

# Modifications to Your Property

It's natural for tenants to want to personalise their home and make it more comfortable for everyday living.

From hanging artwork and installing shelves to accessibility upgrades and security improvements, modification requests are increasingly common. Understanding your rights and responsibilities as a property owner can help you make informed decisions while maintaining a positive tenancy experience.

## What is a property modification?

A modification is any change a tenant requests to make to the property during their tenancy.

Some modifications are simple and easily reversible, while others may be more permanent in nature. Depending on the type of modification being requested, different rules and approval requirements may apply.

### Examples may include:

- Hanging shelves or artwork
- Installing curtains or blinds
- Security upgrades
- Accessibility improvements
- Telecommunications or internet installations
- Energy efficiency improvements

Every request should be assessed individually, taking into account the property's condition, long term impact and relevant legislation.

## Why do tenants request modifications?

For many tenants, a rental property is more than just a place to live, it's their home.

Often, modification requests are aimed at improving comfort, accessibility, safety or functionality. In many cases, reasonable improvements can contribute to a positive tenancy experience and encourage longer term occupancy.

The key is finding a balance between supporting tenants' needs and protecting your investment.

## What types of modifications are there?

Generally, modification requests fall into two broad categories:

### General Modifications

General modifications are requests that receive additional protections under tenancy legislation.

These may include:

- **Minor modifications** that can be easily removed or reversed at the end of the tenancy, such as picture hooks, shelving or curtain installations.
- **Defined-reason modifications** that relate to accessibility, safety, security, telecommunications or energy efficiency improvements.

Depending on the nature of the request, owners may have limited grounds for refusal.

### Special Modifications

Special modifications are requests that fall outside the categories above.

These are typically assessed on a case-by-case basis and may be approved or declined provided the decision is reasonable and consistent with legislative requirements.

### Can I refuse a modification request?

In some circumstances, yes.

However, the ability to refuse a request will depend on the type of modification being sought and the applicable tenancy legislation.

Factors that may be considered include:

- Potential damage to the property
- Impact on common property or shared areas
- Compliance with building or safety requirements
- Ongoing maintenance obligations
- Costs associated with installation or removal
- The overall reasonableness of the request

If a request raises concerns, we'll guide you through the options available and help ensure any decisions are made in accordance with current legislation.

### Can I approve a modification with conditions?

Absolutely.

In many situations, an approval can be granted subject to reasonable conditions that help protect your property.

These conditions may include:

- Requiring licensed or qualified tradespeople to complete the work
- Ensuring appropriate insurance is held
- Providing plans or specifications before works commence
- Protecting surrounding surfaces and fixtures
- Agreeing how the modification will be managed at the end of the tenancy i.e. remain or remove

Conditions help create clarity for both owners and tenants while reducing the risk of disputes later.

### Who pays for modifications?

In most circumstances, the tenant is responsible for the costs associated with a modification they have requested.

This generally includes installation, maintenance, removal and any restoration works required at the end of the tenancy.

However, there may be situations where an owner chooses to contribute towards an improvement, particularly if it adds long term value to the property or will remain in place for future tenants.

### What happens when the tenancy ends?

This depends on the type of modification and the agreement reached when approval was granted.

Some modifications may need to be removed and the property restored to its original condition, allowing for fair wear and tear.

Others may remain in place if both parties agree that the modification provides ongoing benefit to the property.

Clear documentation at the approval stage helps avoid misunderstandings when the tenancy concludes.

### What role does Podium play?

Our role is to manage the process from start to finish.

We'll review the request, explain any legislative requirements, discuss the potential implications for your investment and provide practical recommendations so you can make an informed decision.

Where approvals are granted, we'll help document any agreed conditions and coordinate communication with the tenant to ensure expectations are clear from the outset.

### The Podium Approach

Not every modification request needs to be viewed as a risk.

Sometimes a small change can improve a tenant's experience, encourage longer tenancies and even add value to the property. The key is understanding the request, assessing the impact and ensuring the appropriate protections are in place.

At Podium, we're here to help you navigate those decisions with confidence, balancing tenant needs with the long term protection of your investment.