



Damp and Mould Tenants' Handbook



Damp, Mould and Condensation

Much of the UK's housing stock is old and many properties can have problems with damp, mould and condensation. The majority of Populo Living and Populo Homes' properties are modern or have been recently refurbished, making these issues far less likely to occur.

However, damp, mould and condensation can occur in any property, sometimes due to faults in the building, leaks or lack of ventilation. This guide will take you through the areas of concern, what you can do to get support and what you can expect from us as your landlord to ensure that you are safe and healthy in your home.



What is Damp, Mould and Condensation

Damp - means there's unwanted moisture in the building – from leaks, water ingress, or moisture in walls.

Condensation - happens when warm moist air meets a cold surface and the moisture turns back into water.

Mould - grows where there is moisture over time. It can be black, green, white, fuzzy, or slimy.

They can all damage a home and harm health, for example asthma and allergies.



Types of Damp and Mould in the Home

Mould Type	Colour / Appearance	Typical Texture / Pattern	Where Often Found
Penicillium	Blue-green, sometimes bluish grey or greenish-white	Fuzzy, powdery, sometimes velvety patches	On damp walls, wallpaper, insulation, carpets, on spoiled food etc.
Black mould (often referring to Stachybotrys or similar)	Deep black or very dark green/black	Slimy when wet, can be thick; patches or “sooty” spots	Areas with constant moisture — behind walls, under flooring, near leaks, in bathrooms with very poor ventilation
Cladosporium	Olive-green to brown/or dark; sometimes grey-blackish	Velvety-to-powdery texture; appears as spots or clusters	On wood, carpets, wallpaper, fabrics, surfaces that stay damp (e.g. around windows, in basements)



What is Awaab's Law?

Awaab's Law is an amendment to UK housing legislation, proposed in honour of the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak in December 2020. Awaab suffered respiratory issues caused by prolonged exposure to black mould in his home.

From **27 October 2025**, social landlords in England must address damp and mould hazards that pose a significant risk to health or safety.

Who does Awaab's Law apply to?

Whilst Awaab's Law primarily applies to social landlords, on 17th July 2024, the government announced a new Renters' Rights Bill which will extend Awaab's Law to the private rented sector.

Populo Living will be applying the same rules for both social and private rented housing from 27th October 2025.



Key timeframes under Awaab's Law

Social Landlords Must:

- Investigate potential emergency hazards immediately and if confirmed, complete safety work as soon as reasonably practicable, and always within 24 hours.
- Investigate potential significant hazards within 10 working days.
- Provide written findings to tenants within 3 working days of any investigation concluding.
- Carry out safety work within 5 working days where a significant hazard is identified.
- Begin or take steps to begin works to prevent recurrence within 5 working days, or as soon as reasonably possible and no later than 12 weeks.
- Complete works satisfactorily within a reasonable period.
- Secure suitable alternative accommodation (at the landlord's expense) if hazards cannot be resolved within the required timeframes.
- Keep tenants updated and provide advice on how to stay safe while works are ongoing.

The written summary:

- Within 3 working days of any investigation concluding, landlords must issue a written summary (unless the hazard has already been fully resolved). **This must state:**
 - ✓ Whether a significant or emergency hazard was found.
 - ✓ What action is required, and timeframes for completion.
 - ✓ If no action is required, why not.
 - ✓ Contact details for the landlord.

Failure to meet these obligations can leave a landlord in breach of the law unless they can show they used all reasonable endeavours.



Tenant Responsibilities:

- ❖ Report problems promptly.
- ❖ Allow access for inspection & repair.
- ❖ Maintain good ventilation & heating.
- ❖ Dry clothes appropriately (use tumble dryer/ventilation).
- ❖ Keep property clean and wipe away condensation.
- ❖ Monitor moisture levels (hygrometer/dehumidifier).
- ❖ Open window vents where possible.
- ❖ Follow landlord guidance.

Landlord Responsibilities:

- ❖ Investigate reports within 10 working days.
- ❖ Assess hazards & root causes, not just surface mould.
- ❖ Repair significant hazards within 10 working days and emergencies within 24 hours.
- ❖ Provide written feedback to tenants within 3 working days of investigation.
- ❖ Begin or take steps to begin works to prevent recurrence within 5 working days, or as soon as reasonably possible and no later than 12 weeks.
- ❖ Ensure the property is free from health risks.
- ❖ Keep records of reports, inspections, and repairs.
- ❖ Provide alternative accommodation if property cannot be made safe quickly.

What Constitutes an Emergency Damp & Mould Hazard? (24-hour response)

- **Prevalent damp and/or mould that has a material impact on a tenant's health.**
Example: where a tenant, especially a child, elderly person, or someone with a respiratory condition is already experiencing health problems linked to the mould.
- **Widespread mould growth across living spaces.**
Not just a patch in the bathroom or behind furniture, but extensive mould on walls, ceilings, or multiple rooms.
- **Severe condensation or damp causing unsafe living conditions.**
Example: water dripping onto electrics, or bedrooms being uninhabitable due to mould/damp.
- **Mould/damp linked to structural failure or leaks causing immediate health risk.**
Example: persistent water ingress leading to black mould spreading rapidly, or damp so severe it compromises safe use of a room.





Tips to Manage Damp, Mould and Condensation Indoors

- Use extractor fans/open windows when cooking or showering.
- Keep steady heating in cold rooms.
- Avoid drying clothes indoors without ventilation.
- Wipe condensation from windows and sills.
- Move furniture slightly away from walls to allow airflow.
- Use dehumidifiers/moisture absorbers.
- Regularly clean mould-prone areas.
- Keep lids on pans while cooking.
- Report leaks promptly.

How to Report Damp & Mould

- Report in writing (email/letter) for a clear record.
- Report by phone or in person if urgent, follow up in writing.
- Describe clearly: what you see, where, when.
- Attach photos or videos if possible.
- Keep copies of all correspondence.

Get in touch:



hello@populoliving.co.uk



02071128901