

# Your responsibilities and what to do if you have problems with your accommodation

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Accommodation provided by the Home Office (formerly known as NASS accommodation) must be clean, liveable and safe.

Your accommodation should have adequate fire safety provisions and should not be damp or in need of major repair work.

This leaflet outlines your rights and responsibilities, your accommodation provider's responsibilities, what to do if you have a problem and how we can help.

## What are my responsibilities while living in the accommodation?

You must:

- Keep your accommodation clean and take care of any furniture and equipment provided;
- Maintain the property and communal areas. For example, ensuring the common stairs are clean and clear of any belongings, clothes or other materials;
- Dispose of household waste correctly. This includes things like emptying the rubbish bins in the correct area;
- Request and obtain written permission from the Home Office to have an overnight guest **before** allowing someone to stay with you;
- Request and obtain written permission from the Home Office **before** going away from your accommodation for longer than 14 days (in total) within a six-month period. If you do not obtain this permission before leaving the accommodation, this could result in you losing your accommodation;
- **Report any problems** with the property **to your provider as soon as possible**; and
- Allow the accommodation provider access to your accommodation to make repairs.

## What should I do if I have a problem with my accommodation?

If you have any problems with your accommodation, you should report these to your accommodation provider in the first instance. Your accommodation provider should have given you their contact details when you moved into your property. If you do not have their contact details, contact us and we can help you with this. You contact us on our **free phone: 0800 085 6087**; note that this number is only accessible from a landline telephone.

Problems that **must** be reported may include, but are not limited to, such issues outlined in the chart below. These examples also include the estimated time it will take to respond to the problem.

Issue	Response/fix time
Unsafe living conditions such as gas leaks, flooding or fire damage	Respond within 2 hours of problem being reported
Severe living conditions problems such as no hot water, no electrical power or smoke alarm does not work	Respond within 24 hours of problem being reported
Urgent living condition problems such as minor blockages, glazing repairs or windows are stuck	Respond within 24 hours of problem being reported; repaired within 7 days
Routine issues such as washing machine is not working, furniture needs to be replaced or external repairs are required	Problem to be fixed within 28 days of being reported

It is important to remember that you have the right to live in clean, safe and secure accommodation. You should not be exposed to any physical danger either from the property and fixtures or fittings, or from neighbours or other people.

If your accommodation provider does not fix the problem, we can contact them on your behalf to find out why the problem has not been resolved or, if appropriate, contact the Home Office.

## **What is my accommodation provider responsible for?**

In addition to providing a safe and clean place for you to live, your accommodation provider has a duty to:

- Provide an 'orientation briefing' when you arrive in a language that you understand. This includes showing you around your accommodation, explaining how to use things and outlining the details of your contract;
- Provide an interpreter if you need one;
- Provide you with details of how to contact them in an emergency;
- Arrange and pay for repairs to furniture, fixed appliances, plumbing and any structural problems where it is clear that these are not due to misuse by you or your flatmates;
- Explain to you in writing how and when any complaints will be dealt with. This will be proof that you have raised a problem/ complaint; and
- Respond to any complaints regarding the accommodation within a reasonable timeframe. Note that times can vary depending upon the seriousness of the problem and can sometimes take up to 28 days to resolve. Refer to the chart on the previous page of this leaflet for examples.

## **What should I do if I experience harassment, abuse or attacks?**

Whatever type of accommodation you are in, you have the right to live there in safety, without fear of intimidation or abuse. If someone is treating you badly because of your race, colour, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or national origin, it is a serious criminal offence and is illegal.

The first thing you should do is to contact the local police to report what has been happening; they will investigate the incident. You can contact the Strathclyde Police on 0141 532 2000 and they will identify your local police contact who will be able to help you file a report.

If you are unable or unwilling to speak directly with the police, you can contact us to assist you in reporting the crime confidentially and, where appropriate, we can put you in touch with organisations who will offer you emotional support.

It is important that you record any racial harassment, abuse or attacks. You should:

- make a note of what has happened, including the time, date and place where it happened
- keep any notes, letters, texts or emails sent to you
- talk to other people (for example, other neighbours or tenants) who may have been affected by the person's behaviour.