



**Ministry
of Defence**

Your Service Family Accommodation

DIO/SFA Customer Charter

This Charter lists the key responsibilities of Defence Infrastructure Organisation Service Delivery Accommodation (DIO SD Accn); contractors representing DIO; and Licensees/customers (including Service personnel and their families) in the provision of Service Family Accommodation (SFA), SFA maintenance and community living issues in the United Kingdom. This document should be read in conjunction with [JSP 464](#), which provides detailed SFA policy.

THE ALLOCATION OF SFA

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers

- Service personnel should notify DIO SD Accn Housing Allocations Service Centre (HASC) as soon as possible of changes of personal circumstances that affect their entitlement to SFA. These include notification of posting, change of family size, discharge, retirement and change of P Stat category.
- Service personnel are expected to use the electronic application form (e-1132) when applying for SFA, unless they do not have access to Defence systems due to their location or because they are on operational duty. Service personnel should book appointments and track their application using the online e-1132 system,
- Service personnel should complete the e1132 correctly, noting that disciplinary action may be taken if they knowingly submit incorrect information or withhold information that would affect their entitlement to SFA.
- Service personnel are expected to provide details of any additional requirements which will affect their housing needs on their e-1132.
- Service personnel should comply with their single Service Values and Standards in all interaction with DIO SD Accn personnel, and their contractors. In addition, families should treat DIO and contract staff with courtesy and respect.
- Service personnel should apply for SFA within 14 days of receipt of their posting order.

Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors

- If Service personnel need to telephone the Housing Allocations Service Centre (HASC) they should expect that their call should be answered in less than 2 minutes.
- Taking the applicant's top three SFA preferences into account as far as possible, apply the policy and procedures in JSP 464 fairly when allocating SFA.
- Whenever possible, offer SFA, including an address, within 15 working days of receipt of a valid application. The HASC is to confirm the address at the new duty station at least 28 days prior to the applicant's required date.
- If no suitable SFA is available, issue a non-availability certificate to start the process of sourcing Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA).
- Where appropriate, work with local military staff to minimise the difficulties incurred with short notice postings.
- DIO will treat any additional information in confidence and will take additional requirements into account when allocating SFA as much as possible.
- DIO and its representatives will treat Service personnel and their families with courtesy and respect and seek continually to improve customer service.

MOVE IN

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers

- Service personnel should arrive on time for their agreed Move In appointment.
- Service personnel should inspect the property, noting any concerns with the DIO Housing Officer. If the property falls well short of the required standard, personnel can reject the property. However, personnel should be aware of the that in these circumstances that they may be required to move into alternative accommodation, such as a hotel, until the property is prepared or an alternative found.
- Personnel living in SFA should consider taking out Licence to Occupy insurance as they are potentially liable to DIO up to a maximum of £20,000 of any damage to their SFA that is found to be caused by their actions or inactions. This is entirely separate from buildings or contents insurance – more information is available at <http://siiap.org/l2o>

Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors

- DIO staff should arrive on time for Move In appointments. In exceptional circumstances when they are delayed, such as heavy traffic or if there is an issue at an earlier appointment, they should contact the customer to advise them.
- Ensure SFA properties meet the Move-In standard on time and as defined in JSP 464.
- Take the customer on a tour of the property, pointing out relevant information, demonstrating key appliances and providing key documents. A Welcome Pack will be provided.
- If the customer rejects the property because it falls short of the required Move In standard, DIO will make alternative accommodation arrangements as soon as practically possible until the property is prepared further or an alternative found.

This document was archived on 1 December 2014 and is now out of date following the introduction of the National Housing Prime contract for Service Family Accommodation (SFA) in the UK. New details can be found at: <http://www.carillionamey.co.uk/>

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LIVING IN SFA

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should advise DIO as soon as possible of any change in circumstances, which may impact upon their compliance with the Licence to Occupy. - Service personnel are responsible for protecting their SFA property from damage; including by their family, visitors and pets. Failure to do so may make them liable for charges for damage. - Service personnel should protect their property when they are absent, including keeping the property heated adequately during cold weather to protect it from frost damage. Again, failure to protect the property may result in being charged for damage, see information about Licence to Occupy insurance above. - Service personnel should provide requisite evidence as promptly as possible for new requirements such as Additional Needs Adaptations. - Service personnel will apply to DIO if they wish to erect satellite dishes/sheds, make any changes to decoration; or run a suitable business from their SFA – undertaking to remove any additions, and make good on Move Out to reinstate the property. - Service personnel will apply for permission to keep domestic pets in SFA and will make good any damage caused by them – in addition to undertaking a deep clean and the use of an insecticide on carpets (for cats and dogs) on Move Out. - Service personnel should permit access to their SFA property for safety inspections, such as the annual Gas safety inspection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide and maintain SFA and its environment to the required standard . This includes the fabric of the building, its safety (such as mandatory inspections), maintenance and ensuring that the property is adequately protected, including lagged pipes/insulation. - Provide prompt notification to Service personnel of any changes to accommodation charges approved by local commanders. - Support local commanders in taking action against Service Personnel for a military offence to do with SFA. - Convene SFA Retention Boards promptly when requested. - Address promptly new requirements for Additional Needs Adaptations once written professional evidence has been provided, such as a medical or Occupational Therapist report. DIO can only start the process of identifying any necessary changes to the current or a future property once this evidence has been provided. - DIO will where possible and within reason give permission for encroachments such as a shed and satellite dish. - DIO will where possible grant permission for Service personnel to keep domestic pets in SFA. - When a customer fails to comply with the obligations set out in the Licence to Occupy, DIO may consider terminating the Licence with 28 days written notice.

IMPROVEMENTS AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should assist DIO and its contractors complete mandated and statutory maintenance by allowing access including for Gas Safety, Electrical, CO2 and Smoke Detectors inspections, Chimney Sweeps and Oil Checks. - Service personnel should allow access to complete improvement works in accordance with the Licence to Occupy (provided 48 hrs of notice is given) so as to not jeopardise the contractual timeframe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DIO will seek to inform local commanders and Service personnel of planned works at least 3 months in advance. - Manage improvement projects and regularly report progress to the local commanders and Service personnel. - DIO and Maintenance Contractors will provide a minimum of 48 hours advance notice for access to SFA.

RESPONSE MAINTENANCE

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should report defects to the appropriate Help Desk as soon as possible, particularly those which may affect the fabric of their SFA and lead to long term damage. - Service personnel should allow access, in accordance with their licence, for maintenance, improvements and safety checks. - Service personnel should ensure they are present in their property at the agreed appointment time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide response maintenance within the published timeframes, providing an explanation to the occupant when timescales will not be achieved. - Barring issues beyond their control, such as extreme weather, DIO and its contractors will attend planned appointments on time. - DIO contractors will seek to effect a repair on the first visit where possible. - DIO and its contractors should effectively manage and track jobs where more than one trade is required to complete a repair.

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EMERGENCY OR ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should inform DIO or the Maintenance Contractor as soon as any issue arises that makes their SFA uninhabitable and requires alternative accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a property becomes uninhabitable during normal working hours, DIO will seek to provide temporary, accommodation. Outside of normal working hours and when there is no SFA available, the Maintenance Contractor will arrange for alternative, temporary, accommodation on behalf of DIO following the agreed approvals process.

COMPLAINTS

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should report complaints to DIO and its Maintenance Contractors as promptly as possible. Complaints to DIO should be submitted by email using the <u>template</u> provided on the SFA website. Service personnel should call the relevant maintenance Helpdesk if the complaint refers to a maintenance issue/service. - Service personnel should provide clear information about the nature of the complaint and what resolution they require. - Service personnel should respond promptly when asked to complete surveys as this helps DIO and its contractors to improve the overall service provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resolve customer complaints in a timely and efficient manner in accordance with the laid down <u>complaints procedure</u> on the SFA website. - Keep the complainant informed of progress of the complaint - DIO will regularly publish key performance information each month and keep Service personnel informed of improvements and changes made to its services.

COMMUNITY AND WELFARE

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should understand their contribution towards creating a socially responsible SFA/Service community. This responsibility includes limiting anti social behaviour, keeping noise to an acceptable level, keeping communal areas free of rubbish/fly tipping and ensuring family members/pets do not cause a nuisance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond to complaints about anti-social behaviour sensitively, working closely with local commanders and welfare authorities. - DIO will seek to resolve situations for the benefit of all those concerned but may revoke a licence in the interests of the wider Service community. - Provide guidance and advice about living in Service Family Accommodation.

COMMUNAL ESTATE

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report any communal maintenance issues to the appropriate Helpdesk. - Where appropriate, get involved in self-help community and environmental initiatives, including Neighbourhood Watch schemes, recycling and avoiding litter, fly tipping, graffiti, excess speed and noise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange cleaning of communal areas for flats and maisonettes such as entrances, lifts and rubbish chutes. - Arrange the following communal maintenance services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playground Maintenance and Inspections - Pest Control - Cleaning and maintenance of areas around blocks of garages - Pre-planned estate maintenance

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CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should keep themselves up to date with advice and information provided about their SFA and obligations as a Licensee. Information is available in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SFA pages at www.gov.uk/DIO/SFA - The Defence Intranet - JSP 464 - Cascaded information such as orders/briefings - Other online sources such as the Service Family Federations and HIVE websites - Service magazines and publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop robust communication methods and proactively engage with Service personnel to keep them informed of new developments within DIO and its contractors, and offer relevant advice through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SFA pages at www.gov.uk/DIO/SFA and the Contractor SFA websites, online Home front newsletter and Defence Intranet - Information cascaded through the Chain of Command in orders and briefings - Providing relevant information for publication on websites such as the Service Family Federations and HIVE.

POLICY

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should ensure they understand their responsibilities as a Licensee as set out in the Licence to Occupy and JSP 464. - Service personnel should ensure they read and understand SFA policy as set out in JSP 464 if they have any queries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administer and provide advice on the practicality of JSPs 464 and 315 and, where required, staff suggested changes.

VACATING SFA

Responsibilities of Licensees and customers	Responsibilities of DIO SD Accn and/or contractors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service personnel should notify DIO SD Accn Housing Allocations Service Centre (HASC) as soon as practically possible of changes of personal circumstances that affect entitlement to SFA. These include notification of posting, discharge, retirement and change of P Stat category. - If, after an initial 3 months period, an entitled Licensee can terminate the Licence for any reason with 93 days written notice by writing to the HASC. However, it is accepted that in certain circumstances, such as short notice assignments where the occupant is obliged to give shorter notice, 93 days notice may not be possible. - Service personnel are expected to arrange a Pre-Move Out advisory visit so they are aware of the requirements of the Move Out standard. - Service personnel shall pay any charges for barrack damages charges within 30 days of receiving an invoice, unless they can provide suitable evidence that the charge is incorrect and that they wish to challenge the charge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that the Pre-Move Out is completed in a timely manner to allow a Customer to receive timely advice to prepare for Move Out. - Ensure that the Customer is fully aware of the action needed to meet the Move-Out standard at the Pre-Move Out, so that they have the opportunity to rectify problems to prevent charges being raised. - Raise appropriate charges promptly when a Customer fails to meet the Move-Out standard. - When a Customer is due to leave the service, issue a Notice to Vacate in good time, providing an information sheet on ways of finding other accommodation, including the role of the JSHAO, applying for council housing and housing benefits.