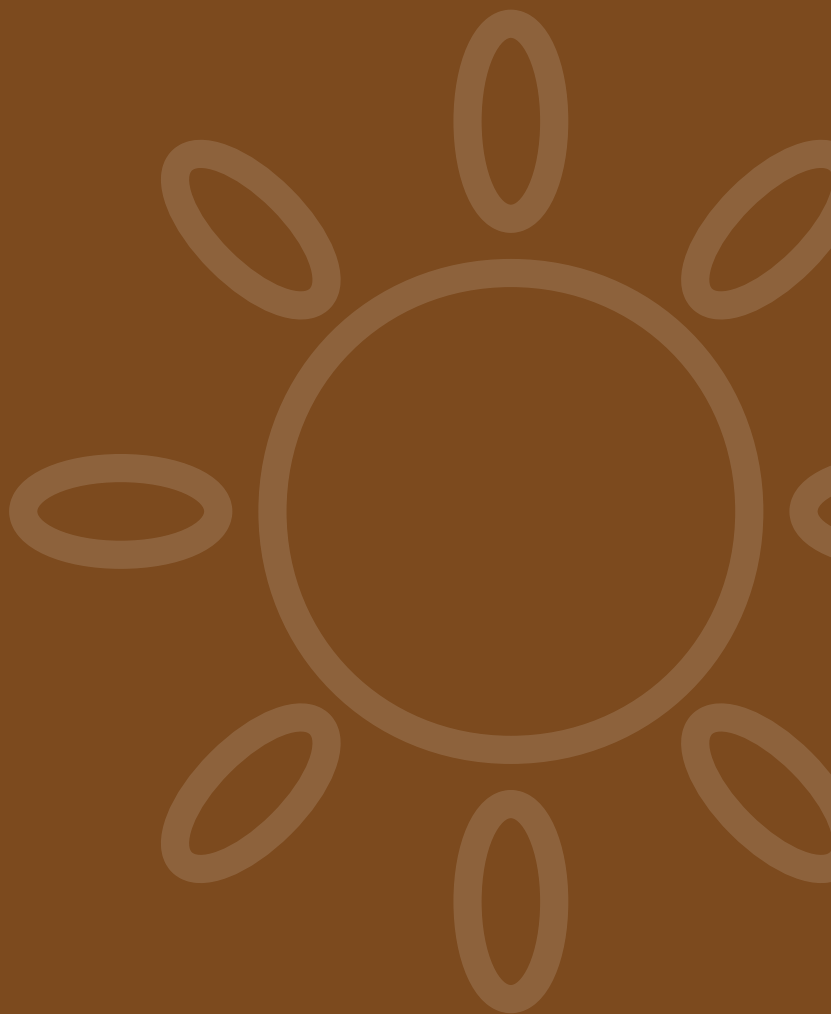


RENTERS' RIGHTS

Building Your Rent Repayment Order

The claim most renters can actually bring



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A Rent Repayment Order is decided beyond reasonable doubt — the criminal standard, in a civil tribunal. That makes the evidence the whole game. Here's how to build it properly.

STEP 1

Confirm which offence applies

A Rent Repayment Order only follows a specific list of landlord offences. Match yours before you build anything.

Unlicensed property.

Your landlord let a property requiring an HMO or selective licence without holding one. The most common ground — check your council's public licensing register.

Illegal eviction or harassment.

Locks changed, belongings removed, or threats used to force you out — a criminal offence under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.

Banning order breach.

Your landlord is subject to a court banning order but let the property anyway. Check the government's banning-order news index.

Improvement or prohibition notice breach.

Your landlord ignored a council enforcement notice about the property's condition.

Violence to secure entry.

Your landlord or their agent used or threatened violence to get into the property without permission — a criminal offence under the Criminal Law Act 1977.

Re-letting after a Ground 1/1A eviction.

New under the Renters' Rights Act 2025: if your landlord evicted you to move in or sell, then re-let within 12 months, that's itself an offence.

Build a bundle that survives scrutiny

Beyond reasonable doubt means the tribunal needs more than your account of events — it needs a paper trail that stands up on its own.

1 Independent proof of the offence

A council licensing search result, an improvement notice copy, or a banning-order register entry — something that didn't come from you or your landlord.

2 Your tenancy agreement and rent record

Establishes you were the tenant and exactly what you paid, for how long — this is what the award is calculated from.

3 A dated, factual written account

For eviction or harassment: what happened, when, in your own words, written as close to the event as possible. Avoid speculation about motive — stick to what you saw and heard.

4 Corroboration where you can get it

Messages from your landlord, witness accounts from neighbours or housemates, a police reference number if you reported it.

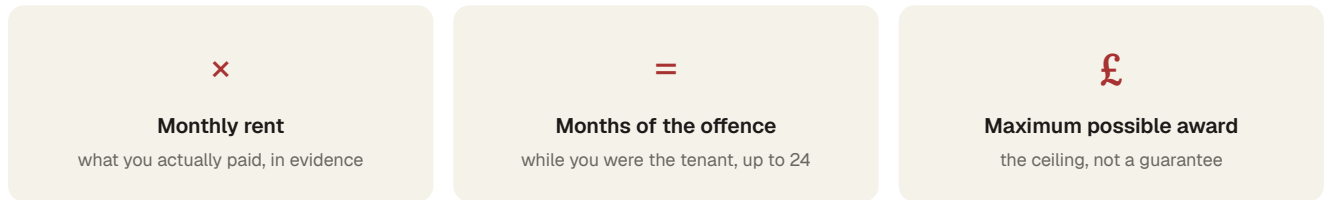
What weakens a bundle

Vague timelines, undated documents, and anything relying purely on your memory of a conversation. If it isn't written down or independently verifiable, treat it as supporting colour, not proof.

STEP 3

Work out what you're actually likely to get

The maximum is simple arithmetic. The likely award is a judgment call — but not a random one.



The tribunal then adjusts from that maximum based on conduct. Two directions it can move:

Pulls the award up:

prior council warnings ignored, multiple affected tenants, deliberate or repeated conduct, no cooperation once challenged.

Pulls the award down:

a genuine first offence, prompt corrective action (applying for a licence, restoring access), no history of harassment or aggravating conduct.

The free RRO estimator at startmyclaim.ai gives a conservative indicative range based on this pattern — real awards run anywhere from 1 to 24 months' rent depending on the facts (see *Williams v Parmar* [2021] UKUT 244 (LC)).

STEP 4

File, and know what's next

Once your bundle is ready, filing is the mechanical part — but the deadline is not.

The window is 12 months from the landlord's last offence.

Not 12 months from when you decide to act. The tribunal cannot accept a late application — there is no extension, so don't let a strong bundle go stale.

The fee is around £300 in total.

£100 to submit the RRO1 application, £200 if it proceeds to a hearing. Fee remission may apply on a low income or certain benefits — check gov.uk before you pay.

Joint applicants share one fee.

If you and a fellow tenant on the same agreement apply together, you're charged once between you.

What happens after you file

Directions, a possible defence, and the hearing itself.

The tribunal doesn't just sit on your application — it sets a timetable for both sides. What happens if your landlord ignores it, disputes it, or turns up to argue is covered in Mini-guide 3, "What Happens at the Tribunal."

Start My Claim's RRO Application Pack (£269) builds your RRO1 form, witness statement and evidence bundle from your case details — startmyclaim.ai/renters-rights.