

## HOUSING ENFORCEMENT TEAM



### Housing Enforcement Team

Tackling criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords and letting agents

Tel: (01604) 838585

E-mail: [pshs@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:pshs@northampton.gov.uk)

### Are you living in a healthy, safe, well-managed home?

Your home must be healthy and safe to live in. It must also be well-managed.

Your landlord is responsible for maintaining your home (including the electrical and gas installations and appliances) and ensuring there are no unacceptable hazards.

Even though they may own the property in which you are living, your landlord must not enter your home without your permission, except in an emergency. They must also provide you with reasonable notice if they want to enter your home.

If your landlord fails to obtain your permission or visits you at a time or frequency that is unreasonable, this may be considered harassment (a criminal offence).

### Extra obligations for Houses in Multiple Occupation

An HMO is a property that is occupied by at least 3 people who are not related to one another and share a kitchen and/or bathroom.

All Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) – including HMOs that do not require a licence – must be safe, clean and properly managed.

As well as ensuring that there are adequate fire precautions and an appropriate means of escape, the landlord must comply with the HMO Management Regulations 2006 (including the obligation to keep the common parts clean) and ensure that the property is in a good state of repair and all services and appliances are maintained in a safe and clean condition.

### Help from the Housing Enforcement Team

If you are concerned about the condition and/or safety of your home (including the adequacy of any fire precautions), you should discuss them first with your landlord.

If your landlord fails to address your concerns – or you suspect that they are operating a licensable HMO without a licence – please do not hesitate to contact the Council's Housing Enforcement Team for confidential advice and help.

Where a landlord has committed a housing offence, the Council has the power to prosecute them or impose a civil penalty of up to £30,000 per offence.

If a landlord is convicted of a housing offence (or has to pay a civil penalty), the tenants normally have the right to apply for a Rent Repayment Order, forcing the landlord to repay up to 12 months' rent.

WORKING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' HOUSING



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## Are you living in a House in Multiple Occupation?

If you are living in private rented accommodation and are sharing with other people, it is likely to be a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

An HMO is a property that is occupied by at least 3 people who are not related to one another and share a kitchen and/or bathroom.

## Does your landlord need an HMO licence?

If your accommodation is three storeys or more and is occupied by at least 5 unrelated people who share a kitchen and/or bathroom, it must be licensed.

Some two storey HMOs that are occupied by at least 3 unrelated people who share a kitchen and/or bathroom may also require a licence.

The licence must be displayed in the property (usually in the main hallway).

## What are the consequences for a landlord who operates a licensable HMO without a licence?

**It is a criminal offence to operate a licensable HMO without a licence.**

If a landlord operates a licensable HMO without an HMO licence, any Section 21 Notice that they serve on their tenants will be invalid. This is likely to make it more difficult for them to evict their tenants.

If a landlord operates a licensable HMO without an HMO licence, the Council has the power to prosecute them or impose a civil penalty of up to £30,000.

If a landlord is convicted (or has to pay a civil penalty) for operating a licensable HMO without a licence, the tenants have the right to apply for a Rent Repayment Order, forcing the landlord to repay up to 12 months' rent.

## How can you check that an HMO is licensed?

Details of Northampton's licensed HMOs are on the Council's website:

[www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/9848/hmo-public-register](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/9848/hmo-public-register)

If you think your home may be a licensable HMO but a licence is not being displayed in the property, e-mail us at [pshs@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:pshs@northampton.gov.uk), telling us your full address, and we will confirm whether or not it has an HMO licence.

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