



Customer Home Alterations Policy

Previously Landlord Permission Policy

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POLICY SUMMARY

This policy outlines our approach to granting permission to our tenants to make alterations to their home.

1. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all tenants of EPIC Housing Limited

2. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the following aims and objectives are met:

- That we comply with all legal requirements.
- To ensure that we do not unreasonably withhold permission.
- To ensure that our assets are safeguarded.
- To ensure that we do not incur unreasonable ongoing maintenance costs.
- To help tenants to make the right choice in deciding on improvements to their home.

3. CONTEXT

We will adhere to the following principles when deciding whether to allow a tenant permission to make alterations to their home:

- We will ask tenants to put alteration and improvement requests to us in writing.
- We will not unreasonably withhold permission.
- We will consider whether the alteration/improvement is something which should be funded by the tenant or by EPIC on an individual basis. Where the business agrees to undertake the alteration, we will instruct our own contractors to carry out the works.
- We will confirm in writing with the tenant whether or not permission has been granted.
- When granting permission, we will notify the tenant of any conditions which need adhering to as part of that permission.
- There is no right of appeal when permission is refused, but tenants can make a complaint via the Complaints Policy.

We will generally grant permission where:

- The permission will enhance the property.
- The alteration will improve the quality of life for the customer.
- The alteration due to the level of permanence could be easily reversed in the future.

We may withhold permission if:

- The tenancy is an assured shorthold or licence.
- The tenant is in breach of their tenancy.
- Where the alteration would require the introduction of a service charge.
- Where the alteration would significantly alter the property.
- Where the alteration would have specific, unique, and ongoing maintenance requirements.
- Where the alteration would impact adversely upon neighbouring properties.
- Where the alteration requires planning permission.
- Where the alteration would affect future letting ability.

Where an alteration is agreed:

- Relevant works must comply with the requirements of the Party Walls Act 1996.
- All works are carried out by a competent contractor, except for minor works.
- Any relevant Building Regulations are complied with.
- We will provide, where necessary, the tenant with any relevant information such as asbestos surveys to make an informed decision.
- We post-inspect works to ensure that they have been done to the required standard.

We will deny permission to install/or:

- Any works which would alter the building subject to regulations and living standards.
- Wood or solid fuel burners.
- The removal of kitchen or bathroom extractor fans.

No permission is required to:

- Fit external gates.
 - They must match the adjacent fencing. If you are unsure check with us first.
 - The gates must open inwards, onto the property and should not be locked.
- Fit floor tiles in the bathroom or kitchen.
 - These must be non-slip tiles and sealed at the edges, to prevent any water getting underneath.
- Fit a water meter.

- Fit laminate flooring.
 - If you live in an upstairs flat, you must fit an acoustic underlay, to help prevent noise travelling to the flat downstairs.
 - We recommend you buy AC3-grade flooring which is suitable for a domestic property.
 - If you are fitting laminate flooring to the kitchen or bathroom, it must be moisture-resistant and non-slip.
 - We must be able to remove the laminate flooring without also having to remove the skirting boards.

- Replace the skirting boards or architrave.
 - Some architraves are metal and cannot be removed – if there are no screws in the frame-side of the hinge, it may be metal and should not be replaced.
 - Skirting boards/architraves must be fixed with plugs and screws. Adhesive must not be used.
 - All new woodwork should be painted or stained when finished.

- Replace light fittings, plug socket covers.
 - You must use a qualified electrician who can supply you with a safety certificate; a copy of this should be given to us.

- Change or remove internal doors.
 - If you remove any internal doors, you must keep them stored away and rehang them at the end of your tenancy unless we agree otherwise.
 - If you replace any internal doors, they must be at least of the same standard as the original doors.
 - Glass in any internal doors must be toughened, safety glass to help prevent injury if the glass is damaged.

- Kitchen and bathroom.
 - You may change the kitchen and bathroom taps.
 - You may fit an extra cupboard or move an existing one, but you must not remove cupboards.
 - If any redundant hot-water tank cupboard is empty, you may remove the doors from this to allow you to use the space.

Permission is always required to:

- Fit a shower.
- Fit a wheelchair ramp or other disability adaptations.
- Fit your own bathroom suite.
- Fit your own kitchen.
- Install a shed in the back garden.
- CCTV and external lights.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Asset Management and Building Safety is the Policy Holder for the following:

- Developing and implementing operational procedures to deliver the policy objectives.
- Embedding the policy through staff training, learning and development.
- Monitoring the overall effectiveness of the policy in terms of cost, quality, and time.
- Reporting to the Executive Team on the operational effectiveness of the policy.
- Ensuring that there are adequate checks and controls in place to ensure that this policy is enacted effectively.
- Evaluating, amending, and enhancing the delivery of the policy.

5. TRAINING

We will ensure that all staff are trained in the operational requirement of enacting this policy and accompanying procedures.

We will publicise our criteria to customers in advance and record feedback on the policy on an annual basis.

6. DATA VALIDATION, REVIEW AND MONITORING

EPIC will keep tenant and customer information gathered and obtained in accordance with the relevant legislation, including the Data Protection Act.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

We are committed to ensuring and promoting equality of opportunity for all. We are opposed to discrimination on any grounds, including race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any unjustifiable criteria. We are committed to developing a culture that values people from all sections of society and the contribution which everyone can make. We will ensure our approach to accessing properties is considerate to people's individual needs. We also adhere to the Equality Act 2010.

EPIC Housing recognises that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances and will strive to ensure no person or groups of persons is treated with injustice due to their personal circumstances. EH will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation and will make sure the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998) will be adhered to.

8. MONITORING / REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. A review may be conducted earlier if there are significant changes to either legislation or EPIC's operating practices.

9. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Landlord Permission Procedure
- Tenancy Agreement
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Rent and Service Charge Setting Policy

Version Control

Date of Review	Reviewer	Version Number	Changes	Date Next Review	Approved By
March 2023	Director of Asset and Building Safety	V1.0	Re-written	March 2026	Executive