

HMO Landlord – Electrical Help and Advice (UK)

This document contains 'HMO' (Houses in Multiple Occupation) electrical advice. The subjects, and order in the document, are:

- General advice.
- Time between electrical inspections.
- Judge Electrical Limited electrical inspection guideline prices.

General Advice

There are many laws and regulations that affect the UK HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation) landlord. The UK electrical laws and regulations are hard to understand, there are many different opinions. There is every chance that if this webpage was written on another day there would be differences to what is written below.

The requirements of the UK electrical laws and regulations can be summarised as:

- Is the property electrically safe?
- Has the landlord taken all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe?
- Can the landlord **show** that they have taken all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe?

A '**reasonable**' **inspection regime** is an annual visual inspection, a 1 to 5-yearly 'full inspection' by a 'competent person' and a 'full inspection' by a 'competent person' in-between lets. UK local authorities provide guidance on what they consider to be 'reasonable', this guidance may be a condition of the HMO licence.

The HMO inspection period depends on the use of the property and the conditions of the electrical installation. The landlord should consider:

- How likely the electrical appliances and circuits are to become unsafe.
- The effect of an unsafe electrical appliance or circuit.
- How likely are tenants to report electrical problems.

New appliances are less likely to become unsafe than old electrical appliances. An unsafe electrical appliance has, potentially, more effect in an HMO with 20 tenants than in an HMO with 10 tenants. Short-term HMO tenants are less likely to report electrical problems than long-term tenants. The landlord should consider what is necessary to show that they have 'taken all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe'.

An electrical inspection must be done by a 'competent person'. The purpose of an electrical inspection defines who is a 'competent person'. Landlords should record the details of the inspection and keep a record of when they were done and by whom.

Most UK local authorities consider an HMO landlord, or agent, a 'competent person' for an annual visual inspection but not a 'competent person' to carry out a 'full inspection'. A qualified electrician should carry out a 'full inspection'.

The annual inspection should check for 'obvious' electrical safety hazards. Landlords should think **'what would I allow in my own home?'**

An annual visual inspection should check, as a minimum:

- The condition of all electrical leads – ensure all electrical leads are not damaged or frayed.
- The condition of all electrical appliances and whether they are working or not.
- There are a reasonable number of working electrical sockets in each room – think 'how many sockets do I have in my own house?'
- Tenants are not 'daisy-chaining' electrical adaptors, for instance connecting one 4-way adaptor into another 4-way adaptor.
- The condition of electrical outlets (plugs and sockets).
- Ask tenants whether the same bulb or fuse is blowing or the same RCD needs resetting – this suggests a problem with the electrical circuit.

A **'full inspection'** by a competent person (take 'competent person' to mean qualified electrician) is a more thorough inspection than an annual inspection.

The 'full inspection' will probably include a 'periodic inspection and test' and a set of PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) tests.

The full inspection\test will check the fixed wiring of a house, electrical and light sockets and the earthing.

Time between Electrical Inspections

Annually – visual inspection by landlord or agent.

1 to 5-yearly – full inspection and test by qualified electrician. Inspection period depends on the age of the wiring and electrical installation.

In-between lets – full inspection and test by qualified electrician.

Judge Electrical Limited Electrical Inspection Guideline Prices

The prices cover all the requirements of a 'HMO' electrical inspection.

Judge Electrical full inspection and test guideline prices:

- One bedroom flat – £150.
- Two bedroom house – £175.
- Three bedroom house – £190.
- Four bedroom house – £210.