

Policy & Procedure for CESSA HA/Greenwich Hospital Sheltered Housing Tenants & Housing Staff

H 27 – Internal Moves

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Approved: DoH

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1. Introduction and Policy

- 1.1 The policy has always been that internal moves from one flat to another, and/or to another of our schemes would not be allowed. In recent years we have created some disabled flats expressly to enable internal moves for tenants that would benefit. Internal moves for medical reasons have also been allowed, for example where medical evidence states that tenants require improved levels of light or to aid mobility, as long as this has not caused detriment to the Organisation. Any such move must, however, be cost neutral to the Organisation, for instance if a void flat had been decorated then the tenant moving will be required to pay for the decoration of the flat they leave.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all CESSA HA and Greenwich Hospital Sheltered Housing Tenants who are offered an internal move, either from one flat to another in the same scheme, or to a flat in another scheme owned by either of the Landlords.

2. General

- 2.1 Internal moves will only be given with the express permission of the Director of Housing after careful consideration on whether the move would be mutually beneficial to CESSA Housing Association or Greenwich Hospital Sheltered Housing (GHS) and the tenant.
- 2.2 Where a request is made to move between an Association and GHS property, the tenant must be eligible for such a move (i.e. a qualifying Naval connection if moving to a GHS flat). In such instance, Greenwich Hospital would also be informed and asked for their authority to proceed.
- 2.3 Requests for a move should be made in writing to Head Office, care of the tenant's Scheme Manager, who will forward the request to the Housing Services Manager for consideration. If approved for consideration, a copy of the Internal Move policy will be provided for information and to guide tenants through the process.
- 2.4 The Scheme Manager is there to support tenants if they are approved for an internal move. However, all communications agreeing the details of the move is the responsibility of the Housing Services Manager who is authorised, on behalf of the Organisation, to act on all aspects (including legal) of the relocation. In their absence, tenants should contact either the Tenant & Services Manager or Director of Housing.
- 2.5 All discussions regarding an internal move should be held directly with the Housing Services Manager, and in their absence, either the Tenant & Services Manager or Director of Housing. The Scheme Manager and Maintainer will be

- kept informed of agreed arrangements so that they can provide support where necessary.
- 2.6 Internal moves will **normally** only be considered for tenants to move to a designated disability adapted flat or to a more suitable flat. This will only occur after consultation with a tenant and may require supporting documentation from their doctor or the hospital.
- 2.7 There may be times however when a larger flat becomes void which has not been able to be filled by an applicant from the housing pool. The Organisation will then offer such a flat to an existing tenant who may wish to have the opportunity to move internally.
- 2.8 Tenants with current or historic (within the previous 12 months) rent arrears, or instances of anti-social behaviour will not be considered for internal moves, unless approved by the CEO for tenancy management reasons.
- 2.9 Internal moves to another flat simply for aesthetic reasons, such as having a better view, will not be considered.

3. Pre-move

- 3.1 On approval for an internal move a new Tenancy Agreement will be issued, the start date for which will be agreed with the tenant. Tenants should be aware that the rent and service charge for their new flat will be set at whatever the current rent and service charge is for a new tenancy for that flat.
- 3.2 Where tenants are moving from a single flat or studio to a two person - one or two bedroom flat, the rent and service charge will be charged at the double flat rate.
- 3.3 If fixtures and fittings have been left in the void flat, the incoming tenant will have an opportunity to decide whether they wish to keep them. If they do, the tenant will then sign a disclaimer notice accepting full responsibility for them.
- 3.4 Where a tenant has carried out improvement works to a property they are leaving, they may be eligible to receive compensation for the improvement under the Organisation's Compensation policy where applicable. Applications for compensation should be made either no sooner than 28 days before the end of the tenancy they are moving from, and no later than 14 days after the start of the tenancy for the flat they have moved to.

4. Clearing a Current Flat Before an Internal Move

- 4.1 The same rules will apply as if the tenant was permanently leaving the scheme and flat to move elsewhere. These are as follows:
- The flat must be cleared on the day of the internal move.
 - Carpets, curtains and blinds must be removed, unless, when the internal transfer was approved, and prior to the tenancy agreement for the new property being signed, agreement has been reached with the Organisation for any fixtures and fittings to remain. All other remaining fixtures and fittings should be clean and in good repair.
 - Any alterations that have been made to a property, such as new showers or changes to the kitchen, should remain in the flat the tenant is leaving.
 - Fixtures and fittings, such as light fittings, can be moved by the company maintainer upon request. However, the work will be added to the defect log

and will be carried out within the normal routine time limits (21 or 28 days, depending on location).

5. Taking the Tenancy

- 5.1 The prospective tenant will be shown the flat they want to move to and, if they are happy, an internal move may be agreed. Tenants moving to a new flat will take the fixtures and fittings of the flat as seen. Any kitchen or bathroom replacement will normally have already been completed as part of the void works.
- 5.2 Keys will not, unless there are exceptional circumstances as agreed with the Organisation, be handed over until the day the new tenancy starts. Access may be arranged with the Scheme Manager for deliveries of new furniture or carpet fitting etc. However, the flat will be locked after use and the keys returned. Tenants who have asked for items to be placed into their new flat in advance of the tenancy start date do so at their own risk.
- 5.3 The keys may be handed over by exception the day before a tenancy starts if the Scheme Manager or another member of staff is not able to be present on the tenancy start date.
- 5.4 The tenant must take, or arrange with the Scheme Manager, for the meter reading to be taken both for the flat they are leaving and for the flat they are moving to. It is the tenants' responsibility to inform the supplier and pay any outstanding balance owed.
- Tenants should be aware that the previous tenant may have changed suppliers, which may be different to one used by themselves. Therefore, tenants may move to a flat with a different electrical supplier than the one they generally use. It is up to the tenant to contact the supplier and if required start the process to transfer to another company. Scheme Managers must also be informed of who the new supplier will be.
- 5.5 Any additional alterations a tenant may wish to make to a kitchen such as the installation of a cooker hob or built-in oven may be done at the tenants' full expense, but must be carried out by a qualified professional. Permission to do such works must be sought from the Organisation.

6. Tenant Costs

- 6.1 The move must be cost neutral for the Organisation. Therefore, if the flat that is void has not previously been decorated as part of the void process, then the tenant moving internally may take the flat as seen and then have it decorated at their own expense.
- If the void decoration has already been carried out in preparation for a new tenant, then the redecoration cost of their existing flat must be paid for by them and is payable before their new tenancy starts.
 - Quotes may be sought either through the Organisation's contracted painter (*Tenants should be made aware that if they have put up wall paper or had walls painted in any other colour than Magnolia the cost may increase due to the extra work involved*), or through a professional painter of their choice. However, **decoration by a family member unless they are a fully accredited painter and decorator (proof of qualification will be required) will not be accepted under any circumstances.**
 - Where redecoration work carried out by another contractor is deemed to be below the standard expected, the Organisation reserves the right to re-

commission the work using our own contractor. In the event of this happening, costs incurred will be recoverable from the tenant.

- 6.2 The cost of removals will be at the tenants own cost, including the removal and reinstallation of fixtures or fittings such as carpets and flooring. Where a tenant has installed their own light fitting and wishes to take it with them, they will need to pay for a new ceiling rose to be purchased and fitted.
- 6.3 Should any damage to a flat a tenant is leaving be evident upon their vacation, it will be repaired and the cost of such repairs passed to the tenant for payment in full. Quotes will be shown and agreed with the tenant prior to any remedial works being carried out.

This policy should be held in the tenants file in each scheme and a copy should be passed to considering an internal move

This policy will be reviewed within 5 years.

Any Related Documents: Voids (H 21),

Distribution: CEO, DoH, HSM, T&SM, Scheme Manager's, Tenant Policy Folder + File