

Homeless & Housing Advice





Erimus Housing has delivered the Homeless and Housing Advice Service on behalf of Middlesbrough Council since November 2004.

What rights do I have?

The Housing Act 1996 Part VII (Homelessness) and the Homelessness Act 2002 set out the legal duties that all local authorities have towards people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days.

Under these acts, the council has a legal duty to make sure that you have accommodation available to you if:

- You are eligible
- You are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days
- You have a priority need
- You have not made yourself intentionally homeless
- You have a local connection with Middlesbrough

It is unlikely you will be found intentionally homeless if you have lost your home through no fault of your own, such as leaving because of domestic violence.

Where can I get help if I am homeless?

If you are homeless or think that you are going to become homeless, please contact us at our Homechoice office on Corporation Road in Middlesbrough to arrange an appointment with a prevention officer.

What are your opening times?

We open from 9am-5pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 10am-5pm on Wednesdays and from 9am-4.30pm on Fridays.

What if I am homeless and it is not in office hours?

We have an out of hours service for emergencies only and not for general advice.

You can contact the service after 5pm on a weekday, or any time at weekends and on bank holidays, by phoning 01642 773633. Some basic information will be taken so we can ensure your details are given to the correct officer. You will also be asked to give a contact number where the duty officer can contact you.



What happens next?

Once you have contacted us, we will ask you to come and see us and we may visit you at home before we make a decision on whether we will take a homeless application. If we do take an application, once we have fully looked into your situation, we will tell you if we are required to house you.

If we are required to provide you with temporary accommodation, we will help you with furniture storage and give you all the advice and assistance we can on how you can register on Homechoice, our choice based lettings scheme.

If we do not have a statutory duty to help you, we will explain the reasons why and give you information and advice to help you find somewhere to live.

Can I be seen by a female officer?

Yes, just let the receptionist know and we will arrange this for you. All our meetings take place in a private room.

What if I need an interpreter at the meeting?

The prevention officer will arrange a time that is convenient for you so you can all meet with an interpreter. We will be happy to contact an interpreter for you but this may take a few days. Alternatively, you may wish to contact an interpreter yourself.

Can I see the same officer each time?

Once you have been allocated an officer, they will deal with your application until a decision is made. If you have an emergency and your own officer is not available, you can ask to speak to the duty prevention officer but you may be asked questions that will require you to repeat information you have already given us. Please be patient if this happens.

What if I am not accepted as homeless?

In this case, we will tell you the reasons why in writing and we will give you any advice and assistance you need on how you can find a place to live. However, you do have the right to appeal against the decision within 21 days of receiving it. Please contact us for more information.

What will happen if I am accepted as homeless?

We will give you priority status on Homechoice, our choice based lettings scheme. Please be aware that we will ask you to express your interest for available properties in your areas of choice and adjoining estates on a weekly basis.

What is the choice based lettings scheme?

The Homechoice scheme gives Erimus Housing customers the chance to find a home of their own choice, rather than being allocated a home someone else thinks is suitable.

What if I am in prison and waiting to be released?

You can contact us by phone and we will answer your questions and give you advice on all the housing options available to you. Your probation officer may also be able to advise you about housing options or they may contact us on your behalf through the Housing and Returning Prisoners Protocol (HARP).

How long will it take to make a decision on my application?

We aim to make a decision within 33 working days but if you can provide all the information we need and we are able to confirm what you have told us, this will help us make a quick decision.

If you are living with friends or relatives, we will arrange a visit within three working days to discuss your circumstances before we can make a decision. Please be aware we may also need to arrange visits to other addresses you have given us.

Can I appeal against the decision?

Yes, if you do not agree with the decision made on your application then you can appeal against it. When you receive your decision letter it will tell you about your right to appeal and how to do this. You will need to submit an appeal within 21 days of receiving your decision.

Your appeal will be allocated to another investigation officer who will meet you to discuss your details and your reasons for disagreeing with the original decision. The appeal will be assessed with the help of the senior homeless and lettings officer, taking all your information into account.

Once this review of your case has been completed, the officer will write to you about their decision and give you the reasons.

If you are still unhappy with this decision, we will give you details of your further right of appeal and advice agencies in the area that can help you.

What if I lose my appeal?

If you are not successful with your appeal, you will still receive advice and assistance on how to find alternative accommodation.

Contacts

For more information, please contact us on 01642 773633 or log on to our website at www.irimushousing.co.uk

Colour coded information leaflets are available for the following services:



CUSTOMER SERVICE

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

SUPPORT SERVICES

REGENERATION

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

We will make this information available in other languages, braille, large print or other formats on request.

Arabic

سوف نحاول توفير هذه المعلومات بلغات أخرى أو بلغة بريل أو بخط كبير أو بصيغ أخرى بناءً على طلبك.

Chinese

我们将会尽力以多种形式提供本信内容，包括其他语言、盲文、大字体或所需的其他格式。

Hindi

विशेषतः आने पर हम यह जानकारी अन्य भाषाओं, ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों तथा अन्य रूपों में भी उपलब्ध करवाने की कोशिश करेंगे।

Punjabi

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਆਉਣ ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਦੂਜੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਭਿਜਵਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ।

Urdu

درخواست کرنے پر ہم اس معلومات کو دیگر زبانوں، بریل، بڑے حروف میں یا دیگر شکلوں میں دستیاب کرنے کی کوشش کریں گے۔



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business for neighbourhoods

