

GUIDANCE ON HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT LETTERS

How to Use the Housing Conditions Letters

These letters are designed to help you:

- make a homelessness application
- challenge a homelessness decision
- challenge a housing allocation decision

They follow the law and the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

1. Things You MUST Change in All Three Letters

These items must always be checked and updated so the letter matches your own situation.

A. Text in Blue (if shown in your version)

- Read it carefully
- Change it to match your situation
- OR delete it if it does not apply

B. Text in *Italics*

- These are instructions
- Remove the italics
- Replace them with your own information
- OR delete the instruction if it does not apply

C. Text in Square Brackets [like this]

- Read the text inside the brackets
- Decide if it applies to you If it applies:
- Remove the brackets and keep the words

If it does not apply:

- Change the wording or
- Delete the entire bracketed section.

Examples:

- [NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY] → replace with local authority near you.
- [Tick or highlight all that apply and delete the rest] → Tick Boxes in Word

2. How to Tick Boxes in Word

Some letters (especially the Housing Allocation Review Letter) include tick boxes. Here is how to complete them properly.

Option 1: Clickable Checkboxes (Developer Tab)

This is the best option if you want boxes you can click on and off.

1. Open Word → File → Options → Customize Ribbon
2. Tick Developer in the right-hand panel → click OK
3. Place your cursor where the checkbox should go
4. Select Developer → Check Box Content Control
5. Click the box to tick or untick it

Option 2: Manual Ticking (Simple Method)

If you prefer not to use the Developer tab:

- Replace ☐ with ☒
- Or type X next to the box

This is quick and works on all devices.

3. Sections That Only Apply to Some People

Some sections are optional and only apply to certain applicants.

Ask yourself: Does this apply to me?

- If YES → keep it and remove brackets/instructions
- If NO → delete the entire section

Examples of optional sections:

✓ Homelessness Application Letter

- Health issues
- Children
- Domestic abuse
- Risks

✓ Homelessness Review Letter (s.202)

- Intentional homelessness
- Suitability of accommodation
- Equality Act / PSED
- Children's welfare

✓ Housing Allocation Review Letter (Part 6)

- Additional preference
- Medical/welfare needs
- Newham policy paragraph

If a section does not apply, delete it completely.

4. Things You MUST NOT Remove

These sections are legal requirements and must stay in the letters.

Homelessness Application Letter

- Section 183 (application can be made in any form)
- Section 184 (duty to make inquiries)
- Section 188 (interim accommodation)
- Section 189A (assessment & PHP)
- Section 195 (prevention duty)
- Section 189B (relief duty)
- Section 193 (main duty)
- Equality Act 2010
- Article 8 ECHR

Homelessness Review Letter (s.202)

- Section 202 Housing Act 1996
- Homelessness (Review Procedure) Regulations 2018
- Regulation 7(2) “minded to find” requirement
- Case law (Bullale, Nzolameso, Saleh, Mohamoud, Saint Sepulchre)
- Request for interim accommodation
- Requirement for senior officer
- Requirement for full written reasons

Housing Allocation Review Letter (Part 6)

- Part 6 Housing Act 1996
- Right to review
- 21-day time limit
- Requirement for senior officer
- 8-week review period
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Care Act 2014

These sections protect you legally.

Do not delete them.

5. Information You MUST Add Yourself

Every letter must include:

- Your full name
- Your address
- The council’s name and address
- The date of your letter

- Your phone number
- Your email
- Your reference number (if you have one)
- Your circumstances (brief explanation)
- Any risks (health, children, safety, eviction)
- Any evidence you are attaching

Without this, the council may ignore your letter.

6. Keep All Three Letters Consistent

To avoid confusion, apply the same rules to every letter:

- Same approach to brackets
- Same approach to instructions
- Same approach to optional sections
- Same format for personal details
- Same approach to evidence
- Same removal of blue or italic text
- All letters must be in black text

This keeps the letters clear and easy to complete.

7. Extra Guidance for Community Use

These points help people with limited English or confidence:

- Keep sentences short
- Use simple words
- Ask someone to help read the instructions
- No legal knowledge is required
- You only need to describe your situation
- Perfect spelling is not required
- Letters can be handwritten or typed
- Letters can be sent by email or post

8. Final Checklist Before Sending

Before sending, check:

- Have all brackets been removed?
- Have all instructions been replaced?
- Have you deleted sections that do not apply?
- Have you kept all legal sections?
- Have you added your own details?
- Have you explained your situation clearly?
- Have you included your evidence?

If yes, your letters are ready.