

Entering & Leaving a Person's Home

Supported Living Services Policy & Guidance

Directorate:	Social Care, Health, and Housing (SCHH)		
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It is the responsibility of every individual to ensure that they are working to the most current version of this document.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. All tenants living within the Supported Living Service have the right to allow or deny access to anyone they wish.
- 1.2. The law assumes that everyone can legally consent and has the right to make his/her own decisions. A person should not be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them to do so have been taken without success (Mental Capacity Act)
- 1.3. Under the Human Rights Act, people are entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their property, this means have the right to privacy within their own home.

2. Legislation and Regulatory Framework

2.1 Relevant legislation:

- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act, 2005
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- Housing Act 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

3. Entering a Persons Home

Access

- 3.1 If required to do so, staff will only enter a tenant's flat or bedroom, with the permission of the person. They must first knock on the door and wait to be invited in.
- 3.2 If a person has restricted mobility, limited or no verbal communication it may be difficult to obtain a response. In those circumstances the staff member may enter after knocking but should pause in the doorway to announce themselves and the purpose of their visit.
- 3.3 If it is obvious that the tenant is unhappy with their presence at this time, they should leave and say they will come back later.
- 3.4 Staff will not enter a flat or bedroom when the person is not present. The only exception to this will be in the case of an emergency.
- 3.5 An emergency will be defined by an accident, serious health issue or fire. At the start of the tenancy a contract be written stating in what circumstances staff can enter the person's premises.

Key Holding

- 3.6 In circumstances where people who are not able to hold their own keys, alternatives must be looked at, for example electronic door fobs or the possibility for keys to be held by staff.
- 3.7 Staff will not hold keys for a person unless there are specific reasons and clear arrangements are in place. In these situations, the need for keys to be held by staff will be clearly detailed in the person's care and support plan along with the reasons why. Where staff are required to hold a key to a property, a contract will be written and agreed/signed by the person and put into their file (see appendices).
- 3.8 Where keys are held by staff a log of usage will be kept, this will include the time the key was taken out, which staff member used it and the time it was returned.
- 3.9 If keys are held, they must be kept in a secure place, (i.e., a locked key cupboard) and will not be used to access the premises unless prior arrangements with the person are made. Keys must not be handed onto a third party unless requested to do so by the person. When this is requested, it must be noted in the person's file.

Health & Wellbeing

- 3.10 If a tenant has a specific health issue, which means they may be at risk or need to be monitored, an action plan must be written and agreed with the person and any relevant health care professionals or representative. This action plan should be written into the care and support plan.
- 3.11 If a health and wellbeing concern does arise and urgent access to the persons property is required, staff should not enter the premises on their own, they should call for support and enter with a colleague.
- 3.12 If there is an emergency such as serious risk to the person and there is not time to wait for backup, the staff member may enter the property alone. These circumstances must be recorded and fully justifiable. All emergency procedures must be followed.

Emergency Situations

- 3.13 Clear plans must be in place for staff to follow in the event of an emergency for each person. These should detail who to call in an emergency, and in what priority they should be contacted. As a rule, this will be the following people and in the following priority:
- Other members of staff on duty
 - Manager of the service
 - Police
 - Other emergency services (such as fire brigade or ambulance)
 - Family/ friends
 - EDT

- 3.14 All staff on duty must be aware of the location of these plans and the contact numbers for the relevant people/organisations.
- 3.15 If a forced entry is required, this should be by a police officer and only after all other avenues have been tried.

4. People with Complex Needs

- 4.1 When a tenant has complex needs, consent to enter the property still needs to be sought. Staff will work with individuals to ensure effective communication systems are in place, involving advocacy services if necessary.
- 4.2 If a tenant has difficulties cleaning their property, they may require support from staff. Staff must not enter a property or room to clean without prior permission from the tenant. If a tenant is due to leave the building, staff must ask permission to enter the property from the tenant before they leave. When in the property, staff should only undertake agreed tasks.

5. Conduct Whilst in a Person's Home

- 5.1 Whilst in the property, staff must remember that it is person's home, and it must be treated with respect. They must not, under any circumstances, interfere with the personal possessions of the person without their permission. Items should not be taken from the room/property or rearranged without the consent or request of the tenant.

6. Leaving the Property

- 6.1 When leaving the tenant's room/flat, it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that they have left the property in clean state (particularly if undertaking care tasks). They should remove any hazards (e.g. equipment, rubber gloves they have been using) and leave the home secure.

7. Evaluation and Review

- 6.2 This document will be reviewed every 2 years unless and relating guidance changed where it will be reviewed sooner.

8. Appendices

- Key Holder Contract

Appendix 1: Key Consent Form

Key Consent Form

I do / do not give my consent for Frogmore staff to keep a copy of my flat key in the office safe. I give permission for all staff to use this in the following circumstances:

- ☐ Staff concerned for my wellbeing.
- ☐ Staff to allow individuals into my flat regarding any maintenance issues.
- ☐ Staff entering my flat for health and safety reasons, i.e. flooding, fires etc.
- ☐ Staff to give me the spare key, should I lose my own and need to get another copy.

Tenants sign

Staff sign

Staff name

Staff position

Date