

FURNISHED OR PART FURNISHED PROPERTIES

The Consumer Protection Act 1987 and The Furniture and Furnishings (fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (Amended 1989 and 1993) place a legal responsibility on us as your Agent and you as a Landlord to ensure that furniture which is supplied as part of a furnished tenancy complies with the legislation. **Failure to do so could result in criminal proceedings against you.**

What are the requirements of the legislation?

In brief the regulations require that:

- Upholstered furniture must have fire resistant filling material.
- Cover fabrics must have passed a match resistance test (covers in certain fabrics such as cotton or silk may be used in non match resistance form provided the furniture has a fire resistance material interliner between the cover and the filling material)
- The combination of the cover and the filling material must have passed a cigarette resistance test.

What types of furniture are affected by the legislation?

The following list sets out the items of furniture most commonly affected:

- Bed bases
- Headboards
- Mattresses
- Sofas/sofa beds
- Armchairs
- Futons
- Convertible beds
- Nursery furniture
- Garden furniture (suitable for indoor use)
- Scatter cushions
- Seat pads
- Pillows
- Loose and stretch covers

It is therefore advisable to check ALL upholstered items at the property.

Items that are NOT covered by the legislation include:

- Sleeping bags
- Bed cloths
- Duvets
- Pillow cases
- Curtains
- Carpets
- Any items manufactured before 1950.

To enable you to tell if an item of furniture complies with the regulations it will carry a permanent label headed 'CARELESSNESS CAUSES FIRES'. The label will also state that the covers or the interliner pass the match test.

As a rule of thumb, mattresses and bed bases sold before 1990 are unlikely to comply.

Penalties

The penalties for non compliance carry a punishment of up to 6 months imprisonment or a level 5 fine (currently £5,000) OR BOTH. Should there be a fire at the property and it is proven that non compliant furniture aggravated the fire, then as Landlord you could be held liable and the penalties even greater.

Disclaimer

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