

# Media Release

**The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Government Services  
Minister for Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Public and Active Transport



Tuesday, 19 November 2024

## MAKING VICTORIAN RENTALS SAFER

The Allan Labor Government is making rental properties safer by requiring smoke alarm, gas and electrical safety checks for all residential rental properties.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Gabrielle Williams today joined the Scarff family in Ballarat to announce new reforms requiring rental providers to conduct smoke alarm checks every 12 months, and gas and electrical safety checks every two years, for all rentals – no matter when the lease started.

In 2022, 52-year-old Simon Scarff tragically lost his life when trying to escape fire in his rented apartment. The Coroner's report was unable to confirm the presence of a smoke alarm in the property.

Simon's family have bravely advocated for smoke alarm checks for all Victorian rentals to prevent other families from experiencing the same tragedy.

In the report into Mr Scarff's death, the Coroner recommended the 2021 reforms for smoke alarm safety checks should be extended to all rental properties regardless of when the residents first signed their lease.

The reforms will also ensure that the residential rental provider or the provider's agent must immediately arrange for urgent repairs to be carried out on faulty smoke alarms.

The reforms also extend the requirements for rental providers to ensure gas and electrical safety checks are conducted every two years – by qualified tradespersons – to all residential rental properties regardless of the rental agreement start date.

This reform builds on the Labor Government's 2021 rental reforms, which introduced new requirements for residential rental providers to check that a rental property has a working and tested smoke alarm every 12 months. This reform applied to rental agreements commencing on or after 29 March 2021.

To learn more about rental minimum standards and safety checks visit [consumer.vic.gov.au/renting](https://consumer.vic.gov.au/renting).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Gabrielle Williams

*"I thank the Scarff family for their longstanding advocacy following the tragic loss of Simon – their efforts will make renting safer for all Victorians and save lives."*

*"These new requirements will ensure that all rental properties in Victoria have working smoke alarms that are checked regularly – no matter how long someone has been living there."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison MP

*"Through their advocacy, the Scarff family have improved safety for renters across Ballarat and the state - these safety checks will save lives."*