



Move-On Assessments and Personal Housing Plans

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1. Background

The Homelessness Reduction Act [2017] (HRAct) stipulates that all applicants that approach a Local Authority (LA) after 3 April 2018, and are deemed to be eligible for assistance and homeless/threatened with homelessness, are to be issued with a Personal Housing Plan (PHP).

This duty continues to be owed if an applicant becomes an accepted homelessness case under s193 of the Housing Act [1996] (HA). The PHP must remain under review until a time that the LA discharges it's duty under s193(5) of the HA.

The PHP should be revisited and amended if the Move-On Officer (MOO) is informed or becomes aware of any changes in the applicants' circumstances, with the LA's reasonable steps being subject to review under s202 of the HA.

The Move-On Assessment (MOA) itself is the tool we use to establish what the applicant's current circumstances are, choose appropriate settled housing options, and elect how they may best be supported to achieve these goals. The MOA is an opportunity to have a wide ranging, meaningful and insightful conversation with the applicant, and should be viewed as an integral part of the ongoing relationship between the Move-On Officer (MOO) and applicant.

Importantly, only applicants that became homeless on or after 3 April 2018 are required to be issued with a PHP. Those that became homeless before this date are not legally entitled to a PHP, but will still benefit from and be issued with a PHP as standard practice.

2. Purpose

This procedure establishes guidelines for MOO's when conducting the MOA and developing the PHP. It does not provide guidance on every section of the MOA, but merely those that may be the most important when establishing the applicants needs.

3. Linked policies and procedures

- Move-On Verification Procedure (currently being revised)



4. Scope

The scope of this procedure is from the point it is established that a MOA is required, to the agreement and consolidation of the PHP.

5. Definitions

LA	Local Authority
PHP	Personal Housing Plan
HRAct	Homelessness Reduction Act [2017]
HA	Housing Act [1996]
MOO	Move-On Officer
OHMS	Open Housing Management System
SP	SharePoint

6. Procedure

6.1 How to conduct a MOA and produce PHP

This time with the applicant should be used to build a collaborative relationship, set expectations, and decide on appropriate actions based on the applicants support needs.

6.1.1 Ideally, the MOA should take place in person at the applicants' current placement, as this is much more likely to foster good relations. This will not always be possible or realistic, and in these instances meetings on the phone are acceptable. Time constraints, workloads, travel distances and health and safety considerations are all factors in deciding how to conduct the MOA.

6.1.2 The MOO should pre-populate as much of the assessment as possible prior to the MOA. This primarily relates to the sections titled "Application Details" and "Property and Rent/Current Financial Details".

6.1.3 The MOO should always familiarise themselves with the applicants' case before conducting the MOA in order to reduce duplication of queries. This will show that the MOO is aware of the important aspects of the case.



6.1.4 The MOA and PHP is not an administrative exercise. While there is a lot of information to be gathered, the MOO ought to actively listen to the applicant, challenging assumptions and asking follow up questions where necessary.

6.1.5 The reasonable steps both parties agree to take in the PHP should be discussed and ratified during the MOA, with the PHP being issued to the applicant for comment within 24 hours of the MOA taking place.

6.2 When to conduct a MOA and agree PHP

Generally, an initial MOA should be completed within the first month of an applicant being notified they are owed the main housing duty. The MOA will be conducted at an agreed time and place, and will normally take between 1 - 1.5 hours. This may be longer if verification or auto bidding requirements are identified.

6.2.1 The MOO should refer to their weekly report when deciding who to book in for an assessment, although there will be occasions where ad-hoc requests for a MOA are made. Such requests may come directly from the customer, from an external agency, a members enquiry or other internal partners.

6.2.2 If a MOO is made aware that the applicant has experienced a change in their circumstances, or know the information is not up to date, they must update the MOA/PHP accordingly and save it to Sharepoint (SP) as a new Microsoft Word file, and shared with the applicant. Any previous versions must be retained as separate documents. This is vital for ensuring our records are accurate, detailed and contemporaneous.

6.2.3 If the applicant is entitled to a PHP, every effort should be made to ensure that the reasonable steps both parties are expected to take are agreed. The MOO should share the completed MOA and PHP with the applicant in order for any comments or queries to be raised within 24 hours of the MOA taking place.

6.3 What if an applicant does not agree to the PHP

Applicants have the right to review the reasonable steps that the LA has indicated they will take. Applicants are unable to review the steps they will take, but can request that a court consider their reasonableness.



6.3.1 If an applicant disagrees with the steps they are asked to take, then the reasons should be clearly recorded on the PHP after further discussion.

6.3.2 If the applicant disagrees with the steps the LA will take, it is worth consulting with management in the first instance. A decision will then be taken on whether to include the relevant steps, amend them, or retain them.

6.3.3 If agreement cannot be reached after consultation with management as per 6.3.2, then the case will be passed to an independent reviewing officer for consideration.

6.4 “Your Households Health”

This section of the MOA is extremely important, and as much detail as possible should be obtained. It is likely to be a sensitive subject for many applicants, so MOOs should approach these questions with care and empathy. The applicants' circumstances in this regard may determine which locality and floor level are most appropriate or suitable.

6.4.1 As a rule, the MOO should include where treatment is given and the names of consultants or specialists involved with the applicants' health care.

6.4.2 If a medical assessment is required, a reasonable step for the applicant should be to provide the most up to date medical documentation.

6.4.3 Similarly, if an applicant or a member of their household is disabled and claims PIP/DLA, then proof of this income should be forwarded, uploaded to SP, and will be noted as a reasonable step for the applicant to complete, if they are able.

6.4.4 The needs of every household member are to be considered and recorded.

6.5 “Your Children’s Education and Wellbeing”

The outcome of this section may dictate what is deemed to be a suitable offer. The Allocations Policy is clear on what is meant by “exam critical”, and will guide us when deciding on the next steps.



6.5.1 If the child/children of an applicant are linked with Children's Services, a reasonable step for the LA will be to make contact with the social worker and open a line of communication.

6.5.2 If further actions are required, these should be noted and confirmed with the applicant, taking in to account the needs of every child in the household.

6.6 "Your Training, Employment and Financial Situation"

Applicants may be employed, unable to work or temporarily unemployed due to a number of factors. The housing options available to people are largely determined by their income and entitlements. This section not only records these details, but is an opportunity to establish if further support can be offered for those in a position to take up employment.

Those that are unemployed, post localism and not exempt from the benefit cap should be made aware that employment represents their best chance of improving their options.

MOO should be aware that some applicants may have been unemployed for some time, and could be hesitant to re-enter the job market. All possible assurances should be given that in most circumstances, people are better off financially when they work.

Some applicants will not be in a position to work, but should still be provided with detailed guidance on their options.

6.6.1 A reasonable step derived from this section could be that the LA makes a referral to a relevant support agency, and the applicant agrees to engage once contacted.

6.6.2 If it not immediately clear whether an applicant is affected by the benefit cap, then further checks should be conducted. MOO's should keep in mind that the current Local Housing Allowance Rate for Inner/Outer North London is unlikely to be affordable for applicants unless one member of the household is in gainful employment, or exempt from the cap.

6.7 "Are There Any Areas That You Cannot Move To?"



It is vital that MOO's approach these questions with sensitivity and understanding. This may be the first time that the applicant has made a disclosure of this kind.

6.7.1 If there is a suggestion that an applicant may be at risk of Domestic Abuse, or has experienced it in the recent past, then consent should be sought for a referral to Hearthstone. It is not mandatory that customers engage with this service, but the benefits and support on offer should be reiterated. In most cases, the MOO will be led by Hearthstone or the relevant Domestic Abuse support agency on what locations may constitute a risk.

6.7.2 If a customer divulges that they are a Schedule 1 Offender or subject to MAPPA protocols, then management advice should be pursued. It is essential that the correct departments are consulted in instances such as this.

6.7.3 If it becomes apparent that the above applies, then immediate consideration should be given to the suitability of the current Temporary Accommodation placement.

6.8 "Connections to Other Areas"

If an applicant has connections to other areas of the UK, and would be open to moving to them, we can explore the possibility of Home Finder UK. Most properties that become available through this scheme are in the North of England.

6.8.1 It may not be appropriate to recommend the above if a customer has indicated they may be at risk in the areas they previously held a connection to.

6.5 Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of every Homes for Haringey employee to report safeguarding concerns if they become aware of them.

6.6 GDPR

All Lettings and Move-On staff should ensure that at all times they consider the requirements of GDPR. This is particularly important when managing electronic data. It is essential that emails containing any personal



information being sent externally are sent by secure emails and staff should be extra vigilant in ensuring they are emailing the correct person.

7. Version control

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Consultation? Who	Reviewed by
1.0	25/11/2020	Initial Release	Move-On Staff	Leigh Richman/Bernard Moonie

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