



Your health and safety

Making sure you are safe

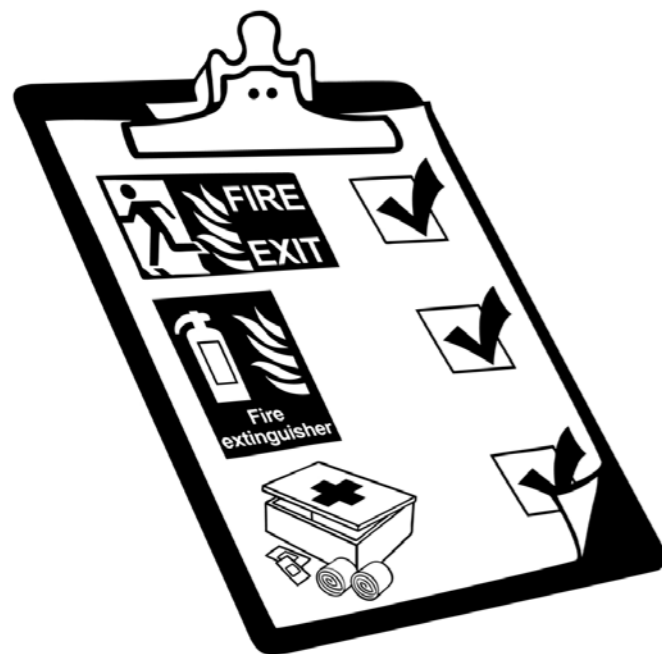


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Your health and safety

We want to make sure that you are safe in your home. Your support worker will regularly discuss health and safety matters with you.



What are risk assessments?

We use a risk assessment to try and deal with any risks that may harm you. We divide these risks into two categories.

1. Risks in your home –
for example, a risk of fire.
2. Risks as a result of your situation –
for example, a risk of suicide.

A risk assessment means that you and your support worker will try to work out what risks you may face. Both of you will draw up a plan that aims to reduce the risk so that it is less of a threat.

If you or your support worker feel that you are at risk in some way, either of you can suggest that you fill in a 'Risk Assessment' form.

Where do I get information on health and safety?

Your landlord will usually give you practical health and safety information in your tenants' handbook.

This will normally include information on the following.

- How to contact housing management about an emergency repair during and outside office hours.
- How to deal with emergencies like:
 - suspected gas leaks
 - power cuts and tips on making sure electrical items are safe
 - problems with your water supply or burst or leaking pipes
 - what to do if there is a fire.

There is also some practical information included in this section of the guide.

What will my support worker do in relation to my health and safety?

Your support worker should go through the information in this guide and any health and safety information from your landlord. Your support worker will make sure that you understand everything.

As part of your support plan, your support worker will:

- Make sure that your accommodation is up to a good standard and secure.
- Make sure that any equipment supplied is safe to use when you first move into a new home.
- Help you to report repairs or security problems to your housing officer.
- Provide advice and support on cleaning and kitchen hygiene to help you keep your home clean.
- Support you to use any equipment that is supplied in your accommodation. This includes showing you how to use kitchen and laundry equipment.

Your support worker will also:

- check for any health and safety issues when they visit you, or carry out regular (monthly or every six weeks) health and safety checks in residential services
- discuss health and safety or maintenance problems with you, and support you in reporting them
- hold regular meetings with your housing officer to discuss health and safety, and chase up any outstanding maintenance work.

In some of our services, your support worker will work with you to carry out health and safety checks and risk assessments.

If your landlord is Metropolitan Housing Trust London (MHT) or Spirita, your support worker and housing officer will work closely together to make sure your home is safe and clean. Health and safety inspections will take place on a regular basis. These will normally involve MST support workers and, in some cases, MHT or Spirita housing officers. An agreement is in place to make that this happens.

What can I do in relation to health and safety checks?

We are keen to get your views on health and safety in your home. If you would like to take part in health and safety checks and inspections, please speak to your support worker.

If I need support outside office hours, what do I do?

For some of our services, we provide an out-of-hours emergency 'on-call' system. This service will mean that you can call a support worker or team manager for advice and support if there is a medical or emotional emergency. If this applies to you, your support worker will make sure that you have the details.

Where there is no out-of-hours emergency system, your support worker will make sure that you have access to any 24-hour phone numbers you may need.

999 is the phone number for the emergency service: fire, ambulance and the police. You can call this number free on any telephone.

When to call 999

- Call 999 if there is a fire or flood, serious accident, medical emergency or serious crime. They will take the details and tell you what to do next.
- Call 999 only for emergencies, such as a heart attack, a serious injury or if a person is unconscious, or for a serious crime. If a crime is not an emergency, call your local police station.

Practical tips to prevent fires from happening

1. Make sure there are smoke alarms at every level in your home. Your landlord should give you these.
2. Make sure that your smoke alarms are free from dust and test them once a week. Change the batteries every year or when the batteries run out, whichever is sooner.
3. Make a fire action plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there is a fire.
4. Keep the exits in your home clear so that people can escape if there is a fire.
5. Make sure that everyone in your home can easily find the security keys for doors and windows.
6. Take extra care in the kitchen. Accidents while cooking cause over half of fires in the home. Never leave young children or vulnerable adults alone in the kitchen.
7. Keep watch over boiling pans.
8. Take extra care when cooking with hot oil. Think about buying a deep-fat fryer which is controlled by a thermostat.
9. Do not leave lit candles in rooms that nobody is in or in rooms where children or vulnerable adults are on their own.
10. Make sure that candles are in safe holders on a surface that doesn't burn. Candles should also be away from other materials that could burn.
11. Make sure that cigarettes are stubbed out properly and thrown away carefully.
12. Never smoke in bed.
13. Get into the habit of closing doors at night. If you want to keep your bedroom door open, close the doors to the lounge and kitchen. This may well help save your life if there is a fire.
14. Keep matches and lighters in a safe place where

children and vulnerable adults can not get to them.

15. Remember to have one plug for one electrical socket. Don't overload each socket. If you live in MHT or Spirita housing, the electrical equipment in your home will be tested every year. It is your responsibility to make sure that the electrical equipment that you bring into your home is safe.
16. Take special care when you are tired, if you have been drinking or if you have taken drugs.
17. Do not leave the TV or other things on 'standby'. Always switch them off and unplug them when they are not being used.
18. Never dry or air clothes around open fires or cookers.

Practical tips to put off burglars

1. Close all windows and lock entrance doors every time you go out. Most thefts happen during the day and only take a few minutes.
2. Fit window locks. They are quite cheap and work well.
3. Never leave your keys under a door mat, on a string inside a letter box, in a plant pot or in similar places.
4. Do not leave notes for people saying that you are away from home.
5. Always ask people you do not know to prove their identity before you let them in. All staff from gas companies, electricity companies, the council and the water board have identity (ID) cards. If you are suspicious, call the police and don't let them in.