

The waiting list

This information is for people in Northern Ireland applying for social housing.

There is one waiting list for everyone wanting a social tenancy. The Housing Executive manages the waiting list. All registered housing associations in Northern Ireland use the same waiting list.

The Housing Executive has information on [how to apply to be on the waiting list](#).

People with more points are higher on the list. There is a shortage of homes, so you might have to wait a long time, even if you pass the [homelessness assessment](#).

When it is your turn on the list, the Housing Executive will offer you a home. People call this 'getting an offer.' There are ways you can improve your chances of [getting an offer](#).

Update your application once a year

To stay on the list, you must update your application once a year. You should receive a letter asking you to do so. If you do not reply to this letter, the Housing Executive will remove you from the waiting list. It's important to keep your details up to date. If your needs or situation changes, your points can change as well.

Improve your chances while on the waiting list

1. Change your areas of choice

You can increase your chances of getting an offer by changing your areas of choice. Contact the Housing Executive and ask about areas:

- with a higher turnover rate
- with less demand
- that need fewer points to get an offer

2. Look into housing for specific groups of people

Some housing associations have housing for specific groups of people. For example, older people or young families.

[Contact the ones that provide housing for your specific needs.](#)

If you are over 55, you may be able to apply for Independent Living accommodation. You can [search by council area](#) to find what schemes are available.

Some housing associations show current vacancies on their websites. Contact the association if there is a home you like.

Remember, all housing providers must follow the rules of the [selection scheme](#).

If you need support to live independently, then you might be able to get help from [Supporting People](#). You can check the Housing Executive's [directory](#) for organisations providing support.

3. Check if you can qualify for Special Acquisition of Dwellings (SAD)

SAD is when the Housing Executive buys a home for someone with very complex needs. They may do this when there is no other suitable housing.

You need all the following to qualify for SAD. You must have:

- passed the homelessness assessment or have [intimidation points](#)
- been on the waiting list for a long time
- complex needs points
- not received any [suitable offers](#)

The Housing Executive should try every other rehousing option before using SAD. This includes:

- checking existing social or private housing
- adapting an existing social or private rental to meet your needs
- checking if new developments in your areas can add a home to meet your needs

Contact your housing officer if you think this is an option for you.

Special Acquisition of Dwellings is only used in very specific cases. If you think you have a good case or any questions, start a chat with one of our advisers.