

HACKNEY TA/SUITABILITY WORKSHOP

FACTSHEET



STAGE 1: What is Temporary accommodation & who is responsible for issues:

When you first apply as homeless to the council you may be placed in emergency or interim accommodation. If you are offered main duty, then they will provide you with no longer term housing known as TA until a longer-term offer is made. You could remain in the same property for several years or you could find yourself being moved from home to home.

If you have issues within your temporary accommodation with disrepair or anti-social behaviour and you are residing in a hostel, you must report this to your hostel manager, you should have been given their details when you moved in.

Some temporary accommodation is managed by letting agents, if yours is one of these, then any issues in the first instance should be reported to the agent.

If you are unable to resolve these issues, then you can contact the council's temporary accommodation team by calling 0208 356 2929.

If your accommodation is overcrowded, you may be able to do a suitability review. There are various factors that are taken into consideration when requesting a suitability review such as how many rooms you have available to sleep in, this can include a living room, office or even a large kitchen.

Overcrowding in Temporary Accommodation:

You are overcrowded if you have less rooms than you need for your household as defined under the Room Size Standard. Count your bedrooms, living rooms and other rooms you can sleep in. (Do not include any rooms that are less than 4.65 square metres. Under this rule:

- anyone aged 10 or over counts as 1 person
- children aged 1 to 9 only count as half a person
- babies under 1 year old do not count at all

Number of rooms	Highest number of people
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7.5
5	10

Disrepair in Temporary Accommodation:

If you have tried to resolve your disrepair issues but not had success, you can take the following steps:

Private TA: Private Sector Team – privatesectorhousing@hackney.gov.uk or by calling 0208 356 3000

Hostel/B&B: You can contact the council's Temporary Accommodations team by calling 0208 356 3000.

Complaints: If your disrepair issue remains unresolved, you can log a formal complaint with the council – <https://hackney.gov.uk/feedback-and-complaints>

Housing Ombudsman: If you cannot resolve your issues following the formal complaints process, you can escalate to the Housing Ombudsman – <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

Suitability reviews:

What is a Suitability review?	Info required to support your review
Once your homeless application is accepted, you can request a suitability review within 21 days of acceptance	Hackney have an internal form that should be issued with your decision letter should you need to request a suitability review.
In certain circumstances, you can also request an 'out of time' review.	You must have a good reason for requesting a review out of time, such as hospitalisation, or your circumstances must have changed significantly since originally moving into the accommodation. IE – medical condition, having a child etc
If your homeless application has not been accepted and your accommodation is still provided under S188 then you do not automatically have the right to request a review.	This does not mean you cannot request a review, however, you would need a solicitor to assist you with judicial review to obtain a suitability review of your accommodation.
My temporary accommodation is too far from my work, school, medical professionals.	There is legislation that covers what is 'suitable' to expect application to travel to school and work, most local authorities will take this into consideration before offering the accommodation. In some circumstances, you may be required to move your medical treatments to a location closer to your temporary accommodation, unless this is specialist treatment that cannot be obtain elsewhere.
Suitability review outcomes	Once you have submitted a suitability review, the council have 56 days to get back to you with a decision. If your review is successful, then the council with have to offer you alternative accommodation. If the review decision is negative then in certain circumstances you can request an appeal which would be in the form of a court hearing,
Court appeals	A S204 appeal at county court is the final stage of the review process. A solicitor will be needed for this. Should you seek a solicitor to conduct an appeal, this is the final stage of the process. If you lose your appeal there is no further steps you can take to challenge suitability.

Requesting a suitability review:

You should reach out to the council, there should be **instructions on your duty letter**. Alternatively, you can email: reviewsandappeals@hackney.gov.uk.

For your review you will need:

- Your housing file .
- Additional evidence, this may be medical, social reports, OT reports. Anything which clearly states your accommodation is not suitable for you and your family.

If your review is **successful** and the council overturn the decision you will be offered alternative accommodation.

If your review is **unsuccessful**, a S204 appeal at county court is the final stage of the review process. A solicitor will be needed for this.

Should you seek a solicitor to challenge the review this will be the furthest you can go with the review.

Options for moving on from Temporary accommodation:

Private Rented Sector:

You can look for your own private rented accommodation.

If the council have accepted the Main housing duty, then they will usually provide financial assistance for the first month's rent and deposit.

Social Housing:

Once the Council have accepted a Main housing duty, they have to place you on their housing register and issue you with a bidding number. You can then go onto ELLC and bid for social housing.

It is worth noting that the current wait times in Hackney can be upwards of 10 years for 2 bedroom or larger properties.

Please find more information about how to take action here:

https://assets.ctfassets.net/6sxvmndnnpn0s/4woKNCy0cuzyw3PBV42DTH/72c04738ef267711a769f135e34d4db6/Factsheet_Applying_As_Homeless_Tips_On_Temporary_Accommodation.pdf

Shelter has letter templates that you can use here:

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/housing_suitability_reviews/letter_templates