

Hackney Council Lettings Policy

Harassment and domestic violence

December 2007

Introduction

Hackney Council has published a guide to its lettings policy. It explains the scheme and covers the policies both for tenants looking for a transfer and for all those joining the housing register.

There are six easy to understand publications, each explaining the separate parts of the scheme:

- How to apply for housing in Hackney
- How we assess your application
- How many bedrooms
- Medical priority
- Harassment and domestic violence
- Council interest priorities

We hope you find this guide useful. Staff at our local housing offices, and Christopher Addison House, are available to explain the policy further. The full policy document “How we let our homes” is available on the Council’s website at www.hackney.gov.uk/ under Housing Needs.

Harassment and Domestic Violence

If you are a Council tenant:

- Your housing officer will interview you and using the racial harassment procedure investigate your case;
- Various steps can be taken against the perpetrator, including written warnings and legal action that may lead to a conviction or eviction;
- If you feel unsafe in your home the Council may offer you emergency accommodation.

If you are not a Council tenant:

- You are still entitled to receive help from the Council at the Housing Advice and Homeless Centre. You can also seek legal advice from a Solicitor who has experience in race relations and housing;
- The Council may be able to assist in moving you to another area; however, these are mostly in the private sector. Housing staff will give you information and advice about making an application to another borough;
- You may register on the housing waiting/ transfer list in order to bid for alternative accommodation.

Social Priority

If you register on the housing waiting/transfer list, in certain circumstances you may be assessed and awarded 'Social Priority'. This is for people who feel unsafe in their homes. There are two categories that can be awarded:

1. **'A' Social Priority** is appropriate where there is a threat to life and limb if the person is not moved and there is no alternative effective remedy. Such moves will generally happen within the borough. Reasonable enquiries will be made to judge the severity of the threat or risk and to ensure that a move will eliminate or minimise the future risk. The circumstances where the highest social priority may be in place include:
 - violent incidents where there is reason to believe the incident might be repeated e.g. rape or harassment as a result of race, ethnicity, sexuality or disability;
 - sexual abuse of, or attacks on, children where moving would end the danger;
 - witnesses or potential witnesses where actual violence or threats of actual violence have been made;
 - domestic violence where moving would end or minimize the danger;
 - in cases of criminal activity where there has been associated threats and violence particularly where innocent parties are at risk;
 - at the recommendation of the police, to help to provide witness protection.

Applicants/tenants who have been awarded 'A' Social priority will be placed in the Urgent band.

2. **'B' Social priority** may be awarded in certain circumstances such as where there has been:
 - harassment over a long period but it is not life threatening;
 - a one off serious violent incident still causing demonstrable stress and anxiety.

Applicants/tenants who have 'B' Social priority awarded to their application will be placed in the general band.

Reviewing social priority

Social priority will be reviewed within six months and will be removed if the circumstances no longer merit that priority. An 'A' Social may be changed to 'B' where this is more appropriate.

Where to get help

- Hackney Council Domestic Violence & Hate Crime Team. Call free on 0800 056 0905
- Your local Housing Office in Hackney
- Housing Advice and Homelessness Centre,
Christopher Addison House,
72 Wilton Way,
Hackney E8 1EA
- Police- Community Safety Unit on 0207 275 3696
- Hackney Citizens Advice Bureau, 236 – 238 Mare Street, E8 1HE
- Dalston Citizens Advice Bureau, 491 – 493 Kingsland Road, E8 4AU
- Hackney Law Centre, 236 – 238 Mare Street, E8 1HE
- Victim Support, 33 Finsbury Square, EC2A 1PL
- North London Muslim Centre, 66 – 68 Cazenove Road, N16 6AA
- Asian Women Advisory Service on 020 8800 7263
- Daymer – Turkish & Kurdish community on 020 7275 8440
- London Irish Women Centre, 59 Stoke Newington Church High Street, N16 OAR
- Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) on 020 7939 0001

Reviews and appeals

There are some situations where there is a right to review:

- any decision made by the Council on the facts of a housing application
- a decision regarding eligibility for housing
- on the Council's decision on a homelessness application, including a decision to discharge duty after an offer is refused

There are other circumstances when we provide an appeal or review process:

- against a decision that an offer we have made is reasonable
- against a grade or recommendation by our medical adviser
- against a decision to remove an 'A' priority grade

Complaints

The Council complaints procedure should be used if it seems that the Council has not dealt with a case properly. Complaints are looked at initially by the staff dealing with the case and if needed, by their managers. They will try to resolve the issues directly and quickly.

If this does not resolve the matter, the complaint will be considered by the Council's corporate complaints staff. Complaints that are not resolved using the Council's own complaints procedure can be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman. The ombudsman will check to make sure that the Council is conducting its published policies fairly and efficiently and that there has been no disadvantage to an applicant by a failure in the process.

Translations

This leaflet tells you about council interest priorities. If you would like this information in your own language please tick the box and return it to the Freepost address below.

Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নীচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

Spanish

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección.

Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çi dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

Turkish

Bu dökümanda ne anlatıldığını öğrenmek istiyorsanız, lütfen uygun kutuyu işaretleyerek, adınızı, adresinizi ve telefon numaranızı bu sayfanın alt kısmına yazıp, aşağıdaki adrese gönderin.

Polish

Jeśli chcesz dowiedzieć się, jaka jest treść tego dokumentu, zaznacz odpowiednie pole, wpisz swoje nazwisko, adres i nr telefonu w dolnej części niniejszej strony i przeslij na poniższy adres.

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

如果你想知道這分文件的詳細內容，請在方框內打鉤，在本頁下面寫下你的名字、地址和電話號碼並寄到下面的地址。

If you would like this document in any of the following formats or in another language not listed above, please complete and send the form to the address below.

In large print

In Braille

On Disk

On audio tape

In another language, please state:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Return to:

FREEPOST – RRAL – RBSK –SCBJ, Choice Based Lettings,
2nd Floor Christopher Addison House, Wilton Way E8 1BJ

