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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

Ministerial Update: A Revolving Door at Consumer Affairs?

Many of you have asked why critical reforms in our sector such as site rent protections and land-lease park oversight seem to be moving at a snail's pace. To understand the delay, we have to look at the leadership at the top.



This month, **The Hon. Paul Edbrooke MP** was sworn in as the new Minister for Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV). While we welcome the Minister, he is the **fifth person** to hold this portfolio in just over three years.

The Timeline of Constant Change

Following a period of relative stability, the leadership of our regulator has been in a state of flux:

- The Hon. Melissa Horne MP: June 2020 – December 2022
- The Hon. Danny Pearson MP: December 2022 – October 2023
- The Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP: October 2023 – December 2024
- The Hon. Nick Staikos MP: December 2024 – April 2026
- The Hon. Paul Edbrooke MP: Appointed 13 April 2026

MHOA: Proactive Advocacy

As the primary voice for land-lease residents in Victoria, the MHOA is already on the front foot. We are not waiting for the dust to settle. On 16 April 2026, we sent a formal letter to Minister Edbrooke, which his office acknowledged the following day.

We have requested an urgent meeting to ensure our members' priorities remain at the top of the government's agenda. Specifically, we have drawn the Minister's attention to the **Legislative Impact Assessment (LIA)** currently before Cabinet.

This document is a vital precursor to the regulatory changes we need, and we have urged the Minister to champion it through the final Cabinet stages to ensure legislative progress this year. Our message to the new Minister is clear: homeowners in residential parks cannot afford another period of "wait and see." We will keep you updated on his response.



Site Rent Increases: Understanding Your Rights

MHOA is committed to ensuring every resident in a land-lease village knows their rights. We want to provide you with the knowledge to protect your interests and help owner-operators avoid non-compliance.

In Victoria, site rent increases are strictly governed by **Part 4A of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997**. These laws override any "common date" in your site agreement or policy set by a village operator.

The 12-Month Anniversary Rule

Under **Section 206SA (2)**, your site rent cannot be increased more than once in any 12-month period. This is an individual protection tied to your specific residency.

- **Your Individual Clock:** For new residents, the 12-month "clock" starts the day your site agreement begins. Your first increase cannot happen until you have been a resident for a full year.
- **The "Common Date" Conflict:** If you moved in on January 1st and the village has a "common date" increase on July 1st, an increase on that first July would be illegal. It has only been 6 months; the operator must wait until you have been there for a full year before they can raise your rent.
- **Aligning the Cycles:** To get a new resident onto a village-wide cycle, an owner must wait **longer** than 12 months (e.g. 15 months). They can **never** shorten the interval to less than a year.
- **Unenforceable Terms:** Under **Section 206F**, any clause in your site agreement that claims the owner can increase rent in less than 12 months is invalid and legally unenforceable.

The Correct Notice Period:

- **Non-Fixed Increases:** If the owner chooses the amount (e.g. "market rate"), they must give you at least **90 days' written notice**.
- **Fixed Increases:** If your agreement specifies a set amount (e.g. "3%" or "CPI"), they must give you at least **28 days' written notice**.

In our **March Newsletter** we outlined some of the new amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Part 4A) and in particular some of the financial information that must now be included in the new Standard Site Agreement (Form 16A) which becomes effective from 1 July 2026. One of the provisions relates to the notice period that owners must provide to homeowners prior to any rent increases.

A site owner may increase annual rent payments by either a "fixed" amount or a "non- fixed" amount.

A **fixed** amount increase can take one of the following forms:

- A fixed percentage increase decided by the site owner
- An increase based solely on the Consumer Price Index (Melbourne)
- An increase based on the higher of two amounts i.e. a fixed percentage or CPI, whichever is the highest
- Increase by another method which must be by a clearly defined formula, including any specific index used.

Any other method used by site owners to increase annual rent that is not based on a fixed percentage, CPI or a combination of both is defined as a **non- fixed** amount.



- **Illegal Timing (Any Time):** If a notice violates the 12-month rule, it is **legally invalid**. You can challenge its validity at VCAT at any time, even after it has taken effect.
- **Excessive Amount (30 Days):** If the notice is legally timed but the amount is too high, you can apply in writing to the CAV Director within **30 days** after the notice of the rent increase is given to request a free assessment. [Section 206\(2\) of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 Part 4A.](#)
- This rule, found in [Section 206SA of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 Part 4A](#), prevents site owners from forcing new residents into "village-wide" increase cycles that occur shortly after they move in. Refer consumer.vic.gov.au website
- The site owner **cannot** include you in the July 1st increase because it has only been 6 months since your tenancy began. Refer consumer.vic.gov.au website
- **Staggered Schedule:** This often results in new residents being on a different "increase cycle" than long-term residents until the site owner aligns them in a future year (which they can only do if it has been at least 12 months since the last increase for that specific tenant). Refer consumer.vic.gov.au website

**SCAM
ALERT!**

Watch out for **Aus Vehicle Check Windsor**, a common scam that tricks people into a **\$10 monthly subscription** while you are trying to renew their vehicle registration online.

Key details:

- **The Trap:** Users often land on their website thinking it is an official government portal (like **VicRoads** or **Main Roads**).
- **The Scam:** It charges an unauthorised recurring fee, often discovered months later.
- **Action:** If you see these charges, contact your bank immediately to **stop the payments** and dispute the transactions.

Always use official apps or government ". gov.au" websites for registration.

[VicRoads Registration Renewal page](#)



With winter on our doorstep, now is the perfect time of year to talk to your doctor and review your immunizations.

As we age, our immune systems naturally become less robust, making us more susceptible to serious complications from common infections. Vaccination is one of the simplest and most effective ways to reduce the risk of hospitalisation, long-term health impacts, and even death.



Three vaccines to consider, even though they don't offer 100% protection, if you still get infected it can make your illness milder.

1. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common cause of respiratory infections. people with pre-existing heart or lung problems or a weakened immune system have a higher risk of serious illness. It is highly contagious.
Free RSV vaccine (Arexvy) from 15 May 2026 for adults aged 75+ Vaccination is strongly recommended before the peak RSV season starts.
2. Influenza is a viral infection and is worse than the common cold, very contagious and can lead to more serious health problems especially in the elderly.
3. Covid – should I have the injection again this year? Getting an updated 2026 COVID vaccine is recommended to protect against severe illness, particularly for older adults and high-risk groups.

Judy & Carmel

Business hours: Mon-Fri 9am—4.30pm