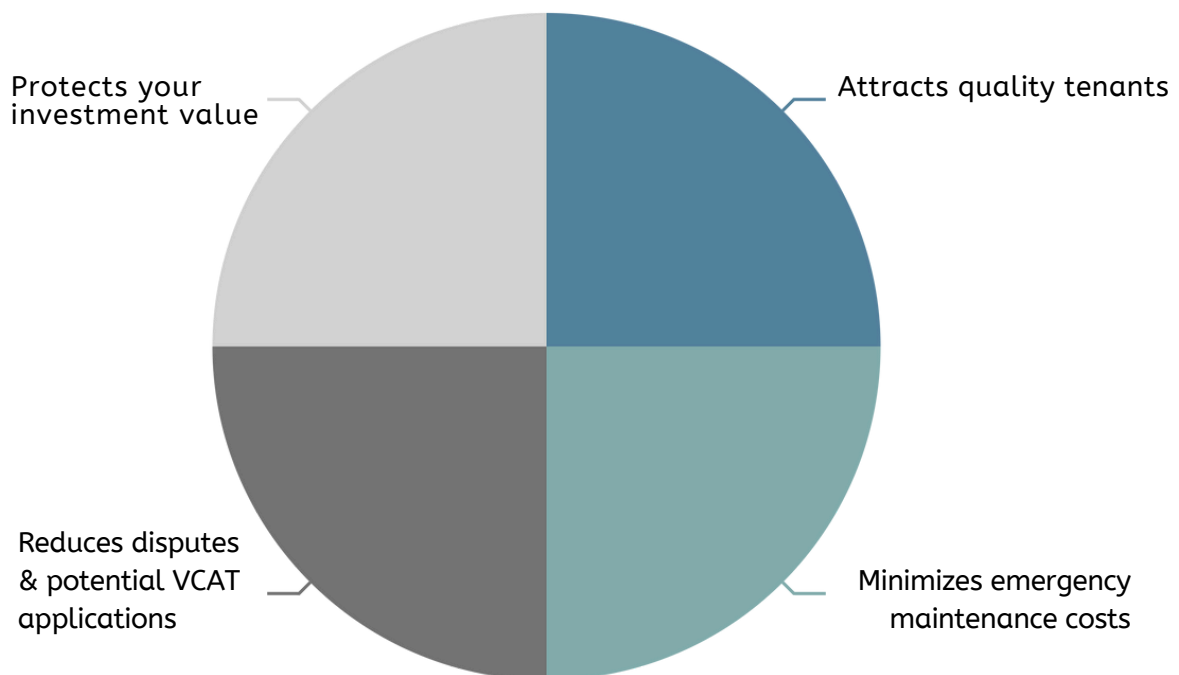
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02 WHY THESE STANDARDS MATTER

The March 2025 amendment to the Residential Tenancies Act has raised the stakes significantly. Rental providers must now verify compliance before advertising a property, making understanding these standards not just good practice, but a legal necessity.



Let's explore each standard with clarity and precision.



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THE 14 STANDARDS: YOUR QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



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BATHROOMS



Essential Requirements:

- ☒ A functioning washbasin
- ☒ A shower or bath
- ☒ Reliable hot and cold water
- ☒ Shower head with 3-star water efficiency rating
(1-star or 2-star acceptable only if property design prevents 3-star installation)




Pro Tip: Check water pressure and temperature consistency during inspections, these are common tenant complaints that signal potential non-compliance.

Pro Tip: Electrical compliance is not DIY territory, always engage a licensed electrician who can provide proper documentation of work completed.



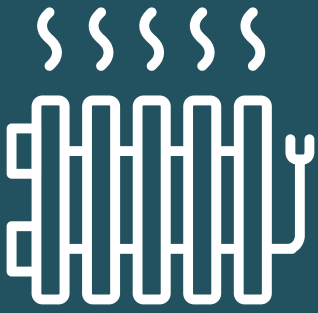
ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Essential Requirements:

-  Modern switchboard with circuit breakers
-  Electrical safety switches (RCDs) for all circuits
-  Circuit breaker protection for power outlets and lighting circuits (minimum)



HEATING



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Essential Requirements:

- ☒ Fixed heater (not portable) in good working order in the main living area
- ☒ For agreements from March 2023, must be energy-efficient
- ☒ Heating capacity appropriate for the room size

Pro Tip: Split system air conditioners that provide both heating and cooling often represent the best value investment for compliance.





KITCHEN

Essential Requirements

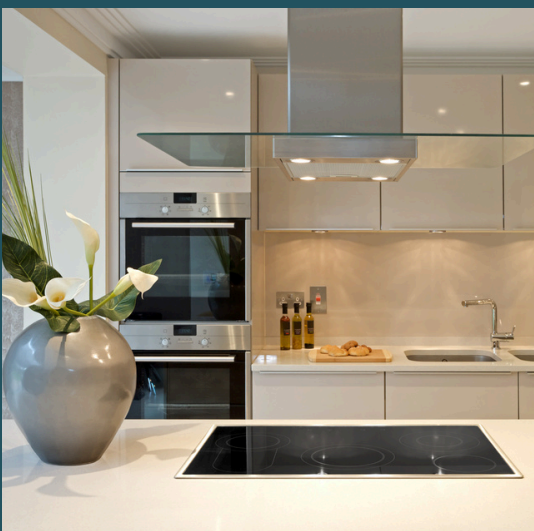
Functioning sink with hot and cold water ☒

Stovetop in good working order ☒

(minimum two burners, four for properties with more than three bedrooms)

Functioning oven ☒

Pro Tip: When replacing appliances, consider energy efficiency ratings, they're not just better for tenants' bills but can be a strong marketing point.





LAUNDRY 05

Essential Requirements:



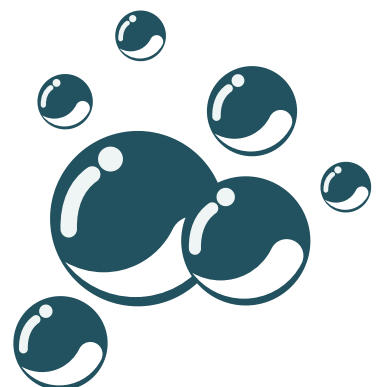
Reasonable hot and cold



water supply
Proper waste water
drainage



Pro Tip: Check connections for washing machines regularly, leaks here can cause significant damage and create mould issues that trigger other compliance problems.





LIGHTING 06

Essential Requirements:

- ☒ All habitable rooms must have natural light access
- ☒ Appropriate electric lighting in all interior room
- ☒ At least one light point at exterior entries



Pro Tip: LED lighting upgrades can improve compliance while reducing energy costs for tenants, a win-win investment



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LOCK



Essential Requirements:

- ☒ External entry doors must have locks operable by key from outside
- ☒ Must be unlockable from inside without a key
- ☒ Requirements don't apply to screen doors or garage access

Pro Tip: Consider master key systems for properties with multiple entry points to simplify management while maintaining security.

08

MOULD AND DAMP

Essential Requirements:

- ✓ All habitable rooms must be free from mould and damp caused by building structure

Pro Tip: Address the cause, not just the symptoms. Structural mould issues often relate to ventilation, plumbing leaks, or building envelope failures



09

STRUCTURAL SOUNDNESS

Essential Requirements:

- ✓ Property must be structurally sound and weatherproof

Pro Tip: Regular roof and gutter maintenance prevents many weatherproofing failures and is far less expensive than remediation after water damage occurs.





Essential Requirements:



TOILETS

- ☒ At least one functioning toilet
- ☒ Connected to appropriate sewerage or wastewater system
- ☒ Located in a room or compartment providing adequate privacy

Pro Tip: Water-efficient toilets can reduce water bills while ensuring reliable operation, consider them when replacements are needed.



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VENTILATION

Essential Requirements:

- ✓ Adequate ventilation in all habitable rooms, bathrooms, shower rooms, toilets, and laundries

Pro Tip: Mechanical ventilation (exhaust fans) in bathrooms and laundries is often the most reliable solution, especially in properties with limited window access.



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VERMIN-PROOF BINS

Essential Requirements:

- ✓ Rubbish and recycling bins that are vermin-proof
- ✓ Typically council-provided or similar type

Pro Tip: Provide clear information to tenants about local waste collection schedules and requirements to prevent overflow issues.

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WINDOW COVERINGS



Essential Requirements:

All windows in bedrooms and living areas must have coverings that:

- ☒ Can be opened and closed
Block light
- ☒ Provide privacy



Pro Tip: Neutral-colored blinds or curtains are typically the most versatile and tenant-friendly option.

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WINDOWS



Essential Requirements:

All external windows that can be opened must:

- ☒ Be able to be set in open or closed positions
- ☒ Have functioning latches to secure against external entry



Pro Tip: Window maintenance is often overlooked, regular lubrication of mechanisms prevents costly repairs and security issues.

04 COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION: THE ESSENTIAL CHECKLIST

Before advertising your property, use this streamlined approach:

Document Everything

- ☐ Photograph compliant elements
- ☐ Retain professional certificates (especially electrical)
- ☐ Keep dated records of inspections and upgrades

Professional Assessments

- ☐ Electrical safety (licensed electrician required)
- ☐ Heating efficiency verification
- ☐ Plumbing compliance checks

Pre-Advertising Verification

- ☐ Complete a final walkthrough using all 14 standards
- ☐ Address any outstanding issues
- ☐ Update your compliance documentation





Common Pitfalls

WHAT TO AVOID

05



Misinterpreting Requirements

Solution: Refer directly to the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021



Inadequate Documentation

Solution: Implement a digital compliance file system



Overlooking Interdependent Standards

Solution: Consider how ventilation affects mould, how structural issues impact weatherproofing, etc.



Delaying Necessary Upgrades

Solution: Develop a staged compliance plan with clear timelines



Assuming Older Properties Are Exempt

Solution: The 2025 amendment applies to all properties being newly advertised, regardless of age

06 How Ham Kerr Property Can Help

With over 30 years of experience in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, Ham Kerr Property offers specialized support for rental providers:



Compliance Assessment Services:

Professional inspections to verify minimum standards compliance

Remediation Coordination:

Management of necessary upgrades or repairs



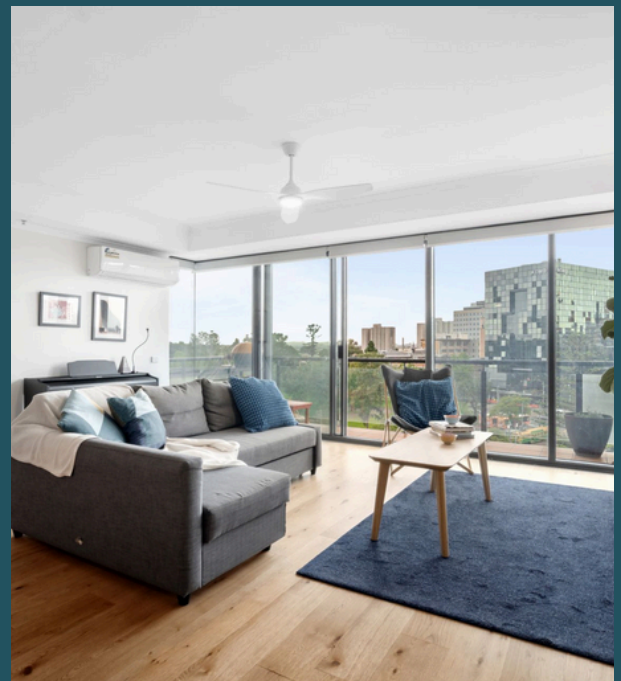
Documentation Systems:

Comprehensive record-keeping solutions

Ongoing Compliance Monitoring:

Regular inspections and maintenance





07 CONCLUSION

The 14 minimum standards represent both a challenge and an opportunity for Victorian rental providers. While compliance requires attention to detail and sometimes investment, properties that meet or exceed these standards attract better tenants, command premium rents, and experience fewer management issues.

At Ham Kerr Property, we're committed to helping property investors not just meet these standards, but leverage them to maximize returns on their investments. Our family-owned business has been serving Melbourne's eastern suburbs since 1992, bringing two generations of expertise to your property management needs. For personalized guidance on ensuring your investment property complies with all minimum standards, contact our team of property management experts today.

THANK YOU

This guide is intended as general information only and does not constitute legal advice. For specific guidance on your individual circumstances, please consult with a legal professional specializing in Victorian tenancy law.



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