



## **COVID-19 and Lease Extensions / Freehold Block Claims**

### **BEWARE: Statutory Deadlines Are Still In Force!**

Landlords and tenants should be aware that **ALL** statutory timetables for leasehold enfranchisement (lease extension and collective freehold block claims) still continue to apply.

#### **WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW IF I AM A TENANT?**

Leases lengths continue to fall with every day that passes – even in “lockdown”. This means it is particularly important if your lease is just about to drop below the 80-year mark (as after the lease drops below this unexpired term, the process generally becomes more expensive).

If you are a tenant you should continue to seek legal and valuation advice as far as possible in advance to ensure you are able to serve your statutory notice(s) in time in this current climate.

#### **PRACTICAL TIPS FOR TENANTS:**

- Check the length of your lease;
- Obtain valuation and legal advice with plenty of time to spare;
- Reach out to the landlord to see whether they are prepared to accept service of a notice by email;

#### **WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW IF I AM A LANDLORD?**

As many landlords know, if a deadline is missed there are severe consequences for the defaulting party – regardless of “lockdown”.

With most offices currently closed, as a landlord you will need to ensure that any statutory notices you are served with (or have already been served with) are dealt with within the timetable set out by statute. Unfortunately, lockdown is not a sufficient ground for defence if you fail to serve a counternotice in time.

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Whilst the legislation does not provide for service of notices by email, in this current climate all parties are being encouraged to accept service of notices by email.

## **PRACTICAL TIPS FOR LANDLORDS:**

- Check all statutory notices you have been served with and ensure you are aware of all key dates;
- Obtain valuation and legal advice with plenty of time to spare;
- Reach out to the tenant or their representatives to see whether they are prepared to accept service of a notice by email;

## **NEED ASSISTANCE?**

Whether you are a landlord or a tenant, if you have any questions on how to safeguard your statutory leasehold claim, please contact Yashmin Mistry, Partner and Head of Leasehold by email [ymistry@jpclaw.co.uk](mailto:ymistry@jpclaw.co.uk) / telephone: 020 7644 7294 or LinkedIn