

Allocation Policy Summary



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આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے: 01257 515151

What is the Allocations Policy?

The Allocations Policy is a document that details how and why Chorley Council can offer homes that become available to customers on its Housing Register (the Council's waiting list).

The Council is required by law to tell its customers how customers applications will be prioritised and must make sure that in certain cases, customers are given higher priority.

Homes available by applying to Chorley Council

Chorley Council does not own or manage houses in the borough, but applicants on the housing register can be nominated for a tenancy with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), sometimes referred to as Housing Associations. Chorley Council transferred all its stock in 2007 to Chorley Community Housing (CCH) and it was agreed that 75% of all properties which CCH own and become available for let, will be allocated to customers on the Councils' housing register. Chorley Council also nominates customers to properties owned and managed by all other RSLs in Chorley.

Applying for a Property

The Housing Register is administered by Chorley Council, and application forms can be collected from the Civic Offices on Union Street, Chorley, PR7 1AL; or you can ring 01257 515151 and ask for the Housing Options Team to be sent one via post. RSLs have their own waiting lists that you can also apply for separate to the Housing Register; a list of these is at the back of Chorley Councils application form.

Supporting information should be provided with your application as evidence of circumstances or condition. Assistance and advice is available on request if you have any problem filling out the application form. Please contact us on the address or telephone number above and we will help you.

All application will be acknowledged within 14 days of receipt and your acceptance or otherwise on the Housing Register (or otherwise) and priority "Band" will be advised within 28 days. Appeals can be made in writing within 21 days of a decision regarding banding or exclusion from the register.

Applicants can also request a review of the decision at any time due to changing circumstances.

Aims of the Allocations Policy and Prioritisation of Applicants

Chorley Council aim to ensure that social rented properties are allocated in a fair, legal way, which promotes equal opportunities and stable communities.

All customers who apply for housing will be asked to provide information about their situation. This will include information about their family, previous homes and any medical condition they may have. Once the Council has all the information, it will make a decision and award the application a band.

The bands are in order of priority and within each band, the only other difference between customers is length of time waiting. The priority bands are as follows in order from highest to lowest:

Blue Band	–	Urgent Need
Red Band	–	High Need
Green Band	–	Recognisable Need
Orange Band	–	Reduced Preference
Yellow Band	–	No Recognisable Need

Band Qualification of Criteria

To qualify for the Blue Band you must be in Urgent Need falling into one or more of the following categories:

- Your household has emergency medical or disability needs
- You live in a disability adapted RSL home able to be released to a household who need it
- You are substantially overcrowded and this has been verified by the council
- You are in a private property in unfit to live in (taking over 6 months to make good)
- You are living in Supported Housing and have been assessed as ready to move on
- You are leaving/left the care of social services and are still under 21
- You have exceptional need as determined by the Head of Housing/Welfare Panel

To qualify for the Red Band you must be in High Need falling into one or more of the following categories:

- You are homeless with a priority need as determined by a Council assessment
- There is evidence of some overcrowding in your home
- Your home lacks one or more basic facilities (e.g. washing, cooking, fuel supplies)
- You have spare rooms in a RSL property looking to move into smaller accommodation
- You are leaving/left the care of social services and are still under 21
- You have been a 'homeless prevention' household for 6 months or more
- Non-emergency medical grounds
- You are awarded this band by the Head of Housing/Welfare Panel

To qualify for the Green Band you must be in recognisable Need falling into one or more of the following categories:

- You are homeless without a priority need as determined by a Council assessment
- You have been a 'homeless prevention' household for 3 months or more
- You are 60+ looking to move into Sheltered Accommodation

To qualify for the Orange Band you may have fallen into the categories above but then been awarded reduced preference for one or more of the following categories:

- You have refused 2 reasonable offers of accommodation
- Rent Arrears or unacceptable behaviour in previous tenancies
- You are above the savings, equity or earnings level
- You have no local connection

Also within the Orange Band are applicants without any recognisable need but fall into one of the following Community Priority categories:

- You are employed or training in the Borough
- You are a 'key worker'
- You need to move to care or give support to a relative
- You are of benefit to the community through activities such as voluntary work
- You are a transfer applicants who have been good tenants
- You are applying for your own tenancy but currently live with parent/s who have been good tenants regardless of tenure

The Yellow Band is for applicants without any recognisable need (and no mitigating circumstances as in orange, or the applicant or household member has been responsible for

behaviour (e.g. non-payment of rent, criminal or anti-social activity) that would be serious enough to warrant eviction.

If an applicant moves down a band due to change in circumstances they retain the date they were placed in the previous band for priority order. However if an applicant moves up a band due to change of circumstances the time they have been on the waiting list will be reset to zero.

How Allocations will work in practice

The Council receives details of available homes for rent from RSLs on a weekly basis. These are entered onto a database in order to be matched against customers with the most need for that property. When matching customers and properties the following will be considered:

- 1) The size and location of the home.
- 2) Any adaptations or special features of the home which are suitable for specific customers (i.e. those with disabilities or elderly persons)
- 3) Any local lettings policies, which may be in place, which require specific criteria to be applied.

If no customer in the Blue Band has a need matching the property, then the nomination will go to the matching customer in Red Band who has waited longest, and this process will carry on down through the bands in priority order.

A customer, who is nominated by the Council to an RSL, may then be asked some questions by the RSL, who will have their own way of deciding if a customer is suitable to be a tenant. It is unusual for RSLs to refuse the Councils' nomination. If this happens, customers are encouraged to contact the Council who will be able to find out why they have not been successful.

Applicants refused a property by an RSL will remain in the same band with the same waiting start date unless new evidence regarding the applicant is found by the RSL that may affect the priority of the applicant. The Council will investigate any changes in a customers' circumstances and may change banding where necessary.

Area of Choice

Applicants can indicate an unlimited amount of areas they wish to live in due to a number of reasons (proximity to schools, work, relatives, place of worship), along with places they do not wish to live (e.g. when fleeing violence or harassment).

Chorley Council will take customer preferred areas into consideration, but due to shortages in available homes, it may not be possible to nominate you for a home in your exact location (particularly if you are specific to a certain street or estate).

Customers need to be aware that the refusal of a nominated property in another area on the grounds of location may affect your priority.

Applicants who are homeless and the Council owes a legal duty to find them accommodation, will be expected to be more flexible when offered accommodation, especially when they are being housed in temporary accommodation.

Some areas are also subject to 'local lettings policies', such as small parish areas where a local parish connection may be needed, or mixed tenure (private owned/private rented/ RSL) new build area where applicants may be required to be in employment.

Type and Size of Accommodation you can apply for

The policy aims to make the best use of the homes available and so customers will only be nominated properties according to the size of their household. For example, a single person or couple will only be offered properties with one room, and a family with two children would be offered a property with 2 or 3 rooms depending on the gender and age of the children.

The number of rooms can change for medical reasons and formal caring responsibilities. The aim of this is to ensure the properties are not overcrowded and also the homes in the Borough are being fully utilised. Sheltered Housing and other Supported Housing will only be available to relevant 'client groups' e.g. Older People, People with Learning Difficulties, Homeless People with Support needs.

Circumstances that could reduce your priority or exclude you from the list

- Rent Arrears
- Anti-social behaviour or criminal activity;
- Applicants have a high amount of savings or equity (£20,000+)
- Applicants earning in the Higher Rate 40% tax bracket (£37,400+ 2009/10)
- Applicants do not have a local connection to Chorley Borough;
- The applicant refuses two properties which are offered;
- People not resident in the British Isles or subject to immigration control are not eligible to join the register

Withholding or Falsifying Information and Deliberately Altering Circumstances

Giving false or deliberately withholding information as part of your housing application is a criminal offence and may lead to prosecution and exclude you from the housing register or reducing you priority. Deliberately changing your circumstances, e.g. inviting people into your home to make you overcrowded, will also lead to your priority being reduced.

The council must also be informed of all changes in circumstances, which may affect your application.

Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the service that you have received, please contact the Housing Options Service, explaining what the problem is and we will do all we can to help you.

You can also register a complaint under the Council's complaints procedure by telephone, e-mail or in person at the Civic Offices, Union Street, and Chorley. All complaints will be acknowledged and investigated. If the applicant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of their complaint they may also make a complaint to the Local Government.

Further information

This is a summary of the main policy that is far more detailed citing all relevant legislation. If you would like a copy of the main policy you can visit the Chorley Councils website; www.chorley.gov.uk/allocationspolicy , you can call 01257 515151 and request the Housing Options team send you a copy, or alternatively visit the Civic Offices, Union Street, Chorley, PR1 1AL, and pick up a copy from the One Stop Shop.