

Temporary Accommodation

Introduction

The Housing Solutions service provides temporary accommodation in the form of;

- Privately rented bed and breakfast
- Council owned and managed hostels
- Privately rented self contained houses
- Other forms of properties provided by charities and other social landlords

If we are unable to find accommodation in Southwark we work with providers in neighbouring areas to place households in suitable accommodation in accordance with guidance set down in law, in particular The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2003 and the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006. The accommodation we offer you will be of a lettable standard.

The accommodation will be furnished with beds, some self-contained accommodation may include a fridge and cooking facilities.

We do not supply bedding or kitchen utensils.

The shared areas will be cleaned for you but it is also your responsibility to clean up after yourself.

We will endeavour to move households from shared bed and breakfast accommodation to more suitable accommodation within six weeks, however this is not an easy challenge due to the shortage of affordable and suitable accommodation across London and the South East generally.

If you refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation we will discharge our duty and you will need to make your own accommodation arrangements whilst your homelessness is being investigated.

Your stay in temporary accommodation

We will notify you in writing of the Council's decision on your homelessness application. If a full housing duty is owed to you, we will continue to ensure that **suitable** accommodation is available to you as you may have a long wait for permanent housing.

If you refuse the accommodation offered we will discharge our duty and ask you to leave, although you are entitled to request for this decision to be impartially reviewed by our reviews team.

If the Council does not owe you a full homelessness duty because you are not eligible, not in a priority need category or because you became homeless intentionally, no continuing homelessness temporary accommodation duty will be owed. We will provide you with advice and assistance to secure other accommodation and notify you of the date when you must leave the accommodation.

It is impossible to say how long you will remain in temporary accommodation as it depends on your circumstances, although at present for many households waiting times for permanent housing in temporary accommodation can be several years.

You will be asked to leave temporary accommodation if:

- our homeless enquiries show we have no duty to continue to accommodate you
- you find your own alternative accommodation
- you accept a private rented sector offer of accommodation
- you refuse a suitable offer of a private rented sector offer
- you accept a permanent offer from the housing allocations team
- you refuse your final offer of permanent accommodation from the housing allocations team
- you lose the accommodation because we have evidence that you are in breach of your licence/occupancy agreement, for example, rent arrears or anti social behaviour.
- You are an accepted household who became ineligible
- Your booking will also be terminated if you voluntarily vacate it or fail to use the property as your only principle home.

Furniture and goods

You may not be able to take all your belongings into temporary accommodation. If so, you'll need to arrange storage.

Temporary accommodation agreements

All temporary accommodation residents must adhere to the terms of the agreement according to the property they are living in. You will be required to sign either a licence agreement, non secure tenancy or an assured shorthold tenancy agreement depending on the property you are offered. We will serve the relevant Notice if you are found to be in breach of any part of the agreement you have entered.

We try to visit as many of the properties used for temporary accommodation as possible to ensure they are suitable for our households and we work with landlords that meet our temporary accommodation standards and issue us with the relevant health and safety certificates for their properties. **You are required to sign a register to prove your occupation.**

Temporary accommodation charges

You are expected to pay for your accommodation whether you are working or in receipt of benefits. You will also have to pay the associated charges for your temporary accommodation which may include **utilities and council tax**.

Please do not decorate or make alterations to your temporary accommodation without permission.

You will be charged for any items removed from or damaged in the property other than fair wear and tear.

You will be required to purchase your own TV licence.

We strongly advise that you claim universal credit if you are not working or on a low income.

The housing register – Homesearch bidding scheme

Where the council has accepted a full homeless duty towards your household, you will be activated on our Homesearch bidding scheme. You will be placed in priority Band 3 and eligible to bid for available properties that become available through our website. The Council however reserves the right to make you one offer of a permanent suitable accommodation. If you do not accept the final offer we will discharge our duty and you will be asked to leave the temporary accommodation.

For full details on the allocations scheme, visit www.southwarkhomesearch.org.uk and follow the links for 'Information' and then 'Policy Documents'.

Compliments and complaints

We welcome feedback on the service we provide and will ask you to complete a survey when you are going into temporary accommodation and when you are leaving.

If you are not satisfied with our service, please talk to the Housing solutions service. If the issue is not resolved please contact the Housing Solutions Manager.

Complaints must be put in writing. Details of the process are available on our website www.southwark.gov.uk

Useful contacts

Temporary Accommodation placements team
0207 525 3506 or email duty.placementsinbox@southwark.gov.uk

Temporary accommodation income team
0207 525 2601 or email ta-income@southwark.gov.uk