




Guide to Introductory Tenancies

If you have any difficulty with this form, please ask for assistance - Large print and Braille are available.

إذا رغبتكم الحصول على هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى غير اللغة الإنجليزية نرجو الاتصال بنا على رقم الهاتف التالي: 01325 388549 مع ذكر رقم الإشارة.  **BRAILLE**

যদি আপনার ইংরেজী ছাড়া অন্য কোন ভাষায় এই প্রকাশনাটির দরকার থাকে, তাহলে 01325 388549 নম্বরে ফোন করুন এবং সূত্র নম্বর উল্লেখ করুন।

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਨੰਬਰ 01325 388549 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਰੈਫਰੈਂਸ (ਹਵਾਲਾ) ਨੰਬਰ ਦੱਸੋ।

如果你需要其它语言的版本, 請與以下電話聯係並報出參考號碼: 01325 388549

What does a Review involve?

The Review will be carried out by a senior Social Services Officer and a member of the Residents' Panel who have not been involved in the decision to evict you. The Review Panel will consider your case based on your Review Request Form, any representations you make and the evidence provided by Officers of the Council. You have the right to attend in person, but it is not essential. You may also bring a friend or representative if you wish. Your Review Request Form will be fully considered.

If you say that you will attend the hearing but you do not attend, a decision may be made without you. If the Review Panel finds in your favour, your Introductory Tenancy will continue. If, however, the Review Panel finds against you, a Possession Order will then be obtained from the County Court and you will be evicted.

How do I obtain advice?

If you begin to experience problems with your tenancy, you should immediately visit, write to or telephone your Housing Officer. A private interview can be arranged to discuss any issues relating to your tenancy. The following telephone numbers may be useful.

Citizens Advice Bureau
(01325) 380755

Disc Community Legal Services
(01388) 424450

First Stop Housing Advice
(01325) 254463

**Darlington Borough Council
Housing Division**
0800 3891227

What is an Introductory Tenancy?

An Introductory Tenancy is a trial period lasting 12 months. During this period, it is possible for the Council to obtain possession of the property more easily if the tenant fails to keep one or more of the tenancy conditions. If there are no problems during the trial period, then the tenancy automatically becomes a secure tenancy after 12 months.

Nearly all Council tenants are Secure Tenants. They have a range of rights and security of tenure which can only be challenged for specific reasons set out in law.

Why have I been given an Introductory Tenancy?

All new tenants of Darlington Borough Council, apart from some who have already been tenants of another Council or a Housing Association, are given an Introductory Tenancy.

The Council had the choice of bringing in Introductory Tenancies for all new tenants or not at all. After consultation with existing residents, it was decided that Introductory Tenancies would be beneficial because they can be terminated easily if the tenant is in breach of tenancy conditions, particularly those relating to anti-social behaviour.

You have been given an Introductory Tenancy not because we suspect you will be a bad tenant - tenants who cause problems are a small minority - but because this enables the Council to take effective action against those who are.

Are my rights and responsibilities different because I am an Introductory Tenant?

Your responsibilities are the same as for secure tenants. They are set out in your Tenancy Agreement. You will have fewer rights than Secure Tenants while you are an Introductory Tenant. The main differences are:-

- You do not have the Right to Buy your home, although the probationary period will count towards any discount you receive if you decide to purchase at a future date.
- You cannot sub-let the property or take in lodgers in the same way as a Secure Tenant can.

- You do not have the Right to Exchange with another tenant. However, the Council will consider any request you make to exchange with other tenants of the Council.
- You are not entitled to claim compensation at the end of your tenancy, for any improvements made while you are an Introductory Tenant.

What if I want to end my tenancy?

You must give the Council 4 weeks notice in writing. There is a special form, which is available from any Housing Office. The form should be handed in to your Neighbourhood Housing Office at least 4 clear weeks before you intend to leave. The tenancy will end on a Sunday.

What will happen if I break any conditions of my tenancy?

If you fail to pay your weekly rent, or if you or your visitors cause nuisance or annoyance to anyone in the locality of your home, or if you break any of the other tenancy conditions, the Council may decide to end your tenancy and take legal action to evict you.

Before bringing your tenancy to an end, the Council must write to you to explain this. They must also give you (or 'serve') a legal document which is called a Notice of Possession Proceedings. This informs you that the Council may be asking the County Court for an immediate Possession Order. If you receive a Notice of Possession Proceedings, you should contact your Housing Officer immediately to discuss whether it might still be possible to sort things out. It may be in your interests to obtain independent advice and you are advised to take the Notice immediately to the Citizens Advice Bureau, a Housing Aid Centre, a Law Centre or a Solicitor.

What are my rights if I am served with a Notice of Possession Proceedings?

If you receive a Notice of Possession Proceedings, it means that, on a certain date, the Council intends to obtain an order for possession from the Court. The earliest possible date for this will be written on the Notice. If this happens, you will have the right to request a Review of the Council's decision to evict you. A Review Request Form will be attached to the Notice. If you wish the Council to hold a Review, you must send your Review Request Form (or write a letter) to the Council within 14 days of receiving the Notice of Possession Proceedings.

Your Request will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt by the Council. The Review Panel will meet as soon as possible after receipt of your Review Request Form. You will be notified of the Review Panel's decision before the Council goes to Court for possession.