



# Housing Allocation Policy

Summary

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## Summary



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# 1. Introduction

This booklet explains

- 🏠 who can apply for council housing;
- 🏠 how people are queued on the housing register; and
- 🏠 how people are assessed and prioritised for housing

**Our allocation policy aims to:**

- 🏠 give priority to people who are in most housing need
- 🏠 make best use of the housing we have available, to take account of local needs and demands
- 🏠 achieve balanced communities
- 🏠 make sure the allocation process is clear and fair

# 2. Who can apply for council housing?

You can apply for housing if you are aged 16 or over, as long as there is no law which stops you from doing so.

# 3. How do I apply for council housing?

## HomeOptions

Before you apply for housing, it is important you have all the information you need to make an informed choice about your housing options.

HomeOptions, is an online self-assessment tool that can help you to identify the housing options that are most suitable to your circumstances.

You can access HomeOptions on the council's website at [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk).

In South Lanarkshire, we have a Common Housing Register called HomeFinder. HomeFinder means that you only need to fill in one housing application form to register for housing with us or any other HomeFinder landlord.

You can complete and submit a HomeFinder application form online from the council's website at [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk) or you can get a form from:

- 🏠 any local housing office
- 🏠 any HomeFinder landlord office

Once you have filled in the application form, you should return it to any HomeFinder landlord office. If, as a result of ill health or a disability, you need help to apply for a house, contact us to discuss how your needs can be met.



## 4. How does the allocation policy work?

### Housing lists and priorities

The housing register is made up of four lists.

#### Urgent housing need

You will be placed on this list if you:

- 🏠 are homeless and we have a legal responsibility to provide you with a permanent home; or
- 🏠 have an extremely serious medical condition and cannot continue to live in your current home and it cannot be adapted or services provided to help you stay at home; or
- 🏠 have completed a minimum of three years military service or been injured in action or discharged on medical grounds.

#### Transfer list

You will be placed on this list if you live in South Lanarkshire and:

- 🏠 are a tenant or tied tenant with us, or a tenant of a HomeFinder landlord.

#### Waiting list

You will be placed on this list if you:

- 🏠 cannot be placed on either of the above lists, for example if you are living care of friends/family members, are a lodger, or own your home.

#### Other Categories

You will be placed on this list if you:

- 🏠 have exceptional circumstances and your housing need cannot be met through any of the other lists

### How will my application be prioritised?

#### Urgent housing need

- 🏠 by the date of your homelessness application; or
- 🏠 by the date you applied for urgent medical need; or
- 🏠 by the date of your HM Forces application.

#### Transfer and Waiting list

- 🏠 by total points;
- 🏠 where you have no points or the same level of points as other applicants, your application will be prioritised in order of the date you applied for housing

## Other Categories

- 🏠 based on your individual circumstances

Because there is a lack of available housing and a high demand in certain areas of South Lanarkshire, if you are on the Urgent housing need or Other categories list, we will ask you to include within your choices, areas where we are likely to be able to make you an offer of housing within a reasonable time.

## What do I get points for?

Points will be awarded to reflect the following circumstances:

### Medical need

Medical points will only be awarded if you or a member of your household has been assessed as having a medical condition and your current house is unsuitable and it cannot be adapted or health care services cannot be provided to meet your needs.

Before medical points are awarded, we will assess whether it is possible and practical to adapt your current home or provide health care services to meet your medical needs. If this is the case, we will not award you medical points to move to another house.

**Points available: 120 points**

## Insecurity of tenure

Insecurity of tenure points will only be awarded where you do not have security of tenure. Insecurity of tenure points will not be awarded if you have a Scottish Secure Tenancy, an Assured Tenancy or a Private Residential Tenancy within the private rented sector, or own your home.

**Points available: 60 points**

## Tied Tenants

A tied tenant is someone who lives in accommodation provided by their employer as a condition of their job.

Tied tenant points will be awarded if you have been in your current job for more than two years, the accommodation and your job are in South Lanarkshire and you need to leave the accommodation because:

- 🏠 you are retiring or being made redundant;
- 🏠 you are ill;
- 🏠 your husband or wife has died.

Points are available up to six months before and six months after the date your tied tenancy is due to end.

Tied tenants do not qualify for points under any other category.

**Points available: 150 points**

## Overcrowding

Overcrowding points will be awarded if your current home is too small for your household needs (under the terms of our occupancy standard).

**Points available: 40 points for each extra bedroom needed (up to 160 points).**

## Care and Support

Care and support points will be awarded if you:

- 🏠 need to move to be closer to a family member to give or receive care and support; and
- 🏠 the care and support you need or give is essential to allow you or your family member to stay in your or their own home; and
- 🏠 it is not reasonable for you or your carer to provide the care and support from where you or they currently live; and
- 🏠 if the care and support ended, this would put a significant demand on care services.

We will only give you care and support points for areas which are within a reasonable distance of the person giving or needing the care and support.

**Points available: 60 points**

## Under Occupancy

Under occupancy points will only be awarded to current tenants of council and other HomeFinder landlords, who do not require all of the bedrooms in their current home. In line with our occupancy standard, points will be awarded for each bedroom not required. Applicants living in a one or two bedroom property, which is suitable in terms of the occupancy standard, will not be eligible to receive under occupancy points.

**Points available: 10 points for each additional bedroom (up to 40 points).**



## 5. Occupancy Standard

One bedroom is required for:

- each person aged 16 or over;
- a couple;
- two children of the opposite sex who are both under eight (if one is eight or over, they need separate rooms); and
- two children of the same sex under 16, unless the age difference is 10 years or over.

Number of bedrooms needed	Size of property you can choose
One	Bedsit One bedroom Two bedrooms
Two	Two bedrooms
Three	Three bedrooms
Four	Three bedrooms Four bedrooms
Five	Four bedrooms Five bedrooms

## 6. Housing Choices

It is important that you tell us about the types of housing you want to be considered for.

**You are able to choose the:**

- area** – you can choose as many areas of South Lanarkshire as you want.
- size of property** – you can choose the size of property you require based on the occupancy standard. See the table opposite.
- type of property** – you can choose the types of housing you are interested in.
- type of heating** – you can choose the types of heating you want

The information you provide will be used to match you to available properties, for example, if you tell us that you only want a tenement flat with gas heating, we will not consider you for any other type of property or heating type.

## 7. How many offers of housing will I get?

We will give you up to two offers of housing and will only offer you a property which meets the requirements on your housing application form.

If you are placed on the Urgent housing need or Other categories list or are a tied tenant, then one offer of housing will be made to you as a priority applicant. If you unreasonably refuse the offer made to you as a priority, your application will be re-assessed and you will be entitled to receive a further two offers based on your re-assessed circumstances.

## 8. Are there circumstances in which I will not receive an offer of housing?

In certain circumstances your housing application may be suspended for a period of time. Although you will not be made an offer of housing during this time, your points level will not be affected.

The reasons your application may be suspended are detailed as follows.

### 1. Anti-social behaviour by you or member of your household

Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- causing annoyance or harassment, violent or intimidating behaviour;
- criminal convictions relating to a tenancy (for example drug dealing); and
- damage to a landlord's property.

**Length of suspension:  
up to 36 months**

### 2. Tenancy related debt

If you owe rent or any other money relating to your current tenancy or to a previous tenancy held within the last three years.

However, your application will not be suspended if:

- you pay back all of the money you owe;
- the money you owe is equal to or less than a months rent;
- you have an agreement to pay the money you owe and you have kept to this for at least three months; or
- the money owed is not your responsibility.

**Length of suspension:  
up to 36 months**

### 3. Breach of tenancy

If you are our tenant or a tenant of another HomeFinder landlord and you have breached the conditions of your tenancy agreement.

Examples of a breach of tenancy include:

- property or garden in an unsatisfactory condition
- deliberate damage to the property
- alterations carried out without the landlord's approval.

**Length of suspension:  
up to 36 months**





#### 4. Refusal of a second offer of housing

If you refuse a second reasonable offer of housing within the last 12 months (made in accordance with your preferences).

**Length of suspension:**  
**6 months**

#### 5. Fraud, false or misleading information

If you have deliberately given us false/ misleading information to improve your chances of being housed.

**Length of suspension:**  
**up to 36 months**

If your application is suspended, we will tell you:

- 🏠 why your application has been suspended;
- 🏠 what the suspension will mean for your application;
- 🏠 how long the suspension will apply;
- 🏠 how you can appeal;
- 🏠 what you need to do to have the suspension lifted; and
- 🏠 what information, advice and support we will give to help you to remove the suspension.

#### 9. What is sheltered housing?

The sheltered housing aspect of the allocation policy will be introduced from 1 February 2020

Sheltered housing aims to meet the needs of older people who can live independently in their own home with housing support.

There are various types of sheltered housing, from purpose built developments to main door bungalows and flats. Tenants who live in sheltered housing developments are required to need and accept the housing support provided by the sheltered housing service.

You can apply for sheltered housing if you or your partner is aged 66 or over **and** one person is retired from full time employment **and** you require the support service.

In exceptional circumstances, we may consider an application from someone under 66.





## How can I apply for sheltered housing?

If you want to apply for sheltered housing, you must fill in the HomeFinder application form (see Section 3). We will then contact you to discuss your housing options including sheltered housing.

## How does the sheltered housing allocation policy work?

You will be queued for sheltered housing in the same way as other types of housing (see Section 4).

## What do I get points for?


In addition to the points set out in Section 4, additional points will also be awarded based on the assessment of your need for sheltered housing and the sheltered housing support service.

## 10. What are Local Letting Plans?

We have developed local letting plans for each of the eight housing management areas in South Lanarkshire. The plans set out in detail where and how it is intended to vary the allocation policy at a local area level to take account of the supply of housing and the needs and demands that exist locally.

## 11. More Information

You can find more information on The Housing Allocation Policy, HomeFinder and HomeOptions on the council's website at [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk)



If you or someone you know needs this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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