

Antisocial behaviour

This information is for people living in Northern Ireland.

It can be frustrating and even scary to have problems with your neighbours. If you're experiencing antisocial behaviour, you can get help.

You're also responsible to make sure that you, and anyone in your home, does not take part in antisocial behaviour. This includes visitors and guests.

Examples of antisocial behaviour

Antisocial behaviour includes actions and activities that upset the community, such as:

- vandalism
- harassment
- illegal activity
- noise, including noise from animals
- drink and drug use leading to trouble
- racism, homophobia or other kinds of discrimination

Being a good neighbour

Keep your neighbourhood safe and friendly by sticking to your responsibilities. Make sure you show your neighbours the same respect you expect from them. For example:

- keep areas outside your home, such as gardens or yards, clean and safe

- take out and bring your bins back in after collection
- keep noise down, don't play loud music or talk loudly in communal areas and corridors
- tell your neighbours if you're having work done, during what hours and when it will end
- keep pets under control, don't let them wander or foul a neighbour's property

Getting help with antisocial neighbours

To deal with antisocial behaviour, start by contacting the person in charge of your property:

- for social tenants, [contact the Housing Executive or housing association](#)
- for private tenants, contact the landlord, estate agent, or [your local council](#). Housing Rights has a [free mediation service](#) for tenants and landlords in the private rented sector. Mediation can help to resolve disputes between neighbours who are private tenants.

If the tenants with antisocial behaviour live in a house in multiple occupation (HMO), the landlord must take complaints seriously. Continued antisocial behaviour complaints could lead to the property losing its HMO licence.

- you can [report antisocial behaviour in an HMO property](#)

You can also call the non-emergency police line 101 to report any antisocial behaviour.

Court action for antisocial behavior

Social landlords, the council or the police, can all take legal action to deal with antisocial behaviour.

If you're causing antisocial behaviour, you might have to comply with an:

- acceptable behaviour contract – you'll have to agree to stick to certain terms for six months or you'll be taken to court
- antisocial behaviour order – you'll have to agree to keep to certain terms or risk going to prison for up to five years. The court will only use this option once other options failed.

Depending on the situation, social landlords will usually try to deal with antisocial behaviour before going to court by:

- giving you the chance to explain if you're accused of antisocial behaviour
- mediating between you and the person affected by your antisocial behaviour, or
- mediating between you and the person causing antisocial behaviour

Private landlords do not need to try other options. They can evict you for antisocial behaviour.

Moving due to intimidation

Antisocial behaviour is not necessarily intimidation. Intimidation means there's a serious and imminent threat to your life if you stay in your home. There's help if you had to move because of intimidation.

You can get an intimidation grant of £754 if you:

- had to move because you were intimidated, and
- have gotten [intimidation points from the Housing Executive](#), and
- moved into a new settled accommodation

The grant is to help you set up your new home. You should get a cheque automatically if you are a social tenant. Otherwise you may need to request it from the Housing Executive. The Housing Executive can keep some of your grant if you owe them money for rent or other charges.

Selling your home due to intimidation

The Housing Executive might buy your home from you if you were attacked, intimidated or threatened with violence. This is called the Scheme for the Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings (SPED).

To qualify for SPED you must:

- be selling the property that was your main home when you were intimidated
- get a certificate from the Chief Constable of the PSNI confirming the risk of violence

If you think you may qualify, contact your local Housing Executive office or call [03448 920 900](tel:03448920900).

More advice

- [Illegal eviction and harassment](#)
- [Paying rent for bad housing](#)
- [Help from the council](#)