Community Sponsorship Groups Accommodation Guide

Guidance for Community Sponsors

THE OPEN COMM–UNITY

Introduction

Welcome

Safe and secure housing provision is a fundamental component of integration that provides shelter and stability, and allows people to participate in education, work and in society more broadly. Securing suitable accommodation for the duration of the sponsorship commitment is a key aspect of the community sponsorship programme, but also one of the most challenging to fulfil. This guide provides step by step guidance to community sponsorship groups at each stage of the accommodation journey and highlights how to avail of expert guidance and access key services.

The guide is informed by the knowledge and expertise of Community Sponsorship Groups from across Ireland and was developed in partnership with A&L Goodbody, Nasc, Peter McVerry Trust, The Housing Agency, Threshold.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate. However, policies and legislation can change at any time. The guide is not intended as legal advice.

Acronyms

LA	Local Authority
CSG	Community Sponsorship Group
CS	Community Sponsorship
IRPP	Irish Refugee Protection Programme
PPSN	Personal Public Service Number
RSO	Regional Support Organisation
IRP	Irish Residency Permit
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
Family	Family or Individual

in partnership with

A&L Goodbody

Nasc Migrant & Refugee Rights

Opening Doors for homeless people

An Ghníomhaireacht Tithíochta The Housing Agency

Threshold preventing homelessness

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Section 1
Pre-Arrival

This section looks at steps that need to be taken prior to the arrival of a family or individual to a community in Ireland. For the purpose of this guide those who have arrived through the Community Sponsorship Programme will be referred to as family. There are certain stages that need to be completed and shared with your Regional Support Organisation (RSO) and the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) – finding appropriate accommodation is one of these steps and a match with a family cannot be made prior to the sourcing of appropriate accommodation. The property that is found will dictate the match that is made. The majority of people that have arrived through the Community Sponsorship (CS) programme have been family units, family sizes have ranged between 3-8 people. The size of the property sourced and its access to transport links, schools, services, necessary amenities all play a role in how the matching of a Community Sponsorship Group (CSG) and people wanting to resettle in Ireland will be made. As a CSG you are responsible for sourcing the accommodation, paying the deposit, rent and any bills attached to the property prior to the arrival of the family.

1. Securing accommodation for 24 months

One of the stipulations of the CS Programme is that the accommodation must have its own door. The CSG must source accommodation for a 24 month period for the family from the day they arrive in Ireland. This also means renting or holding the property prior to the arrival of the family in Ireland. Accommodation can be sourced through the CSG's networks, religious groups, estate agents or any other means available to the CSG.

The link provides an information sheet that can be shared with potential landlords to explain the CS programme and the benefits to the landlord that the programme offers.

Information for landlords
Page 15

2. Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

People who resettle in Ireland through the CS programme are entitled to receive a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). The HAP payment varies greatly throughout the country. Contact your LA to get the most accurate HAP limits. In certain circumstances there can be an Enhanced HAP payment added to the basic HAP allowance.

Whilst the CSG are locating accommodation it is helpful to know how HAP works and what the HAP limits are for the area. The CSG can base the accommodation search on the HAP limit as the family will need to be able to manage the rent payments after the CS period has finished.

Here is a guide to explain HAP and how it works.

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) (citizensinformation.ie)

3. Lease/ Licence Agreement Prior to Family Arrival

As explained in Point 1 above, the CSG finds and leases/holds the property prior to the family's arrival. A lease can either be signed by the CSG for the period of time before the family arrives or the CSG can use a license agreement. A license agreement is a private arrangement between the CSG and the landlord. It is also simpler from a legal perspective as the landlord/ tenant relationship would be directly between the landlord and the family when they arrive in Ireland. There would be no need for a transfer of lease and there would be no confusion as to the start of the tenancy agreement.

To get support with a license or tenancy agreements you can contact your RSO or The Open Community to access its free legal advice panel.

4. Independent Inspection Certificate

All properties that are in receipt of a HAP payment need to meet the housing Standards for Rented Houses Regulations 2017 and 2019, and will be inspected by the local authority.

As part of the Community Sponsorship Programme the property must also be assessed prior to the family's arrival and an independent inspection certificate needs to be obtained.

Inspex provide this service commercially for between €100 and €150. If further assistance is needed contact your RSO.

inspex.ie

LA information Sheet
Page 16 – to be shared with the LA staff

5. Local Authority (LA) Introduction

Prior to the family's arrival, if possible, make an introduction to the Housing Officer at the LA to explain who the group is and how the CS Programme works.

6. Pre-Arrival Meeting

If a pre-arrival meeting is held online with designated members of the CSG and the family, where possible, pictures of the accommodation should be shown, and an explanation of how many bedrooms, and other rooms there are in the property. The CSG should also ask if there is anything that the family would like to have in the home prior to their arrival, such as food or other items for the house. There may also be cultural considerations to enquire about.

For further information on preparing the house you can contact the Community Sponsorship National Peer Support Network through The Open Community info@theopencommunity.ie

Social Housing Glossary

7. Understanding Social Housing Terms

There are many different terms used when navigating the housing supports. Here is an index of terms that are used.

8. Welcome Pack

CSG's create a welcome pack to be at the house when the family arrive. How to access the SWIFT Integration App will be important to add to the Welcome Pack as this includes information on accommodation and access to housing and welfare entitlements. The App is available in English, Arabic, Pashto, Dari and Ukrainian.

As part of the Welcome Pack it is important to include a clear guide of how the heating systems or other appliances work in the house, where possible use pictures and have the Welcome Pack available in the family's first language.

Here is a link to SWIFT Integration on The Open Community.

SWIFT Integration

Section 2
Post-Arrival

This section looks at what needs to be done in relation to accommodation when the family has arrived in Ireland. There are a number of steps that need to be taken on the arrival of the family to ensure that they have access to their rights and entitlements. As the family are new to Ireland it will be a huge support to have the CSG available to help them navigate the welfare system. The CSG will also make sure that the family are engaged at each step to ensure they have a strong understanding of who to contact and how the different welfare and housing systems work.

Local Authorities (LAs) can work differently and can take different amounts of time to approve people onto the social housing list or for HAP applications and the family may need financial assistance from the CSG during this period. Whilst there is an application pending or after it has been approved it is important that the family makes the LA aware of any changes in their circumstances (i.e.: household composition, employment, health issues or disabilities etc.), as this could impact what the family is entitled to.

1. My Gov ID

A number of applications that will need to be made are now online and a basic My Gov ID account is necessary for the adults that are resettling in Ireland. An email address is all that is needed to set up a basic account. Each adult in the home will need to have a my.gov.ie account set up.

MyGovID
citizensinformation.ie

2. Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) and Irish Residence Permit (IRP)

The Personal Public Service Number Card (PPSN) and Irish Residence Permit (IRP) are needed for the family to access their social welfare and housing entitlements. It is very important that the PPSN and IRP cards are applied for as soon as possible after the family arrive in Ireland.

Personal Public Service number
citizensinformation.ie

gov.ie – How to get an Irish Residence Permit (www.gov.ie)

3. Bank, Credit Union, Post Office

A bank, credit union or post office account is needed to access social welfare entitlements and for setting up utilities. If there are difficulties setting up an account, contact the vulnerable customer manager at the bank and if this issue persists contact your RSO or The Open Community.

4. Lease Transfer

When the family arrives, a lease will be signed between the family and the landlord. Each adult that is living in the property should be included in the lease. An introduction should be made between the family and landlord and contact information exchanged. If there are language barriers it can be helpful to agree between the landlord and family to have the communication through WhatsApp which can allow for the use of google translate.

The Open Community legal panel

While as a CSG you were asked to secure accommodation for a 24 month period, it is important to note that after the family has stayed in the property for 6 months or more they have what is called security of tenure. Once there is security of tenure (after 6 months) the landlord can only end the tenancy in limited circumstances. More information can be found about this in Section 3 point 2.

threshold.ie

If there are any questions regarding the lease, contact Threshold or the free legal panel at The Open Community.

5. Utilities

Until Points 1-3 are completed the cost of the bills might need be covered by the CSG. Then the utilities will be transferred into the family's name.

Living In Ireland

As stated in Section 1, Point 8 - add utilities information to the Welcome Plan.

Here's a link to Housing Costs / Utilities - Living In Ireland.

6. Social Welfare

There are a number of different social welfare payments that the family can apply for, based on the needs and circumstances of the family.

While the family is waiting on their social welfare payments to be allocated, they can apply for Supplementary Welfare Allowance.

Claiming a social welfare payment
citizensinformation.ie

Your rights when you get international protection (citizensinformation.ie)

Supplementary Welfare Allowance
citizensinformation.ie

7. Changes That Can Affect Social Welfare and Housing Support

Whilst the family are receiving a social welfare or accommodation support payment it is extremely important if their personal circumstances change, they contact the Department of Social Protection or the Local Authority. A change in circumstances can mean you get an increase or a decrease in a social welfare payment.

Changes in the household composition may include but are not limited to:

- Separation if anyone moves in or out
- Health or disability - if health or disability a HMD1 form to be completed
- Income
- Change of address

Changes that can affect your social welfare payment
citizensinformation.ie

8. Social Housing Application

The family must apply to go on the social housing list. When applying for social housing support, up to three areas can be chosen within the LA area. If there is more than one LA in the county of application, there may be an option to choose an area within another local authority of that county. Speak to the LA for more information.

The selection of the areas for social housing is important, as only suitable housing in these areas will be offered. Factors to consider when choosing include services, transport links, types of housing in the area and whether they would suit the family.

If you incur any difficulties when completing the application, contact your RSO or Threshold.

Social Housing Application Support

Easy to Read Guide to Filling in the Social Housing Support Application Form 2022
housingagency.ie

Applying for Social Housing Support
The Housing Agency

9. Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Application

When the family has been accepted onto the social housing list, the next step is to make an application for HAP. It is important to note that a property that exceeds the HAP limits by more the 20% is likely to have its HAP application denied.

It is important that the HAP application is completed in full and that all the information requested is accurate and any additional information included. If the application is not fully completed it will delay the application being processed which will delay the family receiving a HAP payment.

People in receipt of HAP pay a percentage of their earnings towards the rent on the property. It is important that the family are aware of this and understand that if this is not paid, this will create problems with maintaining the tenancy. The HAP guide in Section 1, Point 2 goes through the HAP process in more detail.

Back payments: a back payment can be made from the date that the HAP application was fully completed and signed, but the landlord must agree to wait for the rent payment whilst the HAP application is being processed. If the rent is paid during this period, there will be no back payment issued. There is no back payment made for the time that the family are waiting for their social housing application to be approved.

If further support is needed speak to your RSO or Threshold.

As LA's can work slightly differently, the CSG should speak with the Housing Officer regarding back payments when they make the introduction prior to the family's arrival.

10. Social Housing Transfer List

Some LA's automatically keep people on the social housing list after their HAP application has been approved. But for some LA's a letter will need to be sent to make sure that the family stays on the social housing list.

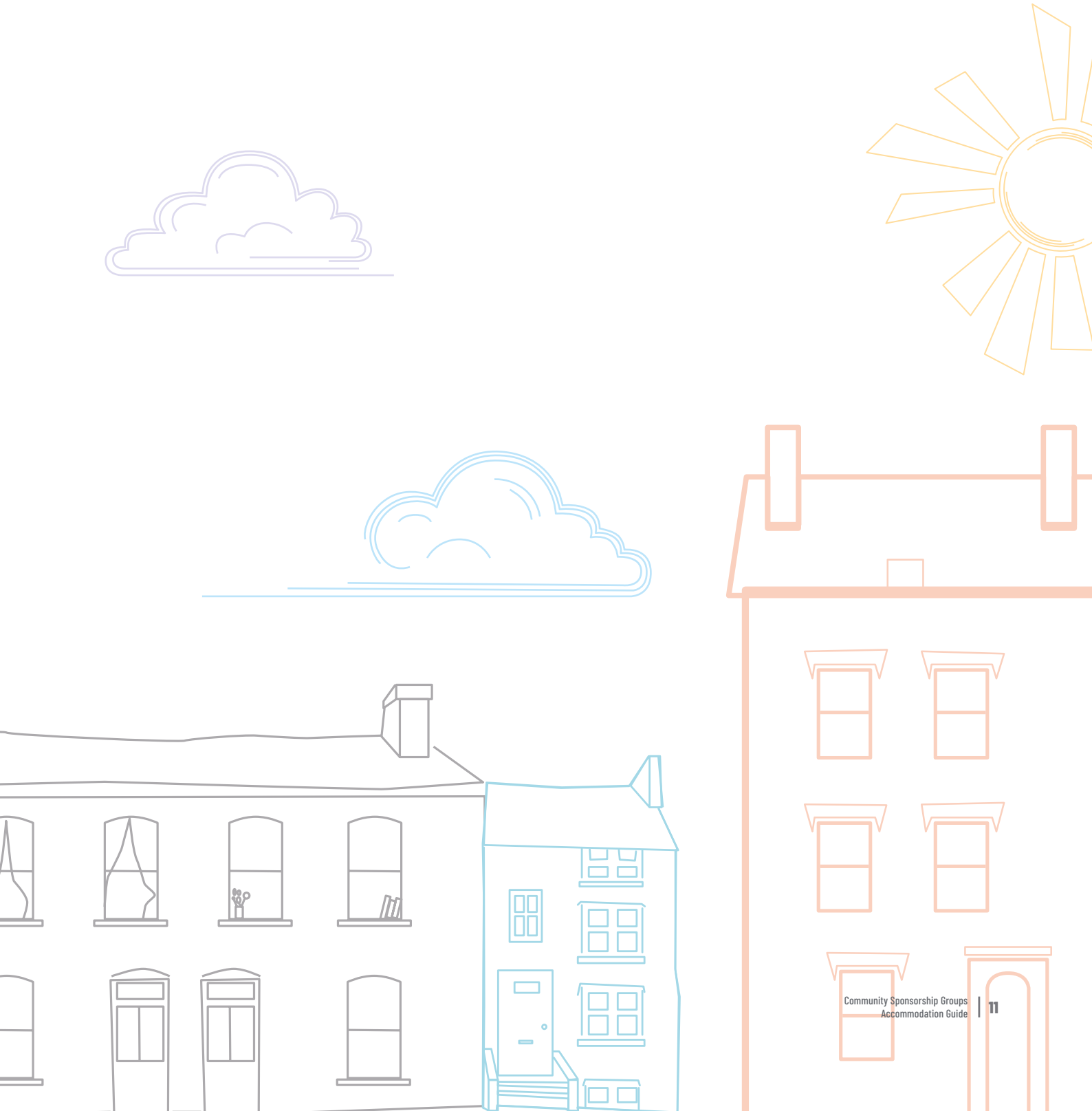
The LA information sheet in Section 1, Point 5 sets out the questions to clarify with the Housing Officer in the LA.

11. Tenancy Issues

If there are any tenancy issues during the 24-month period, the CSG can contact their RSO, and the family or CSG can contact Threshold or The Open Community to access its free legal advice panel.

threshold.ie

The Open Community legal panel



Section 3
Transitional Stage

This section looks at the transitional stage when a family is coming to the end of their Community Sponsorship period. In Section 1 and 2 of this guide there are many steps that need to be completed to ensure that the families are supported to access their rights and entitlements in relation to accommodation. This section will look at what steps need to be taken to ensure that the family understand what happens at the end of the sponsorship period. At this stage the Community Sponsorship Group (CSG) should have limited engagement when it comes to the family's accommodation.

The accommodation commitment given to families resettling in Ireland through Community Sponsorship is 24 months, most families will likely stay in the property past this point. But it is important that families have a good understanding of their rights and entitlements as a tenant. They should know who to contact if there are any issues or if they need further information on either changing their private rented accommodation or anything relating to social housing.

1. Information to be Shared at 18 Months

At 18 months the CSG should ensure that the family know who to contact if there is an issue with their housing. As stated in Section 2, point 4, it is recommended that an introduction is made between the family and landlord early in the sponsorship period. If there has been limited communication between the landlord and the family since the initial introduction, it is important at the 18 month stage that the family is reminded who to contact and how they can be contacted.

The family also need to know where their Local Authority (LA) is and which department they need to speak with regarding housing supports. It should be reiterated at this stage that if there are any changes in their circumstances (as mentioned in Section 2, point, 7) that they must make this information known to their LA.

2. Lease Signed for 24 months

When the family move into the accommodation there will be a lease signed, but after the family has stayed in the property for 6 months or more they have what is called security of tenure. Once there is security of tenure (after 6 months) the landlord can only end the tenancy in limited circumstances.

At the end of the 24 months if the family are planning to stay in the same property they will not need to sign a new lease.

If there are any issues being presented by the landlord, it is important that the family know that they can seek advice from Threshold or if they need any legal advice they can contact the Free Legal Advice Panel through The Open Community.

Threshold
Owen Duggan
Assistant Manager
Owen.Duggan@threshold.ie
01 635 3671

The Open Community legal panel

If your landlord wants you to leave
citizensinformation.ie

3. Social Housing

The family will have completed their social housing application and been on the social housing list since they arrived in Ireland. There is limited accommodation available through social housing, but the family can contact their LA to ask where they are on the social housing list. This will provide an indication of when social housing will become available to the family. But there is often an extremely long wait to be placed in social housing, so it is important to let the family know this. The CSG should speak with the family to ensure that they have a good understanding of what social housing means and that they know who to speak within their LA about their application.

4. Deposit

Most CSGs will have paid a deposit to the landlord to secure a property prior to the arrival of the family. At whatever point the tenancy comes to an end, and the deposit is to be returned, it is recommended that this amount is received by the family. The CSG should make the family aware of the deposit amount and let them know if there are any issues getting the deposit back from the landlord, or have any other deposit related questions, they can contact Threshold for advice and support.

threshold.ie

5. Communication with Landlord

As mentioned in Section 2, Point 4, if there are any language barriers between the landlord and the family it is recommended that WhatsApp or another message service is used as this allows for the use of google translate. If there is a complicated issue that needs to be addressed, then the family can seek support of a friend or their CSG to help to translate.

6. Follow Up Support

Throughout the Community Sponsorship journey, it is vital the family know where they can go and who they can contact regarding their accommodation rights and entitlements. This is very important to reiterate periodically throughout the sponsorship period but should be emphasized again at 18 months.

It is recommended that an appointment is made between the family and Threshold for a consultation to ensure that the family have a good understanding of their rights and entitlements as tenants.

The family will need to know:

How to contact the Local Housing Officer at their LA

Where and how to contact their local Citizens Information office
Find a Citizens Information Centre

How to get legal advice if required through The Open Community
Free Legal Advice Panel

How to contact Threshold for any questions relating to their tenancy rights
Threshold, Owen Duggan Assistant Manager
Owen.Duggan@threshold.ie
01 635 3671

Community Sponsorship Ireland

Information for Landlords

Community Sponsorship is an innovative refugee resettlement programme. Under Community Sponsorship local members of the public come together to form Community Sponsorship Groups (CSGs), comprised of a minimum of 5 people. CSGs then welcome and support a refugee family to settle and start a new safe life in their community.

Process for Community Sponsorship Groups

As part of the Community Sponsorship programme each CSG must find suitable accommodation for the refugee family for a period of 24 months. The accommodation must be available from the date of the family's arrival in Ireland. The CSG will find and rent a property prior to the arrival of the refugee family, and once the family arrives, the tenancy agreement is then transferred into the family's name. The CSG will cover the deposit cost and pay rent in advance of the family's arrival. The family is entitled to the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). The CSG will assist the family to apply for HAP and until it is in place, the CSG will continue to make any necessary rental payments.

Benefits of Community Sponsorship to Landlords

Community Sponsorship offers a secure tenancy for a minimum of 24 months from a family that has access to the full wraparound support offered to them by the CSG. In turn, the CSG are fully supported throughout their engagement with their Regional Support Organisation (RSO). RSOs include Doras, Irish Red Cross, Irish Refugee Council, and Nasc, and offer support to CSGs based in any county in Ireland. Many families arriving through the Community Sponsorship programme, have fled war and/or persecution, and are seeking to resettle in a new life in Ireland with a safe place to call home. Landlords can offer that safety and security when it is needed most.

You can find out more about the Community Sponsorship Programme here:

Community Sponsorship Ireland communitysponsorship@equality.gov.ie
Community Sponsorship theopencommunity.ie

Information for Local Authorities

Ireland's Community Sponsorship Programme for refugees (CSI)

Community Sponsorship Ireland is an alternative resettlement stream to the traditional state-centred model of refugee resettlement. The CSI programme is delivered in partnership by the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) within the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), and a number of civil society partners including, UNHCR, The Open Community, The Irish Red Cross, The Irish Refugee Council NASC, and Doras.

Under the CSI programme, individuals and communities come together and take the lead in resettling refugees in their local areas. They form Community Sponsorship Groups (CSGs) who are volunteers and have a minimum of 5 people, who then support a refugee family to resettle and integrate into their community. The supports provided by groups will vary depending on the needs of the family but lasts for an 18 month period, with accommodation support provided for a 24 month period.

Community Sponsorship Groups (CSG)

The CSG's role is to support the refugee family to resettle and start a new life in safety in Ireland. As part of the CSI programme, CSGs must raise money so they can support the family throughout the sponsorship period. CSGs must also find suitable accommodation that will be available to the refugee family for a minimum period of 24 months from the date of the family's arrival to Ireland.

Families arriving under the CSI programme are programme refugees, they are entitled to social welfare entitlements and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which the CSG will assist them to set up. Until HAP is in place the CSG will assist the family to apply for the Supplementary Payment Allowance. The CSG will cover the family's expenses prior to their social welfare entitlements being allocated and received.

CSI Programme Supports

Throughout the sponsorship period CSGs are supported by a Regional Support Organisation (RSO). There are four RSOs and each provides support in different areas of the country. RSOs include: Doras, the Irish Red Cross, the Irish Refugee Council, and Nasc. CSGs also have access to a range of supports available through The Open Community, the national support organisation for the CSI programme.

More information on the CSI programme

Community Sponsorship Ireland	communitysponsorship@equality.gov.ie
Community Sponsorship	theopencommunity.ie

Questions to Clarify with the Local Authority

- When the HAP application has been approved does the family need to send a letter to stay on the social housing transfer list.
- Do the family need to provide a document confirming they do not own property abroad.

Social Housing Glossary

Term	Definition
Local authorities	These are the main providers of social housing support in Ireland. The Housing Services Department within the local authorities facilitate the provision of suitable housing support to those in need. To find out if you are eligible for social housing support, contact your local authority or citizens information.
Medical Priority	The Social Housing Regulations 2011 allow for medical priority to boost the position of people already on the social housing list. A person must already have been accepted onto the social housing list before they can make an application for medical priority and then must submit an application form and accompanying medical information such as a doctor's report.
Approved Housing Bodies	Independent non-profit making organisations which also provide social housing for people who cannot afford to buy their own homes. Some of them provide specialist housing, such as housing for older people or homeless people. To become a tenant of an approved housing body, you must apply through your local authority using the same application form you use for local authority housing and select the relevant section in the form.
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a form of social housing support for people who have a long-term housing need, provided by all local authorities. Under the scheme, rent is paid directly to private landlords and you pay a weekly contribution to your local authority. HAP can only be received if you have already been accepted on the social housing list.
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HHAP)	HHAP is an additional scheme run by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive. It allows discretion to exceed the HAP rent limits by up to 50% for households which are recognised as homeless. This scheme only applies in the 3 Dublin local authorities and is discretionary. It will only be used where it is necessary to allow a homeless household to source suitable accommodation.
Rental Accommodation Scheme	The Rental Accommodation Scheme is run by local authorities for people getting Rent Supplement for more than 18 months. Under the Rental Accommodation Scheme, local authorities draw up contracts with landlords to provide housing for people with a long-term housing need. The landlord agrees to provide housing for a specific amount of time, and this is covered in the contract with the local authority. The local authority pays the rent directly to the landlord. You may continue to contribute to your rent but you pay this contribution to your local authority, not to your landlord.
Older Persons Accommodation	Some local authorities provide special accommodation for older people – usually community accommodation with special features, such as wardens and security cameras. Age limits for older people's accommodation can vary depending on the local authority, but on average it is 55 years+.

Rent Supplement	If you have a short-term housing need you may be eligible for Rent Supplement, iflive in private accommodation – a home that is owned by a private landlord. You may qualify for Rent Supplement if you cannot pay the rent from your own resources such as your social welfare payments. Your Rent Supplement will be calculated to make sure that, after you pay rent, you have enough money left to live on. If you get Rent Supplement for a period longer than expected, your payment may be changed to a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).
The Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme	You may qualify for the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme if you have a lasting disability that involves physical disability, sensory disability such as sight or hearing loss, mental health issue/s, or intellectual impairment such as a learning disability. The Housing Adaptation Grant is designed to help make your house more suitable for you to live in. The types of works covered include the fitting of access ramps, grab rails, downstairs toilet, stair-lifts, level access showers, changes to allow wheelchair access, extensions, and any other works which are reasonably necessary to make a house more suitable to live in. If your household income is more than €60,000 a year, you will not qualify for this grant. The maximum grant available is €30,000, which may cover up to 95% of the approved cost of works.
Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme	The Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme is available to fast track grant aid to cover a basic suite of works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing. The works grant aided under the scheme include grab-rails, access ramps, level access showers, stair-lifts, and other minor work that helps you with mobility or helps a member of your household. If your household income is more than €30,000 a year, you will not qualify for this grant. The maximum grant available is €6,000 or 100% of the approved net cost of works.
Housing Aid for Older People	The Housing Aid for Older People Grant Scheme helps older people who live in poor housing conditions to make necessary repairs or improvements to their home. If you own your home or are buying it from your local authority under the Tenant Purchase Scheme, you may apply for this grant. A number of repairs or improvements may be covered by this scheme including re-roofing or roof repairs, rewiring, installing central heating if there is none, installing water and sanitary services such as toilets if there are none, repairing or replacing windows and doors, dry lining walls, and making other repairs or improvements that the local authority considers necessary.
Additional Needs Payment	This is a payment available to help with a once-off expense that you cannot afford from your weekly income. You can get an Additional Needs Payment if you are on a low income or receiving social welfare. This payment is available for things such as fuel, funeral, deposits, kitchen utensils, prison visits etc.
Freedom of Information	The Freedom of Information Acts give each person a right to get copies of records held by public bodies that relate to them personally. Under FOI you can also request reasons for a decision made by public bodies that affect you. Local Authorities are covered by these acts so anyone can make a Freedom of Information Request by filling out the form and sending it to the relevant council.

How Do I Qualify For Social Housing Supports?

In order to qualify for social housing supports you must be eligible for social housing and you must be in need of social housing.

1 "Eligible":

To be regarded as eligible for social housing you must satisfy the income criteria. You must also show that you do not have suitable alternative accommodation.

1.1 Income Criteria:

The Household Means Policy provides details of how your household income is assessed by local authorities for social housing support. It includes information about what income is taken into account and what income is disregarded.

Proof of Income must be provided with your application for social housing.

1.2 Alternative Accommodation

You will be regarded as having alternative accommodation if a member of the household has property that the household could reasonably be expected to live in. This includes property that is being rented out. A property will not be regarded as alternative accommodation if it:

- Is occupied by someone who is divorced or separated from a member of the household, or whose civil partnership with a household member has been dissolved;
- Would be overcrowded if the household lived in it;
- Is unfit for human habitation; or
- Would not adequately meet the accommodation requirements of a household member with a disability.

Note: Some local authorities require evidence that the applicants don't own property abroad. Check if your local authority requires this.

2 "In Need"

The housing authorities will consider numerous factors in determining whether a person is "in need" of social housing supports. The following factors must be considered:

- Is your current accommodation an institution, emergency accommodation or hostel?
- Are you homeless within the meaning of section 2 of the Housing Act 1988?
- Is your current accommodation overcrowded?
- Is it fit for human habitation?
- Does it meet the accommodation requirements of a household member with a disability?
- Is it unsuitable for your household's adequate housing on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds?
- If it is shared with another household, have you a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation?
- Has your household's current mortgage been classified as unsustainable as part of the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP) laid down by the Central Bank?
- Is your household dependent on Rent Supplement to meet its housing need?
- Is your current accommodation unsuitable because it does not adequately house your household in any other way, having regard to particular household circumstances?

3 Areas of Choice

In general, you must apply to the area that you are already living in or else have a 'local connection' in the area, although this can be waived by the local authority.

Once you apply to the local authority in that area, the applicant can specify up to 3 areas where you would choose to live. At least one of them must be in the area administered by the housing authority that the applicant applies to (its functional area) and the others must be either in that functional area or within the same county. If the applicant does not live in or have a connection with the housing authority's own functional area, but the authority has agreed to accept an application from them, the applicant can only pick areas of choice within that particular authority's functional area.

4 Timeframe

The local authority has 12 weeks from receiving the completed application form to assess it and make a decision on whether the applicant qualifies for social housing or not. This timeframe can be extended if the local authority needs additional information, which they will request.

THE OPEN COMM–UNITY

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Nasc
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Opening Doors for homeless people

An Ghníomhaireacht Tithíochta
The Housing Agency

Threshold
preventing homelessness

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Guidance for Community Sponsors