



Housing Rental Income Management Policy & Procedure

**Effective from:
18 August 2025**

APPLICATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document outlines how we manage our housing rental income and covers all YMCA St. Paul's Group (the Charity) residents.

The procedures contained within this document set out the four different stages and processes involved in collecting and recording rental income, preventing rent arrears and proactively managing arrears effectively:

- ▶ At referral
- ▶ At move in
- ▶ During support delivery
- ▶ If arrears occur

This document applies to all legal entities within the Group.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Being able to manage a rent account is one of the key skills residents will need to be able to go on to live independently. If we are not equipping residents with that skill, we are failing in our duty to support them to develop the skills they need to live independently. We are also likely contributing to the revolving door of homelessness by increasing the likelihood of them being evicted from future homes.
- 1.2. As such, we see rental income management as a support function.
- 1.3. The key principles of this policy and procedure are prevention of arrears occurring and responding proactively if they do occur.
- 1.4. This policy also works on the principle that there is no reason not to issue a resident a rent letter at the correct time according to the procedure. Failure to give residents the most up to date information as to the condition of their rent account is physically denying them the knowledge they need to manage their rent accounts effectively.

2. Equity Impact Statement

- 2.1. Financial abuse is one area where we must ensure we are protecting vulnerable adults.
- 2.2. By having a clear policy and procedure on rental income, we minimise the risk of staff or others abusing residents financially.
- 2.3. We also ensure that staff do not discriminate against residents by ensuring that every worker within the Charity follows the same procedure. We ensure that timings in relation to the issuing of formal proceedings for arrears are followed and staff are not making decisions based on value-based judgements.

3. Definitions

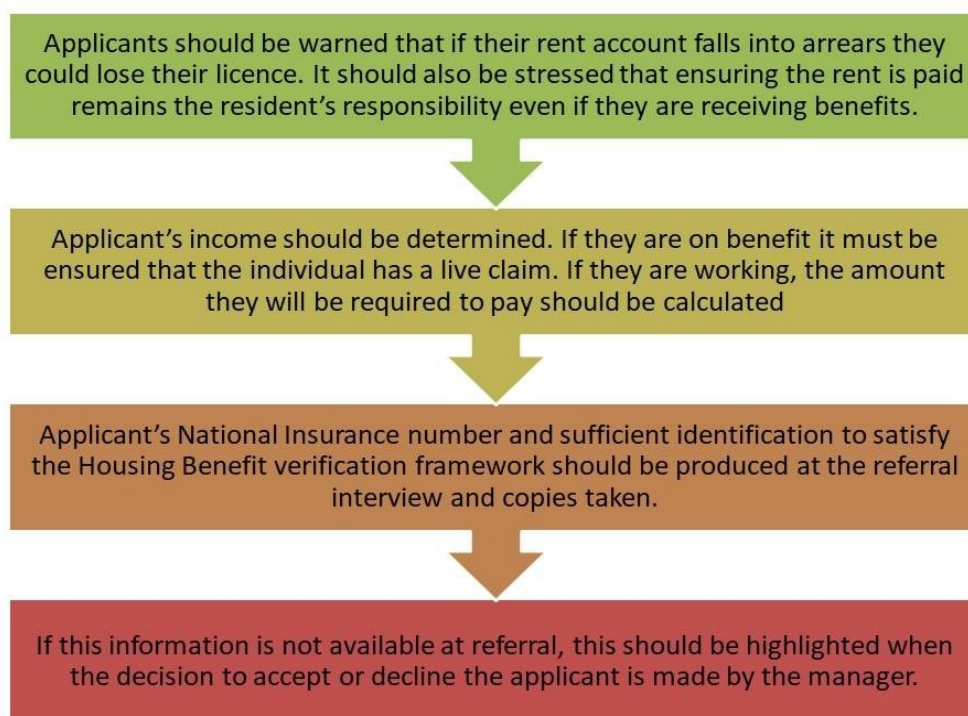
- 3.1. **NTD – Notice to Determine:** an NTD is a document that formally communicates the intention to end a tenancy or licence to occupy. It is used to inform the resident that the agreement will be terminated on a specific date, triggering the end of the licence or tenancy.
- 3.2. **NOSP – Notice Order Seeking Possession:** an NOSP is a formal written notification from a landlord to a resident, indicating the landlord's intention to seek the court's order for the resident to vacate the property. It is a key step in the eviction process, signaling the landlord's intent to

start legal proceedings if the resident does not leave by a specified date.

- 3.3. **S21 – Section 21 Notice:** A section 21 notice starts the legal process to end an assured shorthold tenancy (AST).
- 3.4. **Staff:** refers to either support staff or a member of the Rent and Tenancy Administration Team where relevant. Allocations of responsibility for post holders will be defined in the relevant job descriptions.
- 3.5. **Inform:** the housing management system used to record all resident information and records, including arrears letters and benefit information, etc.

4. Rental Income Management Procedures

4.1. Procedure at Referral Stage (prior to moving in)



4.2 Guidance - Referral Stage:

- a. At this stage, it is extremely important to explain to applicants that they need to ensure that the rent is paid and kept up to date. Applicants should be warned that if their rent account falls into arrears, they could lose their licence. It should also be stressed that ensuring the entire rent (including all service charges) is paid remains the resident's responsibility even if they are receiving benefits. This means it is their responsibility to advise both the relevant benefits office and YMCA St. Paul's Group if there are any changes in their circumstances.
- b. If the applicant's National Insurance Number and sufficient identification to submit a benefit application is not available at referral, this should be highlighted when the decision to accept or decline the applicant is made by the manager. The general rule is to decline the application if the relevant information is not available. Exceptions to this are where there is some other substantial reason why it is in the best interest of both the applicant and YMCA to provide accommodation.

4.3 Procedure at Move In

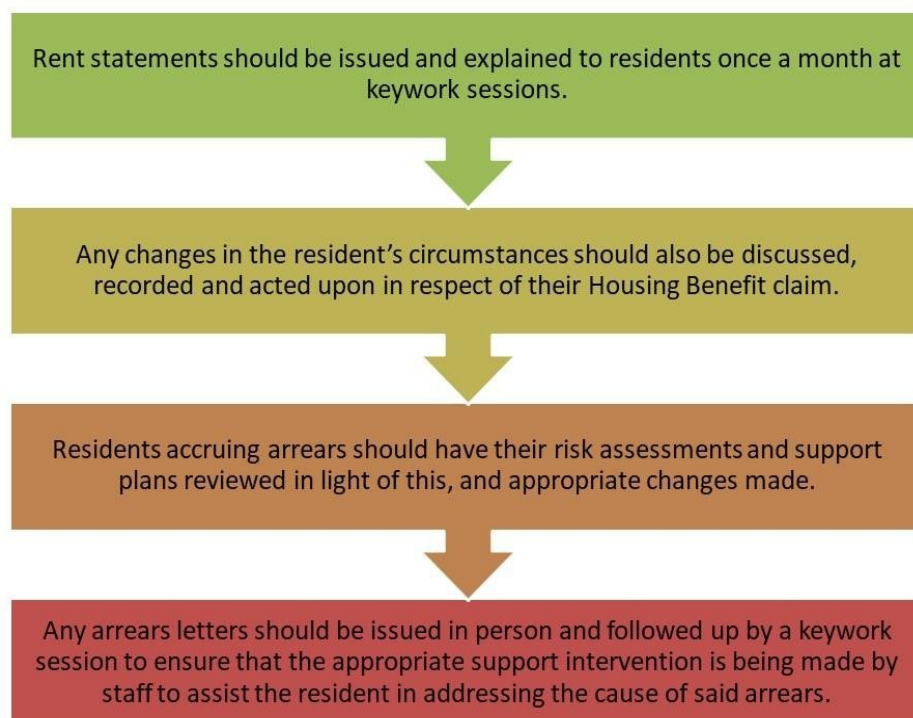


4.4 Guidance – Move In Stage:

- a. Working residents should provide 4 weeks' worth of pay slips if paid weekly, 2 months if monthly, a bank statement covering the last 3 months and a week's rent in advance.
- b. During the move-in process, the staff must stress the importance of keeping a clear rent account; describe the arrears procedure and the possible implications should the resident fall into arrears.
- c. In particular, it should be made clear that:
 - ▶ the resident is fully responsible for all accommodation charges;
 - ▶ the resident is responsible for the success of the Housing Benefit claim by providing information to the Housing Benefit office which is factual and correct and within local timeframes;
 - ▶ the resident is responsible for informing YMCA St. Paul's Group and the Housing Benefit office, with the support of their Supported Housing Officer, of any changes in their circumstances that could affect their claim; **NB:** it is essential that we are supporting the resident when they are engaging with the Housing Benefit office.

- ▶ that non-payment will affect resident's move on options;
 - ▶ YMCA St. Paul's Group has a responsibility (under s.14 of the Fraud Act 1997) to notify the Housing Benefit office of any material change of circumstance as soon as they become aware of it;
 - ▶ arrears letters will be sent and, at the appropriate point, a notice to regain possession of the tenancy will be issued if arrears start to accrue;
- d. Staff must ensure that the HB application form is completed correctly with the resident.
 - e. All HB application forms are completed online, on the day the resident moves in. Copies of the application should be downloaded and saved onto the residents Inform file. A confirmation email or confirmation reference number that the form has been completed should also be saved onto the residents Inform file.
 - f. After two weeks from the move in date, staff should contact the local Housing Benefit office to confirm that the claim is being processed and to find out wherever possible if any outstanding information is required.
 - g. If further information is required, staff should take responsibility for ensuring the resident is aware of the potential consequences of failing to ensure that all the relevant information reaches the local Housing Benefit office within the specified time limits (usually four weeks from the date of the submission of the Housing Benefit claim).

4.5 Procedure during Support Sessions



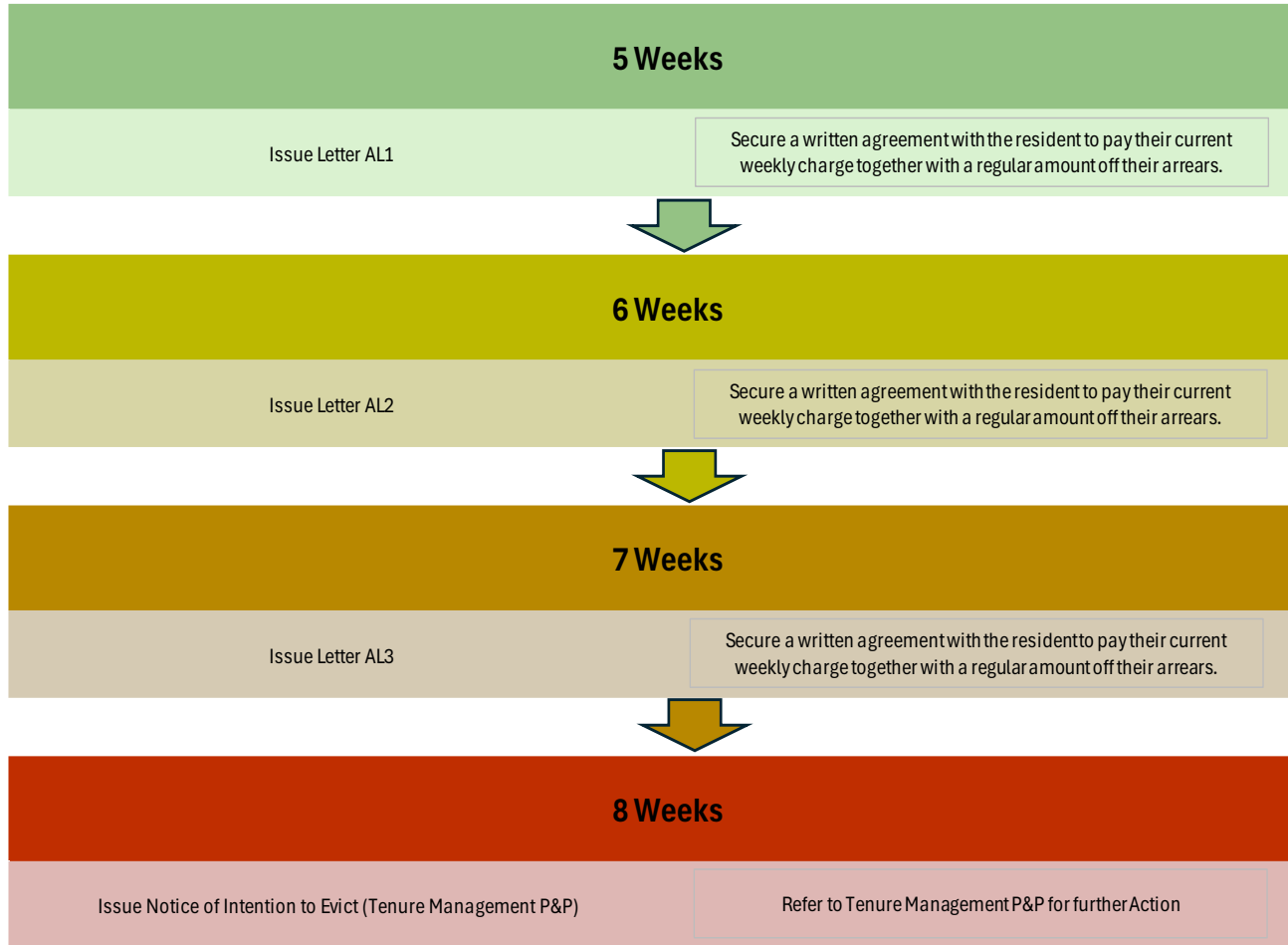
4.6 Guidance – Support Stage:

- a. Staff should remind the resident that a complaint is not a valid reason not to pay rent. The YMCA will respond to any complaints as quickly as possible (please refer to our complaints policy for further information).
- b. During the move-in process, the staff must stress the importance of keeping a clear rent

account; describe the arrears procedure and the possible implications should the resident fall into arrears.

- c. Resettlement should be investigated with all residents who are in arrears - please refer to the Resettlement Policy.
- d. Non-engagement with the rent arrears procedure should be managed through the non-engagement process – please refer to Support Pathway policy.

4.7 Procedure - Managing Arrears



4.8 Guidance - managing the arrears process:

- a. Residents with bank accounts must be encouraged to complete a Standing Order Mandate.
- b. The procedure for arrears must be followed in all cases. The only acceptable deviation from the arrears process is at the point of eviction where a manager can decide not to evict based on a thorough assessment of risk and the potential to recover the monies owed.
- c. Individual staff should monitor residents' rent accounts weekly and provide four weekly reports to their line manager on rental income management actions.
- d. As soon as a resident's rent account falls into arrears, every effort must be made to secure a written agreement (arrears repayment agreement or also referred to as payment plan) with the resident to pay their current weekly charge together with a regular amount off

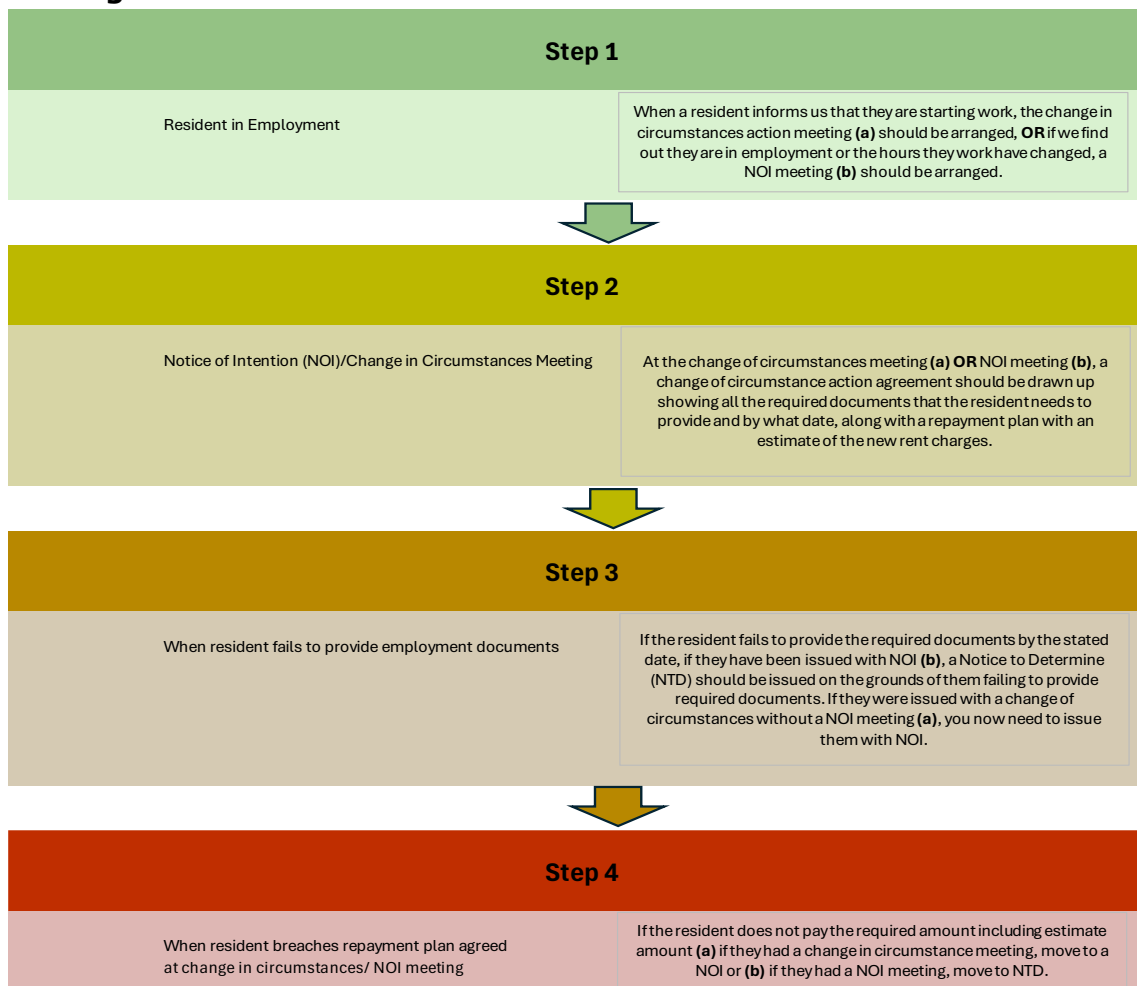
their arrears. This amount should be realistic and based on the resident's ability to pay. This involves assessing the minimum amount that will be acceptable to YMCA St. Paul's Group and the maximum amount that the resident can reasonably afford.

- e. Any repayment agreements reached, must be uploaded to the resident's file on Inform.
- f. Where an agreement has been obtained, formal action should only be suspended once a payment has been made. If a payment is missed, then formal action should be continued at the point it was suspended.
- g. If a resident makes an agreement to pay at any point in the procedure, but then breaks that agreement, the arrears process continues at whichever point it was halted.
- h. For actions at eight weeks of arrears, staff should refer to the Tenure Management Policy & Procedures for guidance on issuing the correct notice type.

5. Working Residents

5.1. A resident starting work is a great step towards living independently again. However, it can also affect their benefits, so it is important that residents and staff work together on ensuring their benefit claims are up to date, and the resident is aware of what this means in relation to their rent payments. The same also applies if a resident's working hours change (both an increase and decrease in hours are important to manage).

5.2. Working Residents Procedure



5.3. Guidance – Working Residents:

- a. When a resident either informs us that they are starting work, we find out that they are in employment, or the hours they work have changed, a Change in Circumstances Actions meeting should be arranged. At this meeting, a Change in Circumstances Actions Agreement should be drawn up, showing all the required documents that the resident needs to provide and by what date. Failure to comply with these actions will lead to a Notice to Determine being issued.
- b. The Supported Housing Officer should use the Housing Benefit Calculator (<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>) to calculate an estimate of the new rent charges, once Housing Benefit has been recalculated. This estimate should be discussed with the resident and put in writing to them using the correct form.
- c. If the resident fails to provide the required documents by the stated date, a Notice to Determine (NTD) should be issued on the grounds of them failing to provide required documents.
- d. If the resident does not pay the required amount (including estimated amount) the Rent Arrears Process should be started/continued immediately. Please refer to Working Residents Procedure below.
- e. Resettlement should be discussed with all residents who are working - please refer to the Resettlement Policy.
- f. When the resident provides all the required documents, these should be uploaded to Inform on the resident profile.

6. Invoiced Rooms/ Temporary Accommodation Placements

- 6.1 For those rooms that are paid via invoice by a company/ local authority, it is the Housing Manager's responsibility to ensure that the invoices are raised as per the agreement.
- 6.2 The Housing Manager should ensure that any non-payment of invoices is chased with the relevant company/ local authority, until payment is received.

7. Social Services Placements

- 7.1 Some referrals received through Social Services are either paid for fully or in part by the Local Authority Social Services team.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the Housing Manager and/or Housing Co-ordinator to get clear confirmation of (1) what is to be paid by Social Services (2) what is to be paid by the resident.
- 7.3 The rent arrears procedure is to be followed for any arrears that occur on any moneys owed by the resident and the collection of debts process as set out in the financial regulations should be followed in relation to any non-payment of invoices by social services (see also section above).

8. Performance Reporting & Monitoring

- 8.1 Teams will be subject to periodic performance reporting against compliance with the Housing Rental Income Management Policy & Procedures.
- 8.2 The process will be aligned to team performance and run on a monthly cycle to correspond with

arrears reporting.

- 8.3 Managers will be required to self-audit files and provide commentary to the Head of Housing, Care & Support.
- 8.4 The Head of Housing, Care & Support or their appointed representative will then re-audit these files as part of the performance management process.
- 8.5 Actions identified through the audit will then be communicated to the line manager of the team manager for follow up in one to ones.
- 8.6 At regular intervals, as agreed by the Audit & Risk Committee, internal audits will be carried out on the income management process. This will also be tested during core compliance internal audits.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Arrears Letter AL 1
- Appendix 2 Arrears Letter AL 2
- Appendix 3 Arrears Letter AL3
- Appendix 4 Arrears Repayment Agreement
- Appendix 5 Change in Circumstances Actions Agreement