

## The process for housing care leavers

- At least six months before the care leaver's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a housing application form will be completed with the care leaver after discussing the housing options available to them, although it should be noted that a direct offer will be made. If required, a meeting will be arranged with a housing options officer to discuss potential accommodation routes. The form is then subsequently submitted to the Housing Needs team (Housing Options Officers and Allocations Officer) in addition to the pathway plan, which will be signed by the Children's social worker and care leaver. These documents will also include confirmation of eligibility of recourse to public funds and other necessary information e.g. medical forms.
- The application is then processed by the Housing Needs team and a housing file will be created. An additional risk assessment or extra information may be requested regarding support needs or special requirements.
- A tenancy sustainment package will be offered to Care Leavers who may need support to maintain their tenancy (see below).
- The Housing Needs team should be notified of the young person leaving care at least three months in advance, whenever possible. If there is a housing emergency the Homelessness Team may need to arrange temporary accommodation.
- The care leaver will be placed on a priority list for the next allocated, suitable, property in accordance to the Housing Needs' Lettings Plan.
- If there is more than one care leaver on the waiting list for social housing, the Housing Needs team will notify Social Care of the upcoming void prior to advertising the property. Social Care will then inform the Housing Needs team of the care leaver they wish to be nominated for the upcoming property.
- The offer of priority for social housing will be a 'one-off offer'. The care leaver will be taken off the priority list if the social housing property is turned down, unless there is reasonable cause, for example, poor health, or social factors.
- In tandem with the registration process, care leavers, as part of their pathway planning, will be assessed by the current semi-independent provider/ carer and social worker on behalf of the City of London, to assess the care leaver's capabilities to live independently. This information will be shared with the Housing Needs team.
- Prior to submitting a housing application form, the Housing Needs team will meet with the Social Worker and young person as part of the pathway planning to discuss independent living and housing options.
- Social Care will maintain support after the care leaver has been allocated a property for a minimum of six months, unless the care leaver has been closed to the Social Care team. The Tenancy Support Team will be introduced to the young person at point of sign up to their tenancy (or just before) and start this relationship at that point – assisting them with setting up their property, sorting utilities benefits etc.
- Regarding length of priority, care leavers will remain on the priority list until offered social housing. However, if a care leaver becomes ordinarily resident out of London for a considerable period of time, they may no longer remain a priority, however, they remain on the social housing waiting list. However if they were to receive social housing from any other provider this would end their entitlement through the care leavers route with CoL.
- If a care leaver, who has limited leave to remain, is allocated a property, they will remain on an introductory tenancy until indefinite leave to remain has been granted.

- If the tenancy is relinquished (for example due to rent arrears) it is the duty of Social Care to support the care leaver to help find an appropriate alternative if they are still open to Social Care in accordance to their guidelines (up to 21 if not in education, 25 if in education). This may include a referral to the Homelessness Team.