

New guidance for social landlords on essential moves

- New guidance asks social landlords to support the most vulnerable to move home – such as those fleeing domestic abuse
- Key role of social housing sector recognised in helping to free up hospital beds during pandemic

Supporting vulnerable people move to new homes during the pandemic should continue to be a priority as Housing Minister Christopher Pincher publishes [new guidance for social landlords](#) today (27 April 2020).

The guidance makes clear that essential moves should continue over this period, where it can be done in line with social distancing guidance.

This includes domestic abuse victims who may be fleeing abusive relationships, people who are homeless and leaving temporary accommodation or individuals leaving hospital.

If people are able to move into a more settled home over this period, it could free up space in temporary accommodation or in hospitals and other healthcare settings, helping more people get access to the help or medical support they need.

Housing Minister Christopher Pincher MP said:

This is a daunting and uncertain time for everyone around the country – especially for those who need a more settled home.

Wherever possible councils and housing associations should continue to support those fleeing abusive relationships or leaving hospital after an illness – to move into decent and more settled homes.

By doing this we will not only help vulnerable people into settled homes but we can also free up more hospital beds and save lives during this pandemic.

The guidance also recognises the importance of cooperation between local partners in order to support those who are vulnerable during this time and will be kept under review whilst the emergency measures are in place.

Non-essential moves, such as home transfers, should be paused during this period, in order to help reduce the spread of the infection. This is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of tenants, applicants and members of

staff.

People should delay moving to a new home while emergency measures are in place to fight coronavirus.

The guidance published today says that all social landlords should prioritise essential moves and do what they can to ensure these can take place, when safe to do so.

Essential moves include:

- supporting victims of domestic abuse and people fleeing violence
- preventing severe overcrowding
- facilitating move-on from temporary accommodation
- supporting discharge from hospital to free-up bed space for others requiring care
- supporting those living in un-safe accommodation, or without settled accommodation, which poses a risk to their health

Where moves or transfers do have to take place, landlords have a responsibility to carry out these functions in line with the latest government advice on social distancing. This message should be communicated clearly to applicants.

The guidance is available [online](#). We will continue to review this in line with the most recent government advice to ensure the safety of everyone in the social housing sector.