



MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL

## Temporary Accommodation Guide for Frontline Practitioners and Community Organisations

This guide has been developed by **Manchester City Council**, the **Manchester Homelessness Partnership** and the **Manchester TA Action Group (TAAG)** to provide frontline practitioners and community organisations with a clearer understanding of Manchester City Council's Temporary Accommodation Service. It aims to address **knowledge gaps** across the sector to support **more informed and coordinated** responses to homelessness.

Manchester City Council's Temporary Accommodation service operates within a **highly pressured** housing landscape. This reflects a national picture, with the number of households living in temporary accommodation having **risen significantly** in recent years, placing **increasing pressure** on local authorities' ability to secure suitable accommodation close to households' preferred locations.

Allocations can be **complex** and involve a **multi-team approach**, with decisions informed by a range of factors including household **vulnerabilities, safeguarding considerations, health needs, support requirements**, and for family households, children's educational circumstances, such as **key transition stages**. Allocation decisions are subject to **oversight and accountability** through established decision-making processes.

While location is an important consideration wherever possible, the priority is to **prevent and address homelessness** and ensure accommodation is **suitable and available**. Due to the limited supply of properties within Manchester, households may sometimes need to be placed in temporary accommodation in **neighbouring boroughs**.

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## TA Definitions

This guide covers both Manchester City Council managed **Dispersed TA** and **In-House TA**. Both forms of temporary accommodation are provided to households who have been **assessed by the Council's Housing Solutions Service** and found to be **homeless, in priority need** and owed a homeless **temporary accommodation duty** by the local authority.

### Dispersed TA

Dispersed temporary accommodation is sourced from trusted accommodation providers **both in borough and out of borough**. Dispersed TA provides households with their **own self-contained property provided** on a **Non-Secure Tenancy Agreement**. It is a condition of the tenancy agreement that the homeless applicant must **engage with the help and support** provided by the Homelessness Service's Floating Support Service whilst living in their property.

Although described as 'temporary', because of the housing crisis in the wider UK and Manchester, the length of time living in this kind of accommodation is going to be **for many years** for all households. Households can remain in their property until a settled housing outcome is secured either via **Manchester Move or the Private Rented Sector (PRS)**. Prospect information can be viewed on the social allocation system – Manchester Move. This information will give an indication of how long it is taking for households to be rehoused into social housing who have been registered for specific numbers of years.

It is important to note for **new households** joining the register their **waiting time will be even longer**. The reality is for some larger households this could be decades.

Moving on into suitable and affordable **private rented properties** is a **much quicker route** out of living in temporary accommodation and ending the homelessness for a family. The Council has a dedicated PRS (Private Rented Sector) Team within Homelessness Services which can **assist homeless households to source and secure their own PRS property**.

### In-House TA

In-House Temporary Accommodation is the Council's **own estate of accommodation schemes** that are managed, operated and staffed by the Council's Homelessness Service within the city. Clients are accommodated under a **License Agreement** in all shared house settings and under a **Non-Secure Tenancy Agreement** in any self-contained flats. There are currently **29 schemes**, three of which are for families and 26 for single homeless clients. There are currently 463 bedspaces for single people and childless couples, and 44 flats for families within the portfolio.

Move on from In-House TA will be predominantly into PRS properties, other supported accommodation options where suitable, with a small minority into social housing via Manchester Move. Length of stay in In-House TA will vary according to each individual but is generally between **3 to 6 months**.

## Arriving in TA



All MCC managed Dispersed TA provides an **essentials property package** which ensures a family can set up home on arrival in a property. This will include **furnishing, curtains/blinds, crockery and bedding**. This package does not need to be requested – it is automatically put in place for each new tenancy.



In MCC singles / family In-House TA everyone is given an **arrivals essential pack – including bedding, toiletries etc.**



Copies of the **Licence / Tenancy Agreement** signed by clients of Dispersed TA or In-House TA are always provided to our clients. Should a client mislay this a copy can always be printed off for them by the service. **A copy of all tenancy / licence agreements is attached to their HPA2 record.**



As part of license agreements all clients moving into MCC In-House TA **sign an agreement** which include conditions around **behaviour, conduct and mutual respect** for all including neighbours in residential areas. This sets out use of the accommodation, what is provided and expected and is transparent about the **potential consequences** of any behaviours that breach the license agreement and adversely impact others. These are applied consistently across all MCC In-House TA sites.



The agreement also includes details around any **service charge** that residents may have to pay. This charge can vary between schemes depending on what kind of utilities are included, and whether food is provided.

## B&B's



Use of B&B/Hotel placements for homeless households presenting to MCC is minimal. Where a hotel is used by MCC for a family this is **very short term**, generally 1 to 3 days on average (if at all) whilst suitable alternatives are sourced for families presenting as homeless to the Council.

The Homelessness Allocations & Support Team will provide a **floating support offer** to households whilst they are in a B&B/Hotel setting. **Manchester Council does not place homeless singles and families into the same hotel accommodation.**

## Managing TA Expectations



Managing TA expectations with households moving into Dispersed TA or In-House TA is the key element of support, advice and guidance provided to all homeless households. **Discussions around affordability and suitability of accommodation** take place at the point of homelessness assessment based on individualised circumstances.

No household living in Dispersed TA will be told their tenure in TA will be short term. **Advice and guidance are always realistic, transparent, empathetic and honest.** This messaging is clearly reiterated at tenancy sign up and in support sessions.

If we need to move a household from one Dispersed TA property to another and there is no immediate emergency, we will give **5 days notice**.

It is explained throughout the homelessness assessment process that sourcing TA in an area of preference of the client in the **central, south, or Wythenshawe** areas of the city is **extremely challenging** due to the cost of accommodation rents in those areas due to high demand.

## Challenging Accommodation Decisions



Where households are accommodated under a homelessness duty, offers are made in pursuit of discharging this duty. The homeless applicant **can request a statutory review** of the suitability of any offer under s202 of the Housing Act 1996.

## House Rules



To **ensure safeguarding** of all residents, children, visiting professionals and staff, MCC Inhouse TA adopts a **no visitor policy** at all managed sites. All professionals working with a client are enabled to visit on site with **suitable organisational ID**. MCC recognises the importance of the support that friends and family can provide and the ability to 'stay away' from In-House properties (see below) supports homeless households to visit with friends and support networks. Where possible the service is building safe community spaces into the design of new TA properties for families.



Families living in Dispersed TA can have **visitors and friends/family to stay** on a short stay basis – such as a weekend visit, for example.



As Dispersed and In-House TA properties are right sized for the families placed in them **no other additional residents can be moved into the TA property**. It

would be a breach of a tenancy agreement if a client were to move any additional people into the property.



Residents of MCC In-House TA sites, families or singles, **can stay out of their accommodation for 2 nights per week** enabling them to visit/stay with friends or family. Please note - this rule **does not apply to Etrop Grange** which functions as emergency direct access accommodation, meaning residents are expected to sleep there every night.



All MCC In-House TA is all located in residential areas of the city. It is important as good and respectful neighbours that **curfew times are in place** and are adhered to for this reason. **Local flexibility according to individual client circumstance can always be considered on a case-by-case basis.** Curfews will vary between properties as they are set by the site managers, taking into account local factors.



MCC In-House TA adopts a **pre-eviction protocol**. This is a stepped warning system applied where a resident breaches a condition of their license agreement.

These steps are:

- A verbal warning
- A behaviour contract
- A written warning

If the above steps are unsuccessful and further breaches occur a **notice to vacate a property** will be issued ordinarily with a **set number of days** by which the resident must leave the property. If an incident occurs of an abusive/violent nature eviction will be **instant** and the **homelessness duty will be ceased**.

## Local Information



**Local information packs** are provided to every household living in Dispersed TA. The service aims to keep these up to date – tracking all changes in local community services and VCSFE offers can be challenging.

MCC In-House TA services are developing **pictorial information maps** of the nearby community which flag shops, parks, community centres, nearest places of worship, food banks, transport etc.

## Council Support



Every client in MCC In-House TA / Dispersed TA has a **named support worker / key worker**. Support planning sessions are **regularly arranged**, and clients are **expected to engage** with their worker.



Support staff can be accessed outside of formal support sessions in all In-House TA sites. At 24/7 MCC TA sites staff are on site and accessible to clients **all the time**.



All MCC Accommodation Support Workers undertake **ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experience) and trauma informed awareness training** as standard.



All homeless families placed in MCC Dispersed TA receive an initial **3-month intensive support package** with their own allocated support worker who visits the household **every 2 weeks on moving in**.

The service will support with the **school admissions** service to assist homeless families in navigating this process where necessary and with **registration with a new GP** in their locality to ensure continuity of healthcare. Support is individualised based upon the needs of the family.



For children whose families receive **universal credit** (where extended rights apply) where **secondary school age children are placed in Dispersed TA in a neighbouring Greater Manchester authority** the Floating Support Service (FSS) support worker will assist the household to access a **free travel pass for each child attending a secondary school in Manchester**. For households where the family is placed into Dispersed TA within Manchester at a distance of more than 2 miles from their original school a bus pass can also be secured.



**Primary** school children **aged 8 – 10** and **Secondary** school children **aged 11 – 16** who live in temporary accommodation **more than 2 miles** from their home address are eligible for **free travel from the local authority**.



The **Floating Support Service worker** will work with the family to manage their expectations to understand that living in temporary accommodation will not be for a short period and therefore **securing a new school for their children could be a better option** closer to their temporary accommodation home. The FSS will support the household with the school admissions process.



At the point of a homeless assessment taking place with a family, the Housing Solutions Officer will ask the applicant if they **consent to the service notifying their child's school about the family's homelessness**. This is to enable the school to offer **timely and effective support** to the family. Services can support by **encouraging families to give consent**. (More info in the glossary)



The Housing Solutions Service is exploring the best way to meet the incoming duty on **GP notification** that will be implemented in the future for homeless families. GP notifications will also require the consent of the homeless applicant.



MCC Floating Support is accessible to newly placed homeless households **outside of arranged visit times** via a duty phone line which is shared with all families. This is available **9am – 4pm Monday to Friday** (excl. Bank Holidays).



MCC Floating Support continues to be delivered **throughout the entire tenure** in MCC dispersed TA for homeless households and can always be **stepped back up** in frequency where any specific support need issues occur/stepped down when households are managing well.

## Wider Joined up Support



The Homelessness Service works in tandem with the dedicated **NHS Homeless Health Visitor Team** for all families where there are children **under the age of 5** who enter homelessness TA. This service will visit households in their temporary accommodation **ensuring all under 5's are linked into relevant health services**.

Early

MCC Floating Support Service works closely with the Council's **Early Help Teams and Hubs** and uses the Early Help Assessment tool for needs analysis of all family households in temporary accommodation. Consent based EH referrals will be made to provide **additional support** to a family where required.



Homelessness Services and **Children's Service** work closely on specific cases with regular meetings/MDTs taking place to discuss specific cases and actions.



As part of the **North-west Protocol** between LA's Children's Services, MCC's Children's Services work in a **joint and cross border collaborative manner** on specific cases wherever this is necessary **with Children's Services in neighbouring LAs**.



## Complaints about Support



Housing Related Support services are monitored on outcomes including support planning. **Concerns can be raised in the first instance to accommodation providers regarding individual schemes. Unresolved issues can then be escalated to MCC.**



**Commissioned Accommodation Providers have published complaints procedures** – these are available via websites or on request from schemes. This is included within service specifications for commissioned services.



If a resident of MCC provided TA wishes to complain about the support they have received in the first instance it is recommended they raise this with either a manager of a scheme for In-House TA provision, or the Duty Phone Line for the Floating Support Service for Dispersed TA. **Most issues can be resolved informally with communication.** If this does not resolve the matter MCC has **clear information on the Council's website** and information can be obtained from managers or staff should a client wish to submit a formal complaint: <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/complaints-comments-and-questions>

## Child Safety



All MCC In-House managed family temporary accommodation units are **family friendly** and **'baby proofed'**



In Dispersed or In-House TA where a family is moving in that **requires a cot** for a baby **this will be provided as part of the move in package.** For any additional new babies born after this point the expectation is that the family will purchase their own cot as required.



The **Homeless Health Visitor Service** and **Homeless Midwifery Service** can often support new mums to access items to support their newborn child. **Both the In-House TA and FSS will link families into this service.**

## Space



In MCC singles / family In-House TA **communal spaces** are provided, **TV** in communal spaces in shared houses.



All In-House TA settings provide **communal external garden spaces including growing areas and often veg beds.**

## Food



In MCC In-House TA every resident has their **own fridge in their room** so that food storage is secure.



Access is provided to **large, well equipped self-use kitchens** in all MCC In-House TA sites.



Where meals are provided in MCC In-House TA clients are encouraged to **input to menu creation** and share dish ideas, meals are subsidised (often as low as £1 a day), **vegetarian and halal options** are always available. All In-House TA sites with a catering offer provide a meat free day each week to raise awareness of the carbon footprint impact of meat-based diets and ways in which to reduce costs of meals.



All staff in MCC In-House TA provisions undertake **Food Hygiene training** and any food donations are safely and effectively managed by qualified catering staff.

## Hygiene



For MCC In-House TA **on-site laundry facilities** are provided for use by all residents.

**Cleaning materials are provided** in all In-House TA shared house settings. Residents are encouraged to keep their rooms clean and communal areas clean and tidy, such as kitchens and bathrooms.

## Pests / Infestations



Every dispersed property is **inspected prior to a new tenancy** – this includes checking for and dealing with any existing infestations. Dispersed TA tenancy agreements set out that any **subsequent pest control issues are the responsibility of the tenant** to address as would be the same in a privately owned home, PRS or social housing tenancy.

Where pest infestation occurs in Dispersed TA property, tenants are advised to **report this to their accommodation provider** who may be able to assist with treatment.



Effective tenancy management, the disposal of waste food and the safe storage of all consumable items is key to prevent re-infestation after treatment. Realistically, where residents have pets in their property treatment options will be limited.

For Dispersed TA managed by MCC all tenants are provided with **guidance and support on effective food and waste management** including storage, disposal, refuse collection days, recycling as well as general advice on effective management of their tenancy to minimise instances and impacts of infestation. Infection control information is shared with In-House TA site managers and commissioned providers from **Public Health** which is in turn promoted and publicised with residents.

## Repairs & Maintenance



MCC managed In-House TA is subject to **room and site checks each week**. Any disrepair is noted and reported via MCC Estates Facilities Management system and is **addressed promptly**. Smaller repairs and redecoration between re-lets are addressed via on-site caretaking staff.



For all Dispersed TA managed by the Council there is a **clear timeframe** by which our accommodation providers must address any repairs issues according to the type of repairs. This is a standard set by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) which identifies category 1 or 2 hazards.

- **Category 1 hazard** is classed as an urgent repair - which affects the convenience or comfort of the residents, and the repair should be completed within **7 days / 5 working days** of the defect being reported or the provider becoming aware of the defect.
- **Category 2 hazard** is classed as a non-urgent, day to day repair - routine repairs which do not fall within Category 1, and the repair should be completed within **28 days / 20 working days** of the defect being reported or the provider becoming aware of the defect.



Property offers **made by MCC Private Rented Sector (PRS) team** are checked by HHSRS trained officers – **issues of quality can be raised with the PRS team**. Issues with condition of social housing offers made via **Manchester Move** can be raised with the accommodation provider who is the Registered Social Landlord. The property must adhere to **Regulatory Standards**, including Safety and Quality.

## Moving On

### PREPARING FOR MOVE ON

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Assisting residents to become **tenancy ready and able to live independently** is key to the support package delivered by MCC In-House TA support staff / Floating Support Service teams. This support is tailored to the needs of the household.



Part of the support delivered to clients of MCC Homelessness Service accommodation is around support to **access to employment, education and training**. This will also cover access to work. Living in TA and not knowing how long a person would be living in that TA **should not be prohibitive to exploring employment, training and education options**.

### PRIVATELY RENTED ACCOMMODATION

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People are encouraged to be **proactive** and **to try and source their own PRS property where possible**. When a property is found, the accommodation support worker will contact the PRS team who will then carry out an inspection of the property. If the PRS team consider the property to be suitable and affordable for the household **they can support with bonds, deposits and potentially cover the first month's rent**.



Focus by the MCC PRS team is on securing **affordable move-on accommodation** at or close to LHA (Local Housing Allowance). **Guidance and assistance with sourcing PRS** in areas of preference is explored with households. Where affordable PRS is not available within Manchester PRS can be sourced **out of borough** which is often far more affordable for households on lower incomes and **support to secure this** can be explored for those households currently living in Dispersed Homeless TA.

### SOCIAL HOUSING

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MCC Housing Solutions staff are **transparent and honest** about rehousing prospects for households from the outset of a homelessness assessment. They are detailed and clear on demand for social housing over capacity in Manchester; they share prospect information according to size of household and stress it will take many years before social housing in Manchester is going to be, if ever, a likely resolution for a household based on individual circumstances.



All clients who are registered on **Manchester Move** are advised how they can check the relevant elements of their Manchester Move application by their support worker.

**Auto bidding is activated** for live Manchester Move applications for tenants in Dispersed TA. This is to ensure that clients stand the best chance in their bidding prospects for social housing. **This does not mean the resident can't bid for themselves, they can do that too.** Many do not bid of their own volition so auto bidding ensures they are 'active' in each bid cycle.

## WELFARE PACK

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When a household is moving out of Dispersed TA into a **PRS or social housing settled tenancy** they will receive a **welfare pack** and must move into their new property **as soon as the welfare pack is delivered** to the new home. The welfare pack is ordered at the point the new property is signed for and it will generally arrive within 7-10 days.

The welfare pack is a standard **package of the basics** for establishing a new home. In the pack for a family there will be:

- Fridge freezer
- Cooker - gas or electric dependent on connection at the property
- Beds & bedding pack - includes duvets, pillows and linen
- Kitchen Starter pack - pans, plates, cutlery

For a single person the pack is the same, but the provision allows for a **microwave** rather than a cooker and a **fridge with an icebox**.

## SINGLE PEOPLE

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Move on from TA for single people will often be into **private sector shared accommodation** due to the income limitations of clients. Accommodation support workers in MCC shared house settings work with all clients around all activities to become **tenancy ready** which includes the importance of property cleanliness, bathroom hygiene, kitchen and food management, etc.

## SUPPORTED / COMMISSIONED ACCOMMODATION

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Move on from TA for some people may be firstly into **supported accommodation commissioned by the Council**. Here people will receive a period of **housing related support from an external provider**, including a support plan, in an accommodation scheme which has been matched to their needs. From here they will be supported to move on to one of the longer-term accommodation options above. Referrals into supported accommodation are via the **MAS (Manchester Access and Support) Gateway** and are managed by the **Homelessness Commissioning Team**.

## TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICE

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MCC offers an optional short term **tenancy support service** for families and single people who are **moving on to their settled accommodation from TA**. This is available for anyone moving out of In-House TA, Dispersed TA or Housing Related Support (that is commissioned by MCC).

The team providing this is our **Tenancy Sustainment Team**. Once the move has happened the support helps with establishing good tenancy management practices, setting up **utility payments**, how to liaise with your **landlord**, **orientation** in a new area, locating **public transport** links, **GP access**, **faith establishments**, **schools**, **food banks**, **community support**, **signposting** and linking people in (who need it) to other more **specialist support services** etc.

This is a floating support offer lasting for **6-8 weeks or longer** where a person or family needs this. The aim is to help people establish good tenancies and to **prevent future homelessness**. Referrals can be made by HRS support workers or MCC staff with the consent of the individual / family. **Services can help by encouraging clients to request this support.**

## RESOURCES

Click on the headings below to access relevant documents / further information:

- [Non-Secure Tenancy Agreement](#) - Provided to clients in Dispersed TA.
- [Licence Agreement](#) - Provided to clients in In-House TA.
- [Pre-eviction Protocol](#) - Stepped warning system applied where a resident breaches a condition of their license agreement.

### Homeless Family Notifications

A new legal duty is being introduced for councils to notify **schools, health visitors, and GPs** when a child is placed in temporary accommodation, so no child is left without support. You can access the guidance on how to best support families here:

- **Schools** – [link to guidance](#)
- **Primary Care** – [link to guidance](#)