

ACCESS TO LICENCEES HOMES

This policy covers access to carry out repairs or other legitimate service-related activities to licensees rooms. This procedure does not relate to tenant's bedsits, flats or houses.

This should be explained to all new licensees when they move in. The term contractor is used for both our in-house maintenance operatives and external contractors.

Licencees

PRHA will hold keys to all Licensees rooms. Staff will endeavour to notify licensees of their intention to enter their room. Therefore, where possible 24 hours notice of appointments or staff intention to enter their home will be given. As a matter of good practice all licensees will be asked to provide written permission to allow staff to access their room without being present. PRHA staff will check with Licensees prior to every need to enter the room if this permission still stands.

Exceptions will be:

- Where urgent access is required to protect the resident or others from fire, flood or other danger.
- Where it is believed that the licensee may be unconscious or otherwise in difficulty and unable to open the door.

However, Licensees do not have the right to refuse permission for entry into their room but they **do** have a right to privacy.

1.0 RIGHT TO ACCESS- licences

Under the terms of the licence agreement residents must allow access to PRHA's employees or contractors for the purposes listed below if notice of 24 hours is given – but immediate access may be required in an emergency:

- a. To inspect the condition of the premises.
- b. To carry out repairs or other works to the premises or to adjoining property.

1.1 Contractors are required to make an appointment to gain access to carry out repair work. Acceptable practice would be:

- a. Contractor makes appointment with resident and / or Maintenance Staff. Scheme Staff must then agree access arrangements with the resident.

b. The Contractor should turn up at the appointed time and notify Project management of their arrival. The Contractor will be required to produce identification.

c. If the Contractor is unable to gain access, the Contractor should inform the Scheme Staff. If there are no scheme-based staff then the Maintenance Administrator must be informed and request another appointment.

1.2 Where access during the day is a problem, evening or weekend calls can be arranged, provided this is agreed with the resident or (if property is vacant) relevant staff member.

1.3 If a contractor arrives without an appointment Project management or the resident may refuse access but should take into consideration the urgency of the repair. If it is the case of an external contractor then contact to the Property Services department to check the situation and the bone fide of the visit.

1.4 Step 2

The Property Services team should contact the resident in writing and:

- a. Explain the need for the repair.
- b. Outline the previous attempts to make contact.
- c. Request contact with themselves so as to make a further appointment with the Contractor.

1.5 The Scheme Manager and Maintenance Manager together will need to consider the urgency and the effect of delaying the repair as well as any mitigating circumstances before proceeding further.

2.0 WHERE HEALTH, SAFETY OR BUILDING SECURITY ARE AT RISK

2.1 The procedure that follows should only be used if, in the opinion of the Maintenance Manager, the health and safety or building security may be adversely affected by further delay.

2.2 If it is agreed between the Maintenance Manager and Scheme Manager that access cannot be delayed any further and there is no clear reason for the lack of contact with the resident, the Scheme Manager should register in the

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day's logbook the reason for immediate access. Property Services Department should then write to the licensee and include the following:

- a. Explain the need for the repair.
- b. Outline the previous attempts to contact the resident and gain access.
- c. Explain the organisation's statutory rights to enter on giving reasonable notice.
- d. Explain that the maintenance manager/support worker and / or a contractor will be calling at a clearly specified date and time.
- e. Explain that if after knocking or ring the bell there is no responses, the organisation keys will be used to gain access.
- f. Explain that the work carried out will be an inspection and whatever work is necessary to make safe and secure and that this may not necessarily mean the full repair.
- g. Explain that if the resident asks staff to leave, they will do so at once and then consult with Project management regarding the next steps required.

2.3 Step 3

If there is no response to the notice from the Association by the date specified, the Organisation may pursue the following actions.

3.0 WARNING (LICENCEES ONLY i.e. hostel rooms not flats)

3.1 The Organisation must not use the power of entry if the resident has quite specifically stated that s/he does not want this to happen.

3.2 The Organisation can only enter if we have spare keys. We cannot break in or change the locks.

3.3 Step 4

If unable to gain entry by using keys or because the resident refuses access and entry is felt to be health and safety issue, the case should be referred to the Assistant Director Client/Community Services for a decision on whether to force entry into the room.

4.0 EMERGENCY ACCESS (FORCED ENTRY): Licensees only (ie rooms not bedsit)

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4.1 Forced entry will only be attempted where there is an identifiable urgent need to gain access to property e.g. uncontrollable plumbing leaks into or from the premises, suspected gas leaks or where health and safety is seriously at risk.

1. Wherever possible the Organisation will give 24 hours notice in writing that a forced entry is felt to be necessary and will be attempted.

2. Where immediate entry is required e.g. where potential death or injury is feared, the Police/ambulance should be called to accompany the Association staff.

3. No forced entry should be made without consulting the Scheme Manager and Assistant Director: Client/Community Services.

4. Any damage resulting directly or indirectly from the forced entry must be repaired as an emergency.

5. A letter should be left for the resident explaining the circumstances and giving a name for further contact and information.

6. An incident report should be submitted to SMT giving details of forced entry.

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