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# Private Rented Property Licensing Accommodation Standards

For all types of privately rented accommodation

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide information on the minimum requirements for privately rented homes in Havering. It is not intended to be a fully comprehensive list of requirements and regard should be made to any national standards, lease terms/conditions and other legal requirements when assessing standards.
- 1.2 This document is concerned with self-contained residential accommodation, which has exclusive use of amenities for a single household and houses in multiple occupation (HMO) accommodation where amenities and facilities are shared by more than 3 or more occupiers living as 2 or more households (see Appendix 1).
- 1.3 As a minimum, properties should always:
  - be free from Category 1 and significant Category 2 hazards with regard to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced by the Housing Act 2004;
  - be expected to be free from such Category 1 and significant Category 2 hazards for a period of at least 5 years from inspection;
  - comply with all other legislation relating to the health and safety of residential occupants;
  - be in such a condition so as not to cause nuisance to any neighbouring properties.
- 1.4 Any furniture supplied by anyone other than the occupier shall comply with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993).
- 1.5 All gas appliances and services shall comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.
- 1.6 Any work carried out at the property, which requires either Building Regulation approval or Development Control consent should have such approval.
- 1.7 Properties should be energy efficient with consideration given to total energy use, carbon dioxide emissions and likely energy performance particularly in relation to the “Heating & Thermal Comfort” section below.
- 1.8 This document is not intended to cover matters that would fall within an Inventory. Furnishings, fixtures and non-permanent fittings should be subject to a separate assessment procedure.

## 2. Kitchen, dining and living facilities

- 2.1 The kitchen should be of satisfactory layout and have adequate provision for hygienic storage, preparation and cooking of food, so preventing the risk of infection to occupants.
- 2.2 The occupants should not be exposed by reason of layout, size, design or other feature to risk from hot surfaces or risk from burns or scalds caused by contact with flames or hot liquids.
- 2.3 Kitchen units and appliances should be free from defects and in good working order. In general, kitchen facilities should be less than 20 years old.
- 2.4 Kitchen facilities used by a **single household** should comprise:
  - cooker (4 cooking rings), oven and grill (suitably restrained and located);
  - sink with integral drainer set on a 1000mm base unit;
  - constant hot and cold water supplies to the sink;
  - fixed impervious and readily cleansable work surface, minimum 2000 x 500mm;
  - adequate tiled splash-back to a height of at least 300mm above any sink or work surface;
  - direct drainage connection to the sink with a suitable water trap;
  - adequate storage cupboard units, minimum 0.3 cubic metres;
  - suitable sized refrigerator;
  - minimum of 2 double electrical sockets above work surfaces (excluding appliance sockets).
- 2.5 Joints around sinks and worktops should be sealed with silicone sealant.
- 2.6 A kitchen must not be the sole means of escape from a room used for sleeping.
- 2.7 Kitchen facilities must not be installed in a hallway.
- 2.8 A humidistat-controlled mechanical extractor must be provided where there is inadequate ventilation by means of a window. Newly converted kitchens must have a mechanical extractor regardless of whether there is an openable window.
- 2.9 Where kitchen facilities are shared by more than one household then the facilities should be no more than one floor away from the letting.

Where this is not practicable, a dining room area of a size suitable for the number of occupiers should be provided.

- 2.10 In **Houses of Multiple Occupation** kitchens must be of an adequate size and shape to enable safe use of food preparation by the number of occupiers and the following guidelines for shared kitchens apply:

Number of sharers	Room size
Up to 3	5.5 sq m
4 – 5	7.5 sq m
6- 7	9.5sq m
8 – 10	11.5 sq m

- a. Where all or some of the lettings within the HMO do not contain cooking facilities, they must be provided for sharing with other households. There should be one full set of facilities per 5 persons, irrespective of age. Some flexibility may be considered in well-managed properties where there are 6 or 7 persons, subject to a risk assessment carried out by the local authority.
- b. Where there are 8 – 10 persons, either an additional full set of cooking facilities must be provided, or additional facilities must be provided in an appropriate number of individual lettings where the room is large enough.
- c. A set of cooking facilities in a **House in Multiple Occupation** is comprised as follows:

Facilities	Number of Occupiers	Specifications
<b>Cooker</b>	One	In one-person bedsits only, a cooker with a 2-ring hob, oven and grill. Must be permanently and safely installed on a fixed worktop
	Up to 5	Four-ring hob, oven and grill
	6 – 7	Four-ring hob, oven and grill and an additional combined microwave oven and grill
<b>Sink / Drainer</b>	Up to 5	1000 mm sink/drainer set on base unit, provided with a constant supply of hot and cold water and properly connected to the drainage system
	6 – 7	A double sink/drainer installed as above <u>or</u> A single sink/drainer plus a dishwasher
<b>Worktop</b>	Up to 5	1000 mm x 600 mm. Worktop must be fixed, and made of suitable impervious material. 2000 mm x 600 mm provided and fitted as above
	6 – 7	2000 mm x 600 mm provided and fitted as above, plus additional space for extra appliances

<b>Splashback</b>	All	300 mm tiled splashback or its equivalent to be provided to the sink/drain, worktop and any cooker without an integral splashback.
<b>Electrical sockets</b>	Up to 5	One suitably located electrical socket for each dedicated appliance such as a cooker, refrigerator and washing machine. In addition, 4 sockets (in either double or single combinations) to be provided above the worktop
	6 – 7	An additional 2 sockets as above.
<b>Floor covering</b>	All	Impervious and washable floor covering to cover the floor area of the kitchen.
<b>Food storage cupboard</b>	Per household	One double wall cupboard or One single base cupboard. May be provided within individual lets. The base unit below the sink/drain is not acceptable for food storage.
<b>Refrigerator</b>	Per Household	Where provided in individual lets, a small fridge freezer

Note. Kitchen facilities, where provided in a bedsit, should be sited remote from the entrance door. The cooker should not be situated below a window.

### 3. Bathroom and WC facilities

- 3.1 There should be adequate provision for personal hygiene.
- 3.2 Bathroom facilities should be in good working order and free from defects and, in general, should be less than 30 years old.
- 3.3 Bathrooms and WC's should be within one floor of lettings, and where shared, must be accessible from a common area. They must be fitted with a suitable lock and the surface should be impervious and readily cleansable.
- 3.4 The bath and shower should be positioned to prevent falls and where necessary handles and grab rails should be provided. Sharp edges or projections should be removed and non-slip surfaces should be provided where necessary.
- 3.5 Sanitary facilities (in total throughout a dwelling) should include:
  - a fixed bath or shower and wash hand basin with a constant supply of hot and cold water and a direct drainage connection

with suitable trap (minimum sizes: wash hand basin 500 x 400mm, bath 1700 x 700mm and shower 800 x 800mm);

- a WC properly connected to the drainage. The WC cistern overflow should discharge externally;
- dwellings with over five occupants should have a WC which is separate from the bathroom;
- adequate tiled splash-back should be provided to the bath and wash hand basin (300mm high);
- showers should have tiling of sufficient height to protect the decoration of the wall (minimum of 1.80m) which is properly sealed and a shower screen or curtain of a sufficient standard to prevent water damage to floor;

3.6 Joints around baths and wash hand basins should be sealed with silicone sealant.

3.7 Facilities should be provided with adequate lighting.

3.8 Bath/shower rooms must be adequately ventilated and heated (electric bar heaters are not permitted).

3.9 There should be adequate space for access adjacent to the facilities. Bathrooms located off a kitchen should have a wash hand basin. Bathrooms should not be accessed through a bedroom except for one bedroom flats.

3.10 The facilities provided for the number of occupiers and households should be adequate and the following is the standard to be applied where facilities are shared by 2 or more households (external WC's are not counted);

Number of Occupants	Facilities	Specification
1-4	1 bath with wash hand basin (WHB) WC can be in bathroom	Standard size bath with 450 mm splashback Full-size WHB with tiled splashback. Both to have constant supply of hot and cold water. If the WC is separate, it must have an additional WHB & tiled splashback within the compartment.
5	1 bath with WHB in room 1 WC with WHB 1 WHB in each sleeping room (where practicable)	As above WC may be in the same room as the bath/WHB WHB's in bedsit rooms where practicable.
6-10	2 bathrooms with WHB's in each 2 WC's, one in own compartment with WHB	As above WHB's in bedsit rooms where practicable.

	1 WHB in each sleeping room (where practicable)	WC's may be in the same rooms as the bath/WHB
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Note: Where a shower cubicle is provided, it must be of a sufficient size that the user can bathe and dress without injury.

#### 4. Heating and thermal comfort

- 4.1 All premises should have effective insulation and efficient heating. This should result in an Energy Performance Certificate rating of at least **E**, where applicable.
- 4.2 Heating should be matched to the thermal capacity and performance of the structure. The heating system should comprise of either full gas central heating or electric storage heaters at off peak or low cost rates.
- 4.3 The premises should be capable of being heated to a temperature of 21°C in living areas and 18°C in bedrooms when the outside temperature is - 1°C.
- 4.4 The heating should be controllable by the occupants i.e. have a timer and/or thermostat and should operate independently from the hot water system.
- 4.5 The heating should be properly installed and regularly maintained by a Gas Safe or NICEIC registered engineer. Copies of their certificates should be provided.

#### 5. Gas Installation and maintenance

- 5.1 All gas appliances should be properly fixed and ventilated; Gas Safe approved and should be certified as safe by a Gas Safe registered engineer on an annual basis.
- 5.2 There should be no evidence of the production of Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Dioxide, Sulphur Dioxide or un-combusted fuel gas.
- 5.3 A gas safety test certificate (Gas Safe Register) should be provided from a Gas Safe registered engineer.

#### 6. Space Standards (room sizes)

- 6.1 Occupants should not be exposed to health risks caused by lack of space within the dwelling for living, sleeping and normal family life.
- 6.2 The following tables should be used to calculate the permitted number of occupants for the dwelling.

<b>Maximum number of occupiers per room based on floor space in single household dwellings</b>	
4.6 to 6.49 sq m (approx 50 to 69 sq ft)	1 person (under the age 10 years old)
6.5 to 10.19 sq m (approx 70 to 110 sq ft)	1 person (of any age)
10.2 sq m or more (approx 111 sq ft or more)	2 persons (see note below)

**NOTE:**

- Communal space, hallways, corridors, landings, kitchens, W.C's or bathrooms cannot be used as sleeping accommodation.
- Only persons under the age of 10 years old of the opposite sex may sleep in the same room, unless those persons are over 16 years old and are married to each other or live together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex)

<b>Maximum number of occupiers per room based on floor space in Houses in Multiple Occupation with shared kitchen facilities in a separate room</b>	
(6.5 sq m (70 sq ft) will be allowed as a minimum providing there is sufficient communal space available in the property)*.	1 Person (1 household) (of any age)
(10.2 sq m (111 sq ft) will be allowed as a minimum providing there is sufficient communal space available in the property)*.	2 Persons (1 household)

<b>Maximum number of occupiers per room based on floor space in Houses in Multiple Occupation with exclusive kitchen facilities within the room and self contained studio bedsits/flats with kitchen facilities within the room</b>	
13 sq m to 17.99 sq m (Approx 140 to 193.6 sq ft)	1 Person (1 household) (of any age)
18 sq m or more. (Approx 193.8 sq ft or more)	2 Persons (1 household)

**NOTE:**

- Communal space, hallways, corridors, landings, kitchens, W.C's or bathrooms cannot be used as sleeping accommodation.
- Only persons under the age of 10 years old of the opposite sex may sleep in the same room, unless those persons are over 16 years old and are married

to each other or live together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex).

- For every 5 persons sharing there will need to be 1 set of bathing and kitchen facilities.
- \*Communal space is either a separate unlocked room at least 4.6sq m with seating or a kitchen with at least an additional 4.6sq m dedicated to a table and seating.

## 7. Fire Safety and Smoke Detection

- 7.1 Occupants must not be exposed to threat from uncontrolled fire and associated smoke, and adequate means of escape from fire shall be provided to all properties.
- 7.2 As minimum standard, hard wired mains operated smoke alarms with battery backup should be provided to the ceiling in the dwelling hallway.
- 7.3 At least one smoke detector should be suitably located on each floor level.
- 7.4 The smoke detectors must be interlinked so that they all sound continuously in the event of a fire.
- 7.5 Smoke detectors shall be inspected and tested periodically to ensure their proper operation. For HMOs a record of testing should be kept.
- 7.6 HMOs should also have a fire blanket and a mains powered heat detector in the kitchen. The internal kitchen door should also be fire rated.
- 7.7 Larger HMOs should have an up to date Fire Risk Assessment completed by a competent person. Fire safety standards to be based on the latest edition of the Lacors Housing Fire Safety Guidance or equivalent.

## HMO and Household definitions

### What is an HMO?

The Housing Act 2004 has widened the definition of an HMO, and some types of accommodation are now HMOs that would previously not have been.

A building is now defined as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) if the following apply:

- It is occupied as living accommodation
- by at least 3 people who belong to more than one family or household
- in accommodation that is not self-contained and
- rent is paid by at least one of the occupiers and
- it is the occupiers' only or main residence.

Or

- it has been converted into self-contained flats and
- the conversion does not meet 1991 Building Regulations and less than 2/3 of the flats are owner-occupied.

Self-contained flats within buildings that are HMO's may be occupied as HMO's themselves. The guidance applies to self-contained flats which meet this condition.

An individual tenancy may have exclusive use of the basic facilities (bath/shower, wc and kitchen), but the accommodation would only be defined as self-contained if the sleeping/living area and all the facilities are behind one door.

### What is a household?

A household can be a single person. For two or more people to be part of the same household, they must be closely related by blood, be married or co-habiting partners of either sex, or be in recognized relationships such as step children, or adopted or fostered children. Some live-in employees also count as being in the same household.