

Tenant Move-In Guide

Updated November 2025.

Steps for settling into rentals from Machakos to Kisumu.

1. Inspect and record unit condition with dated photos and share with the landlord for acknowledgment.
2. Confirm utility meter readings, account transfers, and any prepaid token balances.
3. Store signed leases, tribunal contacts, receipts, and emergency numbers in a digital vault.
4. Schedule first rent reminder, diarise statutory notice periods, and log repair requests in writing.

KENYAN RENTAL LAW DIGEST

Land Act 2012 (No. 6 of 2012): Applies to all public, private, and community land.

Tenancy decisions must align with principles of equitable access, security of tenure, sustainable land management, non-discrimination, and peaceful dispute resolution.

Periodic leases (including monthly rentals) require written notice equal to the rent interval before termination or revision.

Rent Restriction Act (Cap 296, Revised 2009): Covers dwelling houses with standard rent â€ KSh 2,500 per month. Landlords must obtain Tribunal approval before rent increases, issue written notices, maintain rent books, and provide receipts.

Self-help evictions, harassment, or withdrawal of essential services are prohibited; the Tribunal can order compensation and enforce compliance.

Landlord and Tenant (Shops, Hotels and Catering Establishments) Act (Cap 301): Governs controlled tenancies for commercial premises, including unwritten leases or written terms under five years. Any termination or change of rent/services requires adherence to statutory notice and Tribunal oversight. Sub-tenants retain protections even if the head lease ends prematurely.

Eviction & Enforcement: Evictions must flow through lawful orders from the Rent Restriction Tribunal, Business Premises Rent Tribunal, or courts. Lockouts, intimidation, or dismantling utilities breach Kenyan law. Maintain deposits in trust, document deductions, and use Small Claims or Magistrates Courts where relevant.

Furnished Lettings & Repairs: Kenyan statutes require landlords to keep premises in reasonable condition, regulate furnished rentals, and prohibit premiums or excessive ancillary fees. Tenants should log defects promptly to preserve remedies.

Legislative Watch: The Landlord and Tenant Bill seeks to harmonise residential and commercial regimes; verify status before relying on draft provisions.