



Birmingham Choice

Housing Allocation Scheme
Band Summary

How priority is decided: the housing bands

Applicants who are eligible and qualify for housing will have their housing need assessed based upon their current circumstances. By law, a council's Allocation Policy must give priority to certain groups of people. This is called reasonable preference.

Applications will be placed in one of four priority Bands depending on the household's housing circumstances. Applicants will be notified of the date that the band priority was awarded.

The priority Bands are:

Band A

Band A will consist of applicants entitled to a reasonable preference and are granted additional preference with a very urgent need to move for an allocation of social rented housing

Band B

Band B will consist of applicants entitled to a reasonable preference with an urgent need to move for an allocation of social rented housing

Band C

Band C will consist of applicants with a need to move for an allocation of social rented housing

Band D

Band D will consist of applicants from Bands A or B, or C who have exhausted their right to refuse an allocation of social rented housing or have failed to bid on more than three occasions where a suitable property would be available.

The Priority Bands summarised

Band A: People who have a reasonable preference and are granted additional preference (very urgent need to move):

Homeless Applicants

Homeless, as defined by Housing Act 1996, Part 7, and owed both the section 189B initial duty (owed to all eligible persons who are homeless) and the section 188 interim duty to accommodate due to having an apparent priority need.

Owed a duty under Housing Act 1996, Part 7, due to being not intentionally homeless and have a priority need for accommodation, owed the section 193 duty.

Threats of Abuse, Violence and Harassment

Victims of domestic abuse (defined as any incident or pattern of incidence of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse), including those have been provided temporary protection in a refuge or other form of temporary accommodation, who are homeless or owed any homelessness duty and/or have been identified as high-risk victims of domestic abuse at a local MARAC within the last 3 months.

Victims of racial harassment amounting to violence or threats of violence.

Victims of hate crime amounting to violence or threats of violence due to their age disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Witnesses of crime, or victims of crime, who would be at risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence if they remained in their current homes.

Threat to life, extreme violence, or extreme harassment -

Applicants who are suffering extreme violence or harassment where there is strong police evidence that an urgent move is required to protect the life of an applicant or a member of their household and can demonstrate to the satisfaction of Birmingham City Council that it is not safe for the applicant / household to remain in their home.

Exceptional Circumstances

Sudden loss of existing home as a result of a natural or civil disaster, such as those who are required to leave their home due to fire safety concerns identified by the West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service.

Discretionary Housing circumstances

Severely Overcrowded

Severely overcrowded due to lacking three or more bedrooms. For the purposes of determining overcrowding, an assessment will be made using the Scheme's bedroom standard.

Move on from Care

Persons leaving care of the Birmingham Children's Trust.

Underoccupancy 3+ bedrooms

Under-occupying social rented housing by three or more bedrooms.

Releasing an adapted property

Occupying significantly adapted social rented housing whereby the applicant or any usual households' member (or any person reasonably expected to live with the applicant) no longer requires residing in a property with such adaptations and wish to move.

Fostering, Adoption or Special Guardianship

Persons approved by the Birmingham Children's Trust as foster carers or to adopt, who need to move to a larger home in order to look after a child under the care of the Birmingham Children's Trust, including those who require a larger property in order to secure a Special Guardianship Order

Child Welfare

Where at least one child is part of an application where there is a need to move, and the accommodation is a contributory factor to the risk to the child or children. This will occur where the child or children are the subject of a Child Protection Plan, and the Child Protection Conference recommends rehousing as being important for the welfare of the child

Where there is a Child Arrangement Order in respect of a looked after child or for a child that is deemed at high risk of becoming looked after otherwise. The award will be given following a referral from the Council's Children's Trust.

Armed Forces

Members of the Armed and Reserve Forces, with an urgent housing need such as:

- Former members of the Regular Armed Forces
- Serving members of the Regular Armed forces 6 months prior to discharge.
- Serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition, or disability (encompassing a mental ill health condition) which is wholly or partially attributable to their service

- Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which is wholly or partially attributable to their service
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner, which was wholly or partially attributable to their service.

Clearance

Those who require rehousing due to a clearance, demolition, Compulsory Purchase Order and/or subject to a local authority approved regeneration scheme.

Medical or Disability

Terminal or life -threatening medical condition

Planned discharge from hospital is imminent and there is no reasonable accommodation available to occupy.

Band B: People who need to move and fall within one of the reasonable preference categories

Homeless Applicants

Homeless, as defined by Housing Act 1996, Part 7, section 175, and owed the section 189B (relief) initial duty

Threatened with homelessness, owed the (prevention) section 195 duty.

Intentionally homeless and have a priority need for accommodation, owed the section 190 duty.

Medical or Disability

Needing to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability), due to detrimental effects caused by present accommodation, either due to the location of the present accommodation and/or due to the physical conditions of that accommodation e.g.

- A mental illness, including former Armed Forces personnel suffering from depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, a family member of victims of domestic abuse who are suffering the effects of violence or threats of violence.
- A physical or learning disability of any member of the applicant's household.
- Chronic or progressive medical conditions (e.g. MS, HIV/AIDS).
- Frailty due to old age.
- People with behavioural difficulties.
- Need adapted housing and/or extra facilities, bedroom, or bathroom.

- Need improved heating (on medical and/or social care grounds).
- Need ground floor accommodation (on medical and/or social care grounds).
- Need to move following hospitalisation or long-term care on medical and/or social care grounds.
- Moving on from drug or alcohol recovery programme.
- Moving on from short-term supported housing and hostels, including specialist accommodation for those with mental health issues.

Move on from supported accommodation

Moving on from short-term supported housing and hostels including specialist accommodation for those with mental health issues

Hardship

Needing to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet this need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).

- Victims of racial harassment.
- Victims of hate crime due to their age disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- Witnesses of crime, or victims of crime, who would be at risk of intimidation if they remained in their current homes.
- Escaping anti-social behaviour such as harassment, alarm, distress, as result of nuisance or annoyance in relation to the occupation of their premises, or as a result of housing-related nuisance or annoyance, from a person.
- Give or receive care
- Access specialised medical treatment.
- Take-up a particular employment, education, or training opportunity and in respect of Transfer Applicants, be closer to work
- Due to housing benefit restrictions or other constraints on income from benefits (e.g. benefit sanctions)

Insanitary or Unfit conditions

Lacking a bathroom or kitchen, as verified by an Environmental Health Officer or equivalent.

Lacking an inside WC, verified by an Environmental Health Officer or equivalent.

Lacking cold or hot water supplies, electricity, gas, or adequate heating, as verified by an Environmental Health Officer or equivalent.

Property in disrepair, as verified by an Environmental Health Officer or equivalent.

Overcrowded 2 bedrooms

Overcrowded due to lacking two bedrooms

Underoccupancy 2 bedrooms

Under-occupying social rented housing by two bedrooms

Threats of abuse, violence, or harassment

- Victims of domestic abuse.
- The need to recover from the effects of violence (including racial attacks) or threats of violence, or physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
- A restricted ability to fend for self.
- Experiencing or at risk of abuse, harm, or self-neglect from others or from self.
- Young adults at risk of financial and/or sexual exploitation

Care and Support

The need to give or receive care

Those who need extra care or sheltered housing (on medical/social care grounds)

Band C: People who need to move and have a low-level housing need

Homeless

Owed a duty under Housing Act 1996, Part 7, specifically, those who are: non-priority homeless

Medical or Disability

Needing to move where there is low level medical or welfare need (including grounds relating to a disability), due to effects caused by present accommodation, either due to the location of the present accommodation and/or due to the physical conditions of that accommodation.

Overcrowded 1 bedroom

Overcrowded due to lacking one bedroom

Underoccupancy 1 bedroom

Under-occupying social rented housing by one bedroom

Armed forces

Members of the Armed and Reserve Forces without another housing need

Sheltered or Extra Care 55+

Applicants aged 55 and over with a local connection but without an identified need that are applying for sheltered or age restricted housing.

Band D:

Reasonable refusals – exhausted

Applicants from Bands A or B, or C who have exhausted their right to refuse an allocation of social rented housing or have failed to bid on more than three occasions where a suitable property would be available.

Applicants will remain in Band D for a period of 12 months from date of final refusal.

Failure to bid

Those who have failed to bid on more than three occasions where a suitable property was available