Ealing Council’s housing register: how it works

The law says that the council must have an allocations scheme. This is a set of rules that says who we will accept applications from and how we will decide who has priority for housing. The full scheme is 47 pages long. This leaflet explains the key points.

Approximately 10,000 people have already applied to Ealing Council for housing and we receive up to 20 new applications each week. Some of these people are council tenants who need to move to accommodation more suitable for them and some of them are living in privately rented homes, or with friends or their extended families. Some have become homeless and are living in temporary accommodation provided by the council.

Some people will not be accepted onto the housing register.

Some of the reasons for this are:

- Where the applicant, or any member of their household, has been found guilty of serious anti-social behaviour, and the council considers that they are unsuitable to be a tenant as a result.
- Where they, or any member of their household, have assaulted a member of staff and an injunction is being sought or has already been obtained.
- Where they, or any member of the household, have knowingly given false or misleading information, or withheld information, that has been reasonably requested (in this case we may also prosecute).
- Households with a joint income of more than £60,000 or capital assets of over £24000.
- Households that have not lived in the borough for the last 5 years.

If we decide you can not join the housing register, we will tell you in writing and you can ask us to review that decision.

If we accept you onto the register, you will be placed in a priority band

**Band A**: is for people with an extremely urgent need to move. Only about 3% of applicants are in this band. Because of the urgency, most of them are only allowed to use the bidding system for a few weeks, and then we can make an offer that we believe meets their needs.

**Band B**: is for people who urgently need to move, perhaps because of a serious medical condition that is affected by their existing housing situation. Only about 5% of applicants are in this band.

**Band C**: is for everyone else who does not have housing that meets the council’s standards but where their need for rehousing is not so urgent. This includes less serious medical issues and most overcrowding cases. Approximately 40% of applicants are in this band.
**Band D:** The remaining 52% of applicants are in band D. These people would like to move but already have suitable housing according to the council’s standards. They can not bid for properties.

(The council offers up to 20% of properties to households where someone has been working at least 24 hours a week for 12 of the last 18 months. Applicants in band D can bid for these properties if they meet this rule.)

**Even if you are accepted onto the register, this does not guarantee that you will receive an offer of accommodation**

Each year, we have less than 1000 properties to allocate; around 100 of these are sheltered flats for older people. We had less than 10 properties last year with more than four bedrooms and less than 40 with four bedrooms. There are nearly 900 people on the register waiting for properties with four or more bedrooms. We had around 100 properties last year with three bedrooms and there are over 1800 people waiting for properties with three bedrooms. We had 175 properties with two bedrooms last year and there are over 2400 people waiting for properties of this size.

This means that only a small percentage of housing applicants will receive offers of accommodation. It is important that people who apply to us for housing also keep looking for other ways of meeting their housing needs, because being on the housing register does not guarantee an offer of accommodation.

**How do we decide who gets priority?**

In order to decide who needs to be rehoused, we first set standards for what we think it is reasonable for people to expect. This includes:

- the correct number of bedrooms for the household
- indoor bathroom and toilet facilities
- accommodation that does not make any existing medical condition or disability worse
- accommodation that is safe

When you fill in the online application, we ask for information about where you live and the people included in your application, so that we can assess whether you are already adequately housed according to our rules. If you are adequately housed, and you have lived in the borough for 5 years, you can still join the register but you will be in band D, the band for people who want to move but don’t need to.

If we accept you onto the housing register in band A, B or C, we will ask you for documents to prove the information you have given in your application. For example if you say that you are overcrowded because you have three children and only one bedroom, we would expect to see birth certificates and child benefit records for the children and we would visit your home to confirm how many rooms are available to you. **If you give false information in your application, or you deliberately do not provide information that might affect your priority banding, you can be prosecuted.**
Ealing Council’s bedroom standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Bedrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single person</td>
<td>Studio flat or 1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple with no children</td>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant woman (with or without partner)</td>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with child under 1</td>
<td>1 or 2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with child over 1</td>
<td>2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with 2 children under 10</td>
<td>2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with 2 children, same sex where at least one child is 10 and there is an age gap of 5 or more years</td>
<td>2 or 3 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with two children of opposite sex (one over seven)</td>
<td>2 or 3 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents with 3 or 4 children</td>
<td>3 or 4 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/s with five or more children</td>
<td>4 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are already living in accommodation that meets these standards, you will probably be in band D.

Housing benefit rules about bedroom standards are different from Ealing’s room standards. This means that, although our rules might say that you can bid for a property with three bedrooms, housing benefit may only pay rent for a two bedroom property. Because of this, our standards may change in the future so that they match housing benefit standards. We will notify everyone on the housing register if this happens.