

How do social landlords establish timelines for emergency repairs under Awaab's Law?

Under Awaab's Law, social landlords must address emergency hazards like severe damp and mould within 24 hours and complete repairs within specified deadlines, starting from October 2025. Non-emergency cases require inspections and action plans within 70 working days. These timelines aim to protect tenants from health risks linked to poor housing conditions.

Understanding Awaab's Law and Its Timelines

Awaab's Law, set to take effect in October 2025, mandates strict timelines for social landlords to address hazards that threaten tenant health, particularly damp and mould. The law emerged after the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak, linked to prolonged exposure to mould in his home. This legislation compels landlords to act swiftly, balancing urgency with practicality.

Key Timelines for Emergency Repairs

1. 24-Hour Response for Emergencies

Landlords must investigate and begin repairs for hazards posing an "immediate risk" within 24 hours of reporting. Examples include severe mould outbreaks or structural damp causing respiratory distress.

2. 70 Working Days for Non-Emergencies

For less urgent cases, landlords have 70 working days to:

- Inspect the property.
- Provide a report.
- Draft and implement a remedial plan.

3. Ongoing Monitoring Requirements

Post-repair, landlords must ensure hazards do not recur. Tools like humidity sensors or ventilation upgrades (e.g., mechanical systems) are recommended for compliance.

Challenges and Solutions for Compliance

Social landlords face logistical hurdles, such as resource allocation and tenant communication. Proactive strategies include:

- **Pre-emptive Inspections:** Regular checks for early signs of damp.
- **Ventilation Upgrades:** Installing systems like MVHR (Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery) to prevent moisture buildup.
- **Tenant Education:** Clear guidance on reducing condensation (e.g., using extractor fans, avoiding drying clothes indoors).

Example Workflow for Landlords:

1. **Report Received:** Tenant alerts landlord to mould.

2. **Risk Assessment:** Landlord categorises the case as emergency/non-emergency.
3. **Action Taken:** Repairs begin within 24 hours (emergency) or 70 days (non-emergency).
4. **Preventive Measures:** Install monitoring devices like COSIE Homes to track humidity.

Social landlords must adopt a proactive, tenant-focused approach to meet Awaab's Law deadlines, combining rapid repairs with preventive measures like ventilation upgrades and continuous monitoring.