

STATES OF JERSEY



RENT SAFE SCHEME (P.121/2022): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 26th January 2022
by Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier
Earliest date for debate: 8th February 2022

STATES GREFFE

RENT SAFE SCHEME (P.121/2021): AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

At the end of the paragraph, insert the following words –

“and are accredited under the scheme in order to rent out property”.

DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for the Environment –

- (a) to bring forward such legislative amendments as are necessary to make it legally mandatory that all landlords register with the current Rent Safe scheme and are accredited under the scheme in order to rent out property; and
- (b) to develop a process for the regular renewal of Rent Safe registration based on a risk rating approach to determine the frequency and order of inspections of rental dwellings.

REPORT

This simple amendment requires properties to be Accredited under the Rent Safe Scheme in order to be let. This means reaching 3-, 4- or 5-star status, meeting minimum standards that exist in law. Without this, we could inadvertently give tacit approval to housing below minimum standards, perhaps even creating a market for substandard rental accommodation. It could also lead to inflating the price of accommodation attaining 5-star status.

As the proposition states “non-Accredited star ratings Landlords who achieve a 0-, 1-, or 2-star rating do not currently appear on the Rent Safe register.” By bringing all landlords into Rent Safe and requiring minimum standards to be met, this will lead to a need to improve the standard of the accommodation before rental. Without this clarity, accommodation may still be rented out without reaching minimum standards and without registration of the landlord.

It would be for the minister to confirm the time available for improvements to accommodation before reinspection, as arbiter of the inspection regime.

The amendment is intended to strengthen the proposition.

Financial and manpower implications

The original P.121/2021 proposition details the previous year budget for minimum housing standards and the absence of projected figures for 2022, due to the ongoing redesign of the departments – and the opportunities that this highlights.

My amendment should not significantly impact this financial framework, though there may be a limited increase in the number of re-inspections for those Landlords endeavouring to reach the minimum 3-star rating.