

Talking to clients about the assessment outcome, obligations, and going onto the social housing register

This page outlines the priority ratings assigned as an outcome of public housing (also known as social housing) assessment, including what their obligations are, and what happens when they go onto the Social Housing Register.

On this Page:

Talking to clients about the outcome of their assessment

A client should be advised whether they are eligible or not eligible for public housing, and can be informed of their priority rating. You should also let them know what the outcome of the assessment means for them.

It is important to understand that the priority rating does not give people a priority 'place' on the Social Housing Register as another person with a higher priority may come in at any time. The length of time the client has to wait for a house depends on how quickly a suitable house becomes available and the number of people waiting with similar or more urgent needs. This is always changing; as it is dependent on the needs of other applicants on the Social Housing Register. When a suitable house becomes available the housing provider will make contact directly with the client.

At this point you could also discuss resources and other options that are available, such as the MSD housing website or brochures that could help the client find suitable accommodation while they are on the Social Housing Register.

Following are examples of conversations you could have with a client depending on their priority rating.

A Priority

"We have assessed you as being eligible for public housing and established that you have a serious housing need. You will need to wait for a suitable property to become available and the housing provider will contact you at the time. However in the meantime you should keep looking for other accommodation. Because your rating is an A priority, we will contact you regularly to confirm that you haven't had any changes in your circumstances. If we are unable to make contact with you this could mean that you will no longer be considered for public housing. If you turn down a suitable property offer from a public housing provider without a good and sufficient reason you will be taken off the Social Housing Register. Your decision to turn down a suitable property without a good reason will be taken into account if you reapply for public housing within 13 weeks of the decline."

B Priority

"We have assessed you as being eligible for public housing and established that you have a serious housing need. You will need to wait for a suitable property to become available and the housing provider will contact you at the time. However in the meantime you should keep looking for other accommodation. Because your rating is a B priority, if we haven't had any contact with you for 30 days we will contact you to confirm that you haven't had any changes in your circumstances. If we are unable to make contact with you this could mean that you will no longer be considered for public housing. If you turn down a suitable property offer from a public housing provider without a good and sufficient reason you will be taken off the Social Housing Register. Your decision to turn down a suitable property without a good reason will be taken into account if you reapply for public housing within 13 weeks of the decline."

[MAP - Good and sufficient reasons for turning down a property \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/register-management-and-referrals/good-and-sufficient-reasons-for-declining-offer-of-01.html)

C or D Priority

"We have completed the assessment and determined that you are not eligible for public housing due to [explain reason for not being eligible]. We do have resources that could help you find suitable accommodation such as the MSD housing website, brochures."

A client can apply for a Review of Decision when they do not agree with the outcome of the public housing assessment.

[MAP – Reviews and Appeals \[http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changes-and-reviews-assessment-of-eligibility/reviews-and-appeals-01.html\]](http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changes-and-reviews-assessment-of-eligibility/reviews-and-appeals-01.html)

Client makes contact about the outcome of their assessment

The assessment outcome letter explains whether they are eligible for public housing or not, and how to contact us if they have a query. The letter also includes their Review Rights, should they not agree with the decision.

Changing an initial priority rating

For guidance on upgrading or downgrading a priority rating, click on changing a priority rating below.

[Changing a priority rating](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/changing-a-priority-rating.html) [http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/changing-a-priority-rating.html]

[MAP - Changing a priority rating](http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changing-a-client-s-initial-priority-rating-01.html) [http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changing-a-client-s-initial-priority-rating-01.html]

Fast-tracking for households at risk of rheumatic fever

Where a household is at risk of rheumatic fever and they meet the criteria they may be fast-tracked. This means they will get pushed to the top of the Social Housing Register for the next available property, even if there are people with a higher priority rating than them. Click on the link below to find out about identifying and fast-tracking these households.

[Rheumatic fever](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/rheumatic-fever.html) [http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/screening-and-assessment/rheumatic-fever.html]

[MAP - Register fast-track provision](http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/fast-track-provision.html) [http://doogle/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/fast-track-provision.html]

Talking to clients about going onto the register

Before the client is moved onto the Social Housing Register, you need to advise them of the following:

you must tell us straight away about any changes in your circumstances, or the circumstances of your spouse or partner, that may affect your eligibility for public housing or the type of property you need.

the management of your on-going eligibility to public housing will be managed by our Housing & Income Support Services team, who will contact you regularly to talk about your circumstances.

There are two important phone numbers that you should save to your phone:

0800 559 009 – this is the MSD Contact Centre phone number, and this will show when we are ringing you to review your housing circumstances.

0800 801 601 – this is the Housing New Zealand phone number, who will ring you if you are matched to a suitable property. Other housing providers may ring you as well.

if you decline a suitable property offer without a good and sufficient reason, you will be removed from the Social Housing Register for 13 weeks (this also includes failing to accept an offer of a suitable property, by not responding to a public housing provider).

if you have pre-applied for bond and rent, this means, when you accept a property, we can pay bond and rent in advance immediately to the provider without having to contact you (as long as you are eligible for the financial assistance at the time)

your IRR will be paid out of your benefit or pension by way of redirection to the housing provider when you are placed into public housing.

Note: Once the client is on the Social Housing Register, Housing & Income Support Services, and Contact Centre Services, are responsible for updating change in circumstances for the client. These updates are managed via Services.

For more information, see:

[MAP: Duty to advise of changes in circumstances](http://doogle/map/social-housing/duty-to-advise-of-changes-in-circumstances/index.html) [http://doogle/map/social-housing/duty-to-advise-of-changes-in-circumstances/index.html]

[Referrals and placement](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/referrals-and-placement.html) [http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/referrals-and-placement.html]

[Register management](http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/waitlist-management/index.html) [http://doogle/resources/helping-clients/procedures-manuals/social-housing/waitlist-management/index.html]

Content owner: [Service Delivery - Business Process Management](#) Last updated: 06 November 2020

About

[Our Purpose and Values](#)

[Our Chief Executive](#)

[Our regions](#)

[Our leadership team](#)

Help and support

[MSD Service Desk](#)

[Helpline](#)

[IT Guide](#)

[IT tools and applications](#)



Map. The Guide to Social Development Policy

Home | Social housing | Assessment of eligibility | Changes and Reviews assessment of eligibility | Reviews and Appeals

<http://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changes-and-reviews-assessment-of-eligibility/reviews-and-appeals-01.html>

Printed: 9/11/2020

Reviews and Appeals

A client can apply for a Review of Decision when they have received formal notification of and disagree with a decision, including decisions relating to:

- the assessment or re-assessment of:
 - their eligibility or continued eligibility for social housing
 - their housing needs
- the calculation of the rate of Income Related Rent
- the establishment and recovery of Income Related Rent debt

A client can appeal to the Social Security Appeal Authority where they do not agree with a decision, which was upheld or upheld in part by the Benefits Review Committee under an application for Review of Decision

Exceptions

A client has no right of appeal to the Social Security Appeal Authority (and therefore no right to apply for a Review of Decision) if they disagree with:

- a decision not to review their housing need

However you will need to ensure that there is a good reason not to undertake a review of their housing needs.

- any decision made by a housing provider regarding tenancy-related matters, such as:
 - the determination of a market rent rate
 - rent arrears
 - damages debt or
 - whether someone can join into a tenancy agreement

The client has the right to apply for a Review of Decision at any time within 3 months of the original decision being advised. When a client has applied for a hearing outside the 3 month time limit the Benefits Review Committee must decide whether or not to accept the application before it considers the decision under review.

A client has the right to have their decision reviewed once. If they wish to have the same decision reviewed again refer the case to Legal Services.

For more information see:

- Core policy Reviews and Appeals

Legislation

- Rights of appeal section 132 Housing Restructuring and Tenancy Matters Act 1992
 - Tenant may appeal section 133 Housing Restructuring and Tenancy Matters Act 1992
 - Regulations relating to appeals and other matters section 136 Housing Restructuring and Tenancy Matters Act 1992
-

Released Under The Official Information Act 1982



Map. The Guide to Social Development Policy

Home | Social housing | Assessment of eligibility | Qualifications | Assessment of housing need | Changing a client's initial priority rating

<http://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/changing-a-client-s-initial-priority-rating-01.html>

Printed: 9/11/2020

Changing a client's initial priority rating

Before confirming the client's priority rating you need to consider if the Social Allocation System (SAS) generated rating reflects the client's entire circumstances.

Initial priority rating

The client's priority rating is calculated in SAS. There is discretion to change this priority rating where the overall housing need of the client suggests a different priority rating.

Factors to consider before confirming a client's priority rating

Factors to consider may include (but are not limited to):

- Has the client limited the area they want live, to high cost areas?
- Has the client reasonably looked for alternative accommodation?
- Has the client limited their income by choice, for example due to work obligations sanctions, or failure to assist child support reduction or not accessing all assistance available to them?
- Has the initial priority rating reflected the client's need to move correctly when taking into account their whole situation?
- Has the client declined a social housing property (or failed to accept a property offer by not responding to the offer) in the last 13 weeks? When looking at their overall situation and considering their housing need, does it suggest that the client's housing need is not as urgent as the initial property rating they have been assigned under the SAS criteria?
- Are there any other relevant factors that have impacted on a change required to the client's initial priority rating?

Note in the system the changing of a client's initial priority rating up or down is referred to as an over-ride of the priority rating and is undertaken using the over-ride function.

For more information see:

- [Assessment of housing need](#)
 - [Fast-track provision](#)
 - [Assessing housing need after declining a social housing property](#)
-



Map. The Guide to Social Development Policy

Home | Social housing | Assessment of eligibility | Qualifications | Fast-track provision

<http://doogle.ssi.govt.nz/map/social-housing/assessment-of-eligibility/fast-track-provision.html>

Printed: 9/11/2020

Fast-track provision

Fast-track recognises that certain households applying for social housing are at risk of experiencing negative outcomes. Helping them get into social housing quicker will help improve their long-term outcomes.

If the household meets all the criteria, they will be fast-tracked for the next available (suitable) social housing property based on matching, by the social housing provider, even if there are other people with a higher priority rating.

Who can be fast-tracked?

The fast-track policy applies to households in the following circumstances:

- the household has children at risk of rheumatic fever (designated North Island District Health Board areas only)
- the household has a specified child or young person who is in custody under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 or is in an approved permanent care arrangement

For more information see:

- At risk of rheumatic fever - designated North Island District Health Board areas only
 - Specified child or young person in custody under the Oranga Tamariki Act or approved permanent care
 - Priority order within fast-track
 - Social housing Register management and referrals
-