



# Manchester's Emergency Accommodation Standards

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# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to ensure that Manchester has the highest possible standards for Emergency Accommodation to help people who are rough sleeping to make the choice to move inside.

These standards have been drawn up with people who have experience of staying in emergency accommodation and people who provide and commission accommodation and support services. The aim is to ensure that all emergency accommodation which is provided in Manchester is of a suitable standard - provides people with a safe place to stay, where they are treated with dignity and respect and are helped to move on to supported or permanent accommodation with appropriate support.

For the purpose of this document Emergency Accommodation refers to accommodation that is provided to help ensure that people who are homeless do not have to sleep rough, including accommodation that is provided during periods of severe cold weather but excludes B+B/UTA and regular Support Accommodation/hostels which are covered by other regulations.

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# Vision for June 2022 and beyond

That everyone who needs it should be able to access Emergency Accommodation which provides an alternative to rough sleeping and that this accommodation:

1. Provides the choice of a single room, (or rooms for couples or friends who request a preference to share) affording people privacy, security and dignity.
2. Provides support including help to move on to supported or permanent accommodation.
3. Is suitable for people's specific needs.
4. Is available on the day that people need it.
5. That staff (workers and volunteers) are recruited, trained and supported to a high standard.
6. That buildings are of high quality and provide an environment which promotes wellbeing (Psychologically Informed Environments).
7. That services are designed, commissioned and evaluated in a process that includes people who are using the services and uses data/input from voluntary/statutory/faith-based partners to ensure responsiveness to changing needs/trends.

**That all partners make a commitment to work towards meeting this vision by June 2022**

# Objectives for 2019/20

1. That, wherever possible, any new Emergency Accommodation provides single room accommodation (or rooms for couples or friends who request a preference to share).
2. That details about Emergency Accommodation including admission criteria and referral routes are publicly available.
3. That all Emergency Accommodation publicises their aim for how quickly they will try and move people into suitable longer-term accommodation, with clear time limits on how long people will be in shared rooms.
4. That everyone staying in Emergency Accommodation has access to support, including help to move on to supported or permanent accommodation with appropriate support and that everyone is provided with a Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) by the Housing Options Service in line with the Homeless Reduction Act.
5. **Women:** That there is the option for women to access separate and smaller women only Emergency Accommodation where they would be offered referrals into specialist support services based on their individual needs and wishes.
6. **Pregnant women:** That pregnant women have the choice of single room/couples' accommodation where they would be offered referrals into specialist support services based on their individual needs and wishes.
7. **LGBTQ+:** That LGBTQ+ people have the choice of single room accommodation where they would be offered referrals into specialist support services based on their individual needs and wishes.
8. **Young People:** Any young people (-25) who do not have a dedicated support worker is allocated one on entry to Emergency Accommodation and that this worker follows and supports them through the move on process.
9. **People with limited legal rights:** That Emergency Accommodation is available for people who have no access to benefits and/or have no legal right to work and that free specialist advice is available where needed e.g. For EU migrants to apply for settled status and for people to challenge immigration decisions.



# Objectives for 2019/20

10. **Workers:** Accommodation is available for people who are working, including those working night shifts.
11. **Complex needs:** That there is enough, suitable Emergency Accommodation for people with multiple and complex needs including appropriate mental health support and links through to Housing First accommodation.
12. **People who are excluded:** For people who cannot safely be accommodated in Emergency Accommodation there is a clear multiagency response and approach, which involves the individual, to help them get appropriate accommodation with support as soon as possible. (The operation of the Task and Targeting group could be further developed to meet this need). If someone is evicted from Emergency Accommodation, then a referral must be made by the provider to other accommodation or to the Task and Targeting group.
13. **Infection Control:** Provide and maintain a clean and appropriate environment in managed premises that facilitates the prevention and control of infections.
14. **Staff recruitment/training:** That organisations providing Emergency Accommodation are assisted (through shared resources and/or enough funding) to implement safe recruitment practices and high-quality training for staff (paid workers and volunteers).
15. **Co-production:** That services are designed, commissioned and evaluated in a process that includes people who are using the services and using data/input from voluntary/statutory/faith-based partners to ensure responsiveness to changing needs/trends.

# Types of Emergency Accommodation

There are a variety of types of Emergency Accommodation:

## 1. Single Room Accommodation (or rooms for couples/friends who request a preference to share)

With 24-hour access to the building and support provided by experienced staff.

This is the preferred accommodation type which we would like to be available for everyone who needs it. It would meet or exceed all the minimum standards and operate on a similar model to Supported Accommodation.

## 2. "Night Shelters" (where shared accommodation is provided, usually in one or two rooms and where people do not have 24-hour access to the accommodation)

This accommodation is recognised as being valuable particularly:

- As there is currently a shortage of single room accommodation
- Where it is used for short periods of time
- Where it is available for people with no entitlement to benefits who may currently have few other options
- Where staff (including volunteers) are able to provide a warm welcome and create a supportive environment
- During periods of severe cold weather as extra short-term accommodation

## 3. "Sit Up" Accommodation (which may provide people with beds)

Usually provided by existing supported accommodation as an additional provision and may involve using communal areas, particularly during periods of severe cold weather.

This accommodation is recognised as being valuable particularly:

- As there is currently a shortage of single room accommodation
- Where it is used for short periods of time
- Where it helps to introduce people to a supported accommodation project before they are offered an available bed in the project
- As it is usually staffed by experienced long-term staff and offers good quality facilities in the building
- During periods of severe cold weather as extra short-term accommodation
- Where it is available for people with no entitlement to benefits who may currently have few other options

## 4. "Pods" and "Shared" rooms (there may be between 2-8 people sharing a room with other facilities provided in the building or in a neighbouring building)

This accommodation is recognised as being valuable particularly:

- As there is currently a shortage of single room accommodation
- Where it is used for short periods of time
- Where people have access to their rooms 24 hours a day
- Where support is provided by experienced staff
- Who can help people to access other appropriate services
- Where it is available for people with no entitlement to benefits who may currently have few other options

Each type of accommodation may have specific minimum standards which apply to them and other standards which don't apply. This is indicated in the right-hand column of the table which follows with a number corresponding to the accommodation type above.

# Minimum Standards for Manchester's Emergency Accommodation

For the purpose of this table "staff" refers to paid workers and volunteers unless otherwise specified.

	Categories	Minimum Standard	Acc. Type
1.1	Respect and safety	People should be treated with respect and dignity by all staff.	1, 2, 3, 4
1.2		Staff should aim to create an environment where everyone feels safe – this needs to be a priority.	1, 2, 3, 4
1.3		Where security guards are used then they should have a support approach and should be carefully selected and inducted to ensure that they are working within an ethos of respect.	1,2,3,4
2.1	Opening times	People should be able to access the Emergency Accommodation from 7pm or before (5pm for Sit Ups) and people should be able to stay in the emergency accommodation until at least 8am.	1, 2, 3, 4
2.2		People who are working should be able to negotiate to arrive after the usual closing time in the evening.	1, 2, 3, 4
2.3		If people have to vacate the building during the day then there should be a linked service where they can go during the day. This may be a negotiated agreement with an existing day centre.	1,2,3,4
3.1	Age restrictions	No one under 18 should stay in Emergency Accommodation that isn't specifically designed for this age group.	1, 2, 3, 4
3.2		18-25 year olds should be assigned a dedicated young person's Information, Advice and Guidance worker.	1,2,3,4
4.1	Size	A maximum of 20 people will be able to stay at any new unit of Night Shelter Accommodation.	2
5.1	Acceptable behaviour	There should be a clear set of acceptable behaviours which everyone is given when they first arrive which are consistently applied for everyone's safety.	1,2,3,4
5.2		A written agreement should outline the code of conduct which people are expected to abide by. This should be explained to each person on their first night. The use of pictures, translation such as Google translate or translated materials should be used to help explain them to people with limited English.	1,2,3,4
6.1	Belongings	People should be told about any options for them to safely store belongings, including passports/ID etc. – either on site or off site through other services.	2,3,4
6.2		A facility should be available for people to charge their mobile phones securely (either with staff or the people themselves responsible for keeping their phones safe while they are charging).	2,3,4
7.1	Food/drinks	There should be a dedicated, separate food preparation area, if food is to be prepared on site.	1,2,3,4
7.2		Hot food should be available free of charge every evening and for breakfast each morning in Night Shelters.	2
7.3		Food should be provided for people staying in Sit Ups and pods/shared rooms during periods of severe cold weather, this could be in the form of a food parcel so that people can prepare food and drinks in communal kitchens.	3,4
7.4		Hot and cold drinks should be available free of charge at all times.	2,3

# Minimum Standards for Manchester's Emergency Accommodation

	Categories	Minimum Standard	Acc. Type
8.1	Toilets/washing facilities	A minimum of 1 toilet and hand washbasin with hot running water per 6 people for Night Shelters. Liquid soap should be provided and disposable paper towels. Air dryers may be used if paper towels cannot be provided. Reusable terry towels should not be used.	
9.1	Beds	A bed/mattress should be provided for each person. This should be free from damage and stains and have impervious finish to facilitate cleaning.	1,2,3,4
9.2		Sheets should be laundered daily. If the same person is returning to a reserved bed, bedding should be washed weekly or sooner if soiled.	2,3,4
9.3		Beds should be separated by at least 1 metre. Consider changing sleeping arrangements in a foot to head manner to provide more distance. Where there is an increased risk of infection a risk assessment should be carried out. IPC advice can be sought if required. People presenting with respiratory or diarrhoea illness should not sleep in shared spaces.	2,3,4
9.4		There should be separate sleeping areas for men, women and couples. Women should have a separate space which they can lock.	2,3,4
10.1	Evening activities	A range of things should be provided for people to do in the evenings such as games, books, access to the Internet, TV/films.	1, 2,3,4
10.2		There should be a sitting area for people to socialise in, in addition to the sleeping area.	1,2,3,4
11.1	Smoking	Arrangements should be in place for people to smoke in the evening and in the morning.	2,3,4
11.2		Smoking should be allowed where people are in individual rooms.	1
12.1	Support to move on	An agreed system should be in place for each person to receive support to move out of the emergency accommodation – this may be provided by the emergency accommodation provider, by the referring agency or by a different organisation.	1,2,3,4
12.2		Everyone must be given information about where they can access support with housing, benefits, health, legal issues and employment/skills support.	1,2,3,4
13.1	Staffing	A safe staffing model should be put in place which is tailored to individual projects and the support needs of the people they accommodate.	1,2,3,4
13.2		Volunteers (including people with past personal experience of homelessness) should be part of the staff team.	1,2,3,4
13.3		People should be allowed to help with tasks such as setting up beds or cleaning in a supervised way to enable people to make a contribution if they wish to.	1,2,3,4
14.1	Referrals and directions	Details about who the project is for and how to access it should be openly available for everyone, including people who are rough sleeping. This includes procedures for severe cold weather.	1,2,3,4
14.2		A referral procedure should be in place which is available on request to other agencies, ideally this will be through the new MAS gateway for all types of accommodation.	1,2,3,4
14.3		Detailed and accurate maps/description of how to find projects should be provided to people being referred which include pictures of the accommodation. This includes during periods of severe cold weather.	1,2,3,4



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	Categories	Minimum Standard	Acc. Type
14.4		The cost of transport to the accommodation for the day people move in should be covered and a taxi provided where possible to assist in finding the accommodation the first time. This includes during periods of severe cold weather, during which the cost of transport into central Manchester should also be provided throughout via the provision of bus passes where the accommodation is more than 2 miles away or where people have mobility issues, this is to ensure the maximum take up of provision.	1,2,3,4
15.1	Evictions	If someone is evicted from Emergency Accommodation, then a process must be in place to ensure that a referral is made to other accommodation or to the Task and Targeting group.	1,2,3,4
16.1	Complaints	Everyone should be given a copy of the complaint's procedure on their first night.	1,2,3,4
16.2		People should be encouraged to give feedback and suggestions about the accommodation, and this should be recorded, along with any follow up action. An explanation should be given if suggestions can't be actioned.	1,2,3,4
16.3		People should be told that if they wish to make a complaint but feel they need support to do this that they can make use of an Independent Advocate who will help them to raise their issue in a constructive way.	1,2,3,4
16.4		A report about complaints around Emergency accommodation should be on the agenda of multi-agency meetings regarding Emergency Accommodation.	1,2,3,4
17.1	Health and safety	Current fire risk assessment is required.	1,2,3,4
17.2		Suitable fire equipment, with current certificates are required.	1,2,3,4
17.3		Inspection from the Fire Service is essential + all recommended actions must be taken before the emergency accommodation is opened.	1,2,3,4
17.4		Weekly fire alarm tests and monthly fire evacuation tests.	1,2,3,4
17.5		Current Health and Safety Policy + risk assessments are required.	1,2,3,4
17.6		The building must be free of trip hazards and hazardous substances.	1,2,3,4
17.7		The building must be free of vermin and damp.	1,2,3,4
17.8		An Asbestos survey is required.	1,2,3,4
17.9		Legionella assessment and appropriate checks.	1,2,3,4
17.10		An Electrical certificate and all equipment to be PAT tested.	1,2,3,4
17.11		Suitable insurance should be in place – public and employers' liability.	1,2,3,4
17.12		First aid boxes should be readily available to staff.	1,2,3,4
17.13		A qualified first aider should be on duty each night.	1,2,3,4
17.14		Appropriate arrangements should be in place for the safe disposal of sharps.	1,2,3,4
17.15		Appropriate arrangements should be in place for the safe disposal of sanitary products.	1,2,3,4
18.1	Infection control	Current infection control policy and risk assessments are required.	1,2,3,4
18.2		Infection control guidance and standard operating procedures for emergency accommodation should be followed.	1,2,3,4
18.3		Safe systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of infection should be in place; provision of training & programme of audits/checks of the environment.	1,2,3,4

# Minimum Standards for Manchester's Emergency Accommodation

	Categories	Minimum Standard	Acc. Type
18.4		Appropriate personal protective equipment should be readily available and accessible for staff and volunteers.	1,2,3,4
18.5		Appropriate arrangements should be in place for the safe management of bodily fluid spillages including the provision of bodily fluid spillage kit.	1,2,3,4
18.6		Suitable dedicated cleaning equipment should be provided. Equipment should be used, stored and managed to facilitate infection prevention and control.	1,2,3,4
19.1	Laundry	Provide a dedicated space for onsite laundry facilities (for sheets and towels) with access to hand wash basin or suitable arrangements for off site laundry. Ensure facilities and equipment provided allows the separation of dirty and cleaned laundry.	1,2,3,4
19.2		If the service allows people to use laundry facilities for their own personal items, then provide instructions on safe use of the facilities.	1,2,3,4
20.1	Operating policies	Written safeguarding policy is required.	1,2,3,4
20.2		Written whistle blowing policy is required.	1,2,3,4
20.3		Written data protection/sharing agreement.	1,2,3,4
20.4		A policy about pets (which would detail if pets are or are not allowed and under what conditions).	1,2,3,4
20.5		Food safety policy is required (including a policy around donated food) and key staff should be trained in food safety.	1,2,3,4
20.6		Standard operating procedures for infection control should be in place.	1,2,3,4
20.7		All staff should have signed to say they have read policies.	1,2,3,4
20.8		A written admissions criteria and referral route should be publicly available.	1,2,3,4
20.9		The aim for how quickly the project will try and move people into suitable longer-term accommodation, with clear time limits on how long people will be in shared rooms should be publicly available.	1,2,3,4
21.1	Management	There should be clear lines of accountability.	1,2,3,4
21.2		Financial monitoring systems should be in place.	1,2,3,4
		A suitable record system should be in place to record who stays each night.	1,2,3,4
22.1	Joint working and the development of new services	New projects should be developed in discussion with the MHP Emergency Accommodation Action Group which can provide support to ensure that projects are linked into and complement existing services. Wherever possible new services should provide single room accommodation (or rooms for couples or friends who request a preference to share).	1,2,3,4
22.2		All providers are invited to participate in the Emergency Accommodation Action Group, which aims to foster joint working and support to enable all services to meet the standards.	1,2,3,4
22.3		All providers are encouraged to make links to existing service providers in the voluntary and statutory sectors to ensure that they are providing the best possible service for the people who they are accommodating.	1,2,3,4
22.4		That services are designed, commissioned and evaluated in a process that includes people who are using the services and uses data/input from voluntary/statutory/faith-based partners to ensure responsiveness to changing needs/trends.	1,2,3,4



# Staff recruitment and training

The role of support staff (paid staff and volunteers) is crucial to providing both a safe environment and good quality support. Organisations providing Emergency Accommodation should be assisted (through shared resources and/or enough funding) to implement safe recruitment practices and high-quality training for staff. The following table outlines the minimum requirement and a menu of staff training that services may aim to provide depending on the people who use the service.

## Staff recruitment

Minimum requirements:

- References should be provided during the recruitment process
- DBS checks should be carried out for all staff working in services which support vulnerable adults

## Staff induction prior to starting work

The minimum standard staff induction should include:

- Introduction to homelessness (particularly for volunteers)
- Communication skills/dignity/respect
- Safe operating procedures
- Professional boundaries
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding
- Blood borne viruses and infection control

## Ongoing staff training

Each service to identify a training package suitable to the specific needs of their service and the people they support, which may include some or all of these courses:

Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Person centred approach/communication skills, Diffusing violence/aggression, Drug and alcohol awareness / Spice, Mental health awareness, First aid, Health and safety, Food safety, Infection control, Fire awareness, Motivational interviewing, Safe Spaces (LGBTQ awareness training), Nalaxone, Domestic violence and abuse, Mental health first aid, Trauma informed practice, Psychologically informed environments, Religious and cultural awareness training



## Manchester's Emergency Accommodation Standards

### With thanks for input from:

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To find out more and to join the MHP Emergency Accommodation Action Group email [amanda@boothcentre.org.uk](mailto:amanda@boothcentre.org.uk)