



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Community and Local Government



12<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Circular Housing 31/2015

To the Chief Executive of  
Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council

#### Housing Allocation Scheme - Ministerial Direction

Dear Chief Executive,

I am directed by Mr Alan Kelly T.D., Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to refer to the *Action Plan to Address Homelessness* and the *Implementation Plan on the State's Response to Homelessness*.

Section 22(17)(a) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 provides that the Minister may issue directions to a housing authority regarding the operation of an allocation scheme and the housing authority shall comply with any such direction in operating the scheme.

The Minister has decided to issue a Direction to your authority in accordance with Section 22(17)(a) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 and this Direction is enclosed. This Direction will apply from **7 August 2015** to **31 January 2016** and will be reviewed in advance of that date. This means that your authority's current allocation scheme is required to operate in accordance with this Direction.

Please make the necessary arrangements to ensure that your authority complies with this Direction. Your particular attention is drawn to the qualifying needs under 1. (ii) and (iii) of the Direction. Only those described as vulnerable due to disability or those in unsuitable accommodation on exceptional medical grounds or compassionate grounds (domestic violence and young people leaving State) come under this Direction. Details of the revised arrangements should be published in accordance with Section 22(14) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

Please provide details on a quarterly basis to [socialinclusion@environ.ie](mailto:socialinclusion@environ.ie) on the allocations made under the allocation scheme by specifying the different categories of dwellings and households and the proportions of each such category by reference to the total number of such allocations. The format and details of this report will be provided to each housing authority in due course.

A comprehensive review of the overall allocation and transfer policies of housing authorities is being undertaken as one of the actions under the Social Housing Strategy, with a view to issuing revised regulations and comprehensive guidance on the operation of allocation schemes. It is intended that this review would update and consolidate any previous guidance given to housing authorities in respect of their allocation schemes. As soon as this review has concluded, we will write to you again about this matter.

If you have any queries in relation to this circular, please contact the undersigned or Gary Ryan by telephone at 8882716 or email at [gary.ryan@environ.ie](mailto:gary.ryan@environ.ie).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Kenny". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and the last name "Kenny" clearly distinguishable.

Brian Kenny  
Principal  
Homelessness and Housing Inclusion Supports

email: [brian.kenny@environ.ie](mailto:brian.kenny@environ.ie)  
Tel: 8882545

### **Ministerial Direction**

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, in accordance with Section 22(17)(a) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, directs each of the following housing authorities:

- Dublin City Council;
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council;
- Fingal County Council; and
- South Dublin County Council

to operate its allocation scheme in accordance with the Direction below for the period from **7 August 2015 to 31 January 2016**.

In accordance with Section 22(3) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, each housing authority is obliged to make an allocation scheme that applies to the following categories of dwellings:

- (a) all dwellings owned or under the control of the authority (including leased dwellings and dwellings subject to rental accommodation arrangements) and
- (b) dwellings owned or under the control of approved housing bodies which are the subject of mortgage agreements under the Capital Assistance Scheme, the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme and the leasing Payment and Availability agreement.

Properties acquired or leased from NAMA's loan portfolio as well as vacant dwellings being brought back into productive use are deemed to be included in the allocation scheme by virtue of Section 22(1) of the 2009 Act.

## Direction

1. Each housing authority must ensure that at least **50%** of the dwellings available for allocation under Section 22 of the 2009 Act during the specified period will be allocated to households that are qualified for social housing support (i.e. those who are on the record of qualified households) and that, on or before **1 June 2015**, have been deemed by the authority to have one or more than one of the following needs:

- (i) was in an institution, emergency accommodation or a hostel (i.e. a homeless household within the meaning of Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988);
- (ii) has an accommodation requirement arising from an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment (i.e. households where one of its members has a disability and as such is deemed to be a vulnerable household); and
- (iii) was in accommodation that was unsuitable for the household's adequate housing on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds (i.e. including households the subject of domestic violence and young people leaving State care and as such deemed to be a vulnerable household).

2. Each housing authority should make arrangements for timely and efficient selection of households and offers of accommodation so as to ensure that households are notified and ready to move into dwellings as soon as they become available. These arrangements should seek to avoid inadvertent delays in letting dwellings, and dwellings being left vacant for lengthy period due to refusals of offers of accommodation.

Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government

7<sup>th</sup> August 2015



<b>Circular</b> : Housing 31/2015
<b>Title</b> : Housing Allocation Scheme – Ministerial Direction to 4 Dublin Housing Authorities

<b>Importance</b>	<b>Critical</b>	<b>High</b>	✓	<b>Moderate</b>
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<b>What does this circular do?</b>	The Circular sets out details of a Ministerial Direction regarding the operation of the housing allocation scheme for a period from 7 August 2015 to 31 January 2016.
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<b>What are LA's being asked to do?</b>	<p>LAs are being asked operate their housing allocation scheme in accordance with a Ministerial Direction which provides that each of the specified housing authorities must ensure that at least 50% of the dwellings available for allocation during the specified period will be allocated to homeless households and other vulnerable groups who had qualified for social housing support on or before 1 June 2015.</p> <p>LAs are also being asked to provide details on a quarterly basis on the allocations made under the allocation scheme by specifying the different categories of dwellings and households and the proportions of each such category by reference to the total number of such allocations.</p>
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<b>Related circulars?</b>	<b>5 of 2015</b>
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<b>Who must read it?</b>	Chief Executives Directors of Service (Housing)
<b>Who should also read it?</b>	All housing staff

<b>DOE Contacts</b>	Brian Kenny Brian.kenny@environ.ie	Gary Ryan gary.ryan@environ.ie	
	01 8882545	01 8882716	

