


**T H E  
T E N A N T  
H A N D  
B O O K**



This Tenant handbook sets out what you can expect the Council to do and what the Council expects you to do.



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# INTRODUCTION

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME YOU AS A NEW TENANT AND ARE PLEASED TO GIVE YOU A COPY OF OUR REVISED TENANT'S HANDBOOK.

***This Tenant Handbook will be very important to you as a tenant of Monaghan County Council.***

***It provides you with all the relevant information about various issues concerning your tenancy with us.***

THE TENANT HANDBOOK SETS OUT WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT THE COUNCIL TO DO AND WHAT THE COUNCIL EXPECTS YOU TO DO.

# THE TENANT HANDBOOK CONTAINS INFORMATION ON:

- ❖ PAYMENT OF RENT
- ❖ MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS TO YOUR PROPERTY
- ❖ MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS
- ❖ HEALTH & SAFETY IN YOUR HOME
- ❖ GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR RESIDENTS COMMITTEE
- ❖ CONTACT DETAILS FOR YOUR KEY STAFF IN MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL HOUSING DEPARTMENT THAT CAN SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR TENANCY
- ❖ WE HAVE ALSO INCLUDED SOME OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION THAT YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

**PLEASE KEEP THIS HANDBOOK IN A SAFE PLACE AS YOU WILL NEED TO REFER TO IT FOR INFORMATION AT A LATER DATE.**

As a new tenant of Monaghan County Council, we hope that you will enjoy your new home and play a full and active part in making your new community.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns in relation to your tenancy or general housing issues, please contact the Housing Department in Monaghan County Council.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

### MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

#### COUNTY OFFICES

Glen Road, Monaghan

Co. Monaghan

tel: **047 30500**

### CLINIC HOURS

**MONDAY – FRIDAY**

**10:00am – 12.00 pm**

e-mail: [info@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:info@monaghancoco.ie)

Pre-booked appointments can be made outside of these times Monday to Friday 9.15am - 4.30pm. The office telephone line is open from 9.15am - 1.00pm and from 1.30pm - 5.15pm. Various documents and information relating to housing can be found at [www.monaghan.ie/housing](http://www.monaghan.ie/housing)



# UNDERSTANDING YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT AND YOUR RENT

# MOVING INTO YOUR NEW HOME



# MOVING INTO YOUR NEW HOME

## PRE TENANCY INFORMATION

Before you receive the keys to your new home, all new tenants, and existing tenants transferring from one local authority property to another must make themselves familiar with your responsibilities as a council tenant.

## GETTING YOUR KEYS

***You will be presented with your keys once you have:***

- ❖ Paid your deposit.
- ❖ Completed your pre tenancy training.
- ❖ Signed your tenancy agreement.
- ❖ Returned all relevant documents.

## CHECKLIST FOR MOVING INTO YOUR NEW HOME

### 1. GAS AND ELECTRICITY

Contact the relevant service providers for gas and electricity to either set up a new account or transfer your existing account to your new address. Make sure you take a final meter reading at your old address and one in your new home to ensure you are not charged for gas and electricity that you have not used.

### 2. REFUSE COLLECTION

Contact your local refuse company to order a 'wheelie bin' or let them know of your new address if you already have a bin.

### 3. CONNECTION OF TV AND TELEPHONE

Contact the relevant service provider for connection/installation of your telephone line and/or television connection.

### 4. INSURANCE

Organise household contents insurance. Monaghan County Council will insure the structure of your new home but does not insure your furniture, clothing, personal belongings or decorations against fire, theft, vandalism and accidental damage. It is important that you take out home contents insurance.

### 5. AN POST

Make sure to inform AN POST that you have moved home and let them know your new address.

### 6. COURTESY VISIT

Once you have moved into the house, a visit by an officer will be arranged to see how you are settling in.



# YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT

***When your new home is allocated to you, it will be in a good condition. It is then your home for you to live in and enjoy.***

## TENANCY AGREEMENT

A Tenancy Agreement is a contract between you, the tenant and Monaghan County Council, the landlord. The tenancy agreement sets out in detail the conditions or rules of your tenancy. It will inform you about what is allowed and not allowed with regard to you being a tenant of Monaghan County Council. It will also inform you about the support Monaghan County Council will provide you during your tenancy.

Your Tenancy Agreement is an important legal document, so please read it carefully and make sure you fully understand what your obligations and responsibilities are.

Do not sign your Tenancy agreement if you do not fully understand the information within. Staff from the housing department will explain in detail any areas you have difficulty with. ***Make sure that you keep it in a safe place as you will use it from time to time in your tenancy.***

## SOME OF THE KEY POINTS OF YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT ARE LISTED BELOW

- 1 Your Rent must be paid in full each week.
- 2 The house in your Tenancy Agreement must be used as your main home.
- 3 You must not pass the Tenancy to anyone else.
- 4 You must not take in lodgers, or sub tenants including family members returning home or partners moving in without prior permission from Monaghan County Council.
- 5 You must give the County Council full details of your income and household circumstances. (People who live in the house with you).
- 6 You must not make any structural alterations to the property without getting written permission from Monaghan County Council.
- 7 If you will be away from your house for more than six weeks you must let the County Council know.
- 8 The property must not be used for business purposes of any kind.
- 9 You must keep the house and garden in good condition.
- 10 You must have a refuse disposal service in place. Rubbish must not be allowed to accumulate in the property, or in the garden, whether or not it is in bin bags.

- 11 You can keep a domestic pet (cat or dog - apart from dangerous dogs as identified in the agreement) so long as they don't cause nuisance to your neighbours. A maximum of two dogs and a maximum of two cats may be kept as domestic pets.
- 12 If you do have a dog, you must have a dog licence - you can buy a dog licence at any post office.
- 13 If you do have a dog, you must ensure the dog wears a collar and is kept under control at all times. Dog collars should have the owners name and contact information on it.
- 14 You are responsible for the behaviour of every person (including children) living in or visiting the property. You and your household or anyone visiting your home must not cause any annoyance, disturbance or nuisance to your neighbours.
- 15 You must give authorised staff of the County Council access to your home if repairs, maintenance or inspections need to be carried out. Staff must give you adequate notice that they intend to call to your home.
- 16 If you wish to end your tenancy you must give the County Council four weeks notice in writing; pay any outstanding rent arrears; sign a termination of tenancy agreement; and hand over your keys.

***Monaghan County Council has the right to end your tenancy and repossess your home if you do not keep to the conditions of your tenancy agreement. If Monaghan County Council ends your tenancy for not keeping to any of the conditions of your tenancy agreement you may not be re-housed or be eligible for housing related social welfare payments.***

# YOUR RENT

Monaghan County Council Housing Department will assess your rent and deal with any queries you may have about your account, such as paying your rent, dealing with arrears. Some general questions are answered below, but you can always contact the housing section at any time with any question you may have about rent. Contact details for the housing sections are at the back of this handbook.

## HOW MUCH RENT DO I PAY?

Your rent is calculated using the County Council Differential Rent Scheme. This means that your rent is calculated by looking at the amount of income coming into your household and the make up of your household (number of people/children dependents etc). If you would like more information on the Differential Rent Scheme you can contact the Housing Department.

The amount of rent you pay will be reviewed each year. You will be sent a review form. You must fill out this form and send it back to the housing section.

This process is compulsory, if you don't return the completed form you may have a penalty rent applied to your account. It is important that you complete these forms correctly each year when requested by the County Council and any other time there is a change of income or family composition in order to ensure that any such changes are reflected in your rent.

## HOW DO I PAY MY RENT?

Monaghan County Council offer many different ways to pay your rent:

- ◆ **Household Budget Scheme (direct weekly deductions from social welfare payment)**
- ◆ **Standing Order**
- ◆ **On-line payments**
- ◆ **In person at Cash Office: Cash / Laser Card / Credit Card**
- ◆ **Card payment services through An Post**

The Household Budget scheme is the recommended method of payment for those on Social Welfare. Through this scheme, the rent amount is deducted weekly from your Social Welfare payment and credited to your rent account.

*For further information on the Household Budget Scheme, contact your local housing office or post office.*

## PLEASE NOTE

Rent cannot be deducted through the Household Budget Scheme for people in receipt of the following Social Welfare payments:

- ◆ **Illness Benefit**
- ◆ **Carers Allowance**
- ◆ **State Transition Payment**
- ◆ **Family Income Supplement**

## WHAT IF MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?

You must keep the Council informed about changes in your family circumstances. This means you must tell us when someone in your house:

- ◆ **Gets a job**
- ◆ **Becomes unemployed**
- ◆ **Moves in (prior permission is needed for this)**
- ◆ **Starts claiming a social welfare payment**
- ◆ **Is born**
- ◆ **Dies**
- ◆ **Leaves home**
- ◆ **Reaches 18 years of age**

## WHAT IF I DON'T NOTIFY THE COUNCIL WHEN MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?

When the Council become aware of the change in your circumstances, your rent will be reassessed and your rent will be backdated to when your circumstances changed. This may result in rent arrears being charged to you. Also if you do not complete the rent assessment form and return it to the County Council you will be breaching your tenancy agreement and further action may be taken against you.

## WHAT IF I MISS A PAYMENT?

If you do miss a rental payment, you should contact Monaghan County Council Housing Section and make an agreement to repay the arrears as soon as possible. Missed payments are called Rent Arrears. The housing section will advise you on a Repayment Plan.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I GET INTO RENT ARREARS?

Monaghan County Council will write to you setting out the arrears on your account and ask you to make up any payments you may have missed. Monaghan County Council may ask you to come to the Housing Section offices to discuss the matter and put in place an arrangement to pay the arrears. Usually this would mean you pay your weekly rent plus an amount from your arrears every week.

*If you do not do this and the debt increases, we will take further action.*

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I GO INTO RENT ARREARS?

The Council's general policy in relation to rent arrears is that all tenants should have a clear rent account at all times. Rent accounts are monitored regularly and Monaghan County Council will take the following steps when a rent account falls into arrears and the tenant has breached the terms of the tenancy agreement.

A tenant deemed by the Council to have breached their tenancy agreement either through being involved in Anti-Social Behaviour activity, or not paying rent, or any other tenancy breach will be served with a Statutory "Tenancy Warning" as prescribed under Sections 7,8 and 9 respectively of the Housing Act 2014. This Tenancy Warning Letter may be preceded by less formal warnings. Failure by a tenant to adhere to the requirements set out in the Tenancy Warning to immediately address the breach may result in the Council initiating repossession proceedings against the tenant in the District Court.

If the Council is successful in its application to repossess the dwelling to which the tenancy agreement pertains, the tenant may be liable for the costs of such an action.

A tenant has a right to a review of a Tenancy Warning Letter should they feel aggrieved and believe the serving of same to be without merit or should they wish to challenge the factual basis of the Tenancy Warning Letter.

## PAYMENT OF ARREARS AND DEFERRED PAYMENT

During the time of warning notices, or legal proceedings the Tenant will be required to clear all arrears by stated dates. However, if the council are satisfied that the tenant is in difficulty and unable to clear the rent arrears in full an alternative payment arrangement in instalments may be agreed. This is based on a minimum amount of €10 onto the weekly rent until such time as the account arrears are cleared.

If this payment agreement is broken, the payment option will be cancelled and the procedures listed above will be resumed.

Where you are on a weekly Social Welfare Benefit Payment and have been required as part of the arrears agreement to enter into a Household Budget payment plan, where you cancel this plan it will be considered a missed payment by Monaghan County Council.

*These alternative payments arrangements will be available only once.*

## MEDIATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE TENANT

At all stages of the arrears process you will be encouraged to meet with staff from the Housing section to put in place suitable arrangements to resolve the situation.

Where considered by the Council, all appropriate support may be made available from the Councils social worker.

# LIVING IN YOUR NEW HOME AND ESTATE



# LIVING IN YOUR HOME AND YOUR ESTATE

**WHEN YOU BECOME A TENANT YOU ALSO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH YOU LIVE. THE COUNCIL ENCOURAGES YOU TO BECOME ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN YOUR ESTATE. OUTLINED BELOW ARE SOME OF THE CONDITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES YOU HAVE WITH REGARD TO YOUR HOME AND YOUR COMMUNITY.**

You must live in the property as your only home. You must let the Council know and seek permission if you are going to be away from the property for more than 6 weeks in any year.

If you are going to be away from your property for more than 6 weeks you must put in writing to the council:

- ❖ The date you intend to leave.
- ❖ The date you intend to return.
- ❖ The arrangements you have made for paying the rent and for looking after the property, including garden/s and disposal of household rubbish.
- ❖ The address and phone number where the Council can contact you.

## LOOKING AFTER THE PROPERTY – YOU MUST

- ❖ Take care of the property, including the Council's fixtures and fittings and make sure that your visitors and other people using or living in the property do the same.
- ❖ Keep your property and gardens clean, tidy and rubbish free.
- ❖ Not cause or allow any shared area or communal area of the estate to become untidy or unclean.
- ❖ Keep the inside of the property reasonably well decorated.
- ❖ Tell the Council, as soon as possible about any problem that the Council is responsible for repairing.



## LOOKING AFTER YOUR GARDEN

You are responsible for your individual garden and you are expected to keep this in a reasonable condition at all times.

There is a set minimum standard for gardens which are:

- ❖ All garden areas should be kept tidy and free of litter and rubbish.
- ❖ Grass should be kept at a reasonable height and weeds should be kept under control.
- ❖ Paths and access routes should be kept clear.
- ❖ Permission is required before putting up/removing boundary structures or fencing.

## YOU NEED WRITTEN PERMISSION TO

- ❖ Put up any type of shed (brick sheds will not normally be approved).
- ❖ Put up, remove or change a wall/fence.
- ❖ Put up gates.
- ❖ Install a patio/paving/decking/pond.
- ❖ Tarmac or concrete your driveway or outdoor area.

## IMPROVING MY HOME

Before you carry out any changes or repairs to your home you must get written permission from the County Council.

This means you **MUST** get permission in writing from the Council if you wish to carry out the following:

## CHANGES TO

### 1. THE PROPERTY

- ❖ Walls
- ❖ Stairs
- ❖ Windows
- ❖ External doors

### 2. FIXTURES AND FITTINGS OF THE PROPERTY

- ❖ Light fittings
- ❖ Central-heating boilers and radiators
- ❖ Built in wardrobes/cupboards
- ❖ Bathroom suites (sinks/baths/toilets)
- ❖ Kitchen units
- ❖ Carpets/flooring

### 3. SERVICES OF THE PROPERTY

- ❖ Heating
- ❖ Plumbing
- ❖ Electricity

## SOME EXAMPLES OF ALTERATIONS

- ❖ Knocking down walls.
- ❖ Installing a new kitchen.
- ❖ Installing a new bathroom.
- ❖ Replacing/installing an electric shower.
- ❖ Replacing/removing a fire place.
- ❖ Replacing internal and external doors and windows.
- ❖ Erection of an aerial or satellite dish on the outside of the property.
- ❖ Decorating the outside of the property.
- ❖ Installing gates, security cameras. (max 2 fixed position cameras if permitted).
- ❖ Installing an alarm system.

The Council will, within reason allow alterations/improvements to your property. If the Council do not give permission it will be made clear to you the reasons why permission is not granted. You must also get any necessary approvals such as planning permission or building regulation approval.

You will be responsible for any health and safety implications during the course of the work. All work should be carried out by qualified and experienced tradespersons.

Note: You should ensure, that any project/works/construction/maintenance/repairs to the dwelling, which arise in accordance with the Tenant's responsibilities under the Letting Agreement, or otherwise, and which are carried out by you personally, or by a Third Party/Contractor, are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

## THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ALSO APPLY

**1.** You must submit a written request to the Council (by completing a 'Tenant Permission Request Form for Alterations/Improvements'), detailing the work you want to carry out. The Council may need to carry out an inspection before we grant/decline permission.

**2.** Any agreed alterations to the property must be completed in a reasonable time. The work must be carried out by a qualified tradesperson. The work must be of good quality and be finished to an acceptable standard and be in accordance with the requirements of the constructions regulations where applicable by a competent person.

**3.** Any electrical or gas works carried out at the premises must comply with current electrical and gas regulations and must be carried out by a registered tradesperson and be confirmed by submission of RECI and RGI certificates to the Council.

**4.** When the work is complete, we may need to inspect the improvements or alterations to make sure we are happy with the standard and quality of work.

All constructions become the property of the Council and are not removable by the tenant should your tenancy end.

The Council is not liable for any loss or damage of any alterations carried out by the tenant with or without the Council's written permission.

# REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

The Council are generally responsible for the structural element of your home; you are responsible for the day to day maintenance of the house. A full outline of your responsibilities are outlined below.

## HOW TO MAKE A REPAIRS REQUEST

If an item in your home is damaged or not working you should check as to whether it is your own responsibility by referring to the sections below.

If it is our responsibility then you should report it to the housing repairs and maintenance section of the Council. You can contact the housing office by telephone or by writing to us. The contact numbers are contained in the Contacts Section at the back of this handbook.

## WHAT HAPPENS?

Upon receipt of a repair/complaint we will investigate the matter ourselves and assess firstly that we are responsible for the repair. If the repair is not our responsibility we will let you know directly.

Where a repair is our responsibility we will attend to your request as soon as possible. You should remember that we prioritise repairs dependent on how urgent the particular item of work is.

Every time you make a maintenance request, your rent will be checked. With the exception of emergencies, maintenance works or improvement works will not be carried out if your rent account is in arrears.

A repair may be your responsibility. In certain circumstances and on compassionate grounds, we may carry out the work and charge you the cost.

## REPORTING DETAILS OF FIRE OR STORM DAMAGE

Damage arising from storms, burst pipes, or fires, should be notified immediately to the Council.

## CATEGORIES OF REPAIR REQUESTS

All maintenance requests/complaints are categorised as follows

TYPE	EXAMPLE	TARGET RESPONSE TIME
<p><b>EMERGENCY</b></p> <p>Faults which could be a risk to the health and safety of the occupants or to the structure and fabric of the house.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Smoking fuse board</li> <li>&gt; Faulty socket</li> <li>&gt; Tiles falling off roofs</li> </ul>	<p>These faults will be made safe immediately and key work started within 24 hours</p>
<p><b>URGENT</b></p> <p>Repairs that need to be carried out quickly to avoid damage to the dwelling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Leaking pipes</li> <li>&gt; No water in the taps</li> <li>&gt; Burst pipes</li> </ul>	<p>Completed within 4 working days</p>
<p><b>ROUTINE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Replace fire backs</li> <li>&gt; Faulty heating system</li> </ul>	<p>Completed within 3 working weeks or may be deferred to planned maintenance</p>
<p><b>PLANNED</b></p> <p>These are low priority works that are more efficiently dealt with during the cyclical maintenance programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Leaking gutters</li> <li>&gt; Rotting fascia boards</li> <li>&gt; Replacement kitchen units</li> </ul>	<p>Annual plan of works</p>

## LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCESS TO THE PROPERTY

The Council may on occasion need to access your property to carry out repairs, other necessary maintenance works, safety checks, or house condition surveys. You must allow the Council access to the property at reasonable notice for these purposes.

If a repair team calls to your house and cannot gain access, they will leave a card with a contact number. In emergency cases, for example gas, water or sewage leaks or where the buildings or electrics are unsafe the Council can enter the property without giving you notice, whether you are there or not, in order to inspect the property and carry out repairs to deal with the emergency.

### **PROTECTING OUR STAFF**

Monaghan County Council is committed to customer care but is also concerned about the safety and wellbeing of our staff.

It is a condition of your tenancy agreement that you do not threaten or abuse staff or contracted staff, including using any bad language.

In addition to this tenants should not call to the housing office whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **INSURANCE**

The Council only insures the structure of the house. It does not insure any of the contents of the property that belong to you (e.g. furniture, decorations, improvements and personal belongings).

You are therefore advised to take out contents insurance to protect these items against damage caused by fire, water leaks, flooding, vandalism, theft burglary, criminal damage or accidental damage.

The Council is not responsible for repairs to the property caused by criminal damage. This should be covered by your insurance policy.

# WHAT DO I HAVE TO REPAIR AND MAINTAIN IN MY HOUSE?

## 1. INSIDE YOUR HOUSE

*You are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items: -*

- \* Internal plaster cracks.
- \* Kitchen/cupboard/wardrobe doors (hinges/handles/locks/catches and drawers).
- \* Floor coverings.
- \* Chimney Sweeping.
- \* Repairs due to condensation.
- \* Wall tiles.
- \* Floor tiles.
- \* Vent covers.
- \* Curtain rails and window boards.
- \* Internal woodwork such as floors, doors and skirting boards.
- \* Doors and Windows.
- \* Replacement of broken glass.
- \* External and internal locks and handles.
- \* Window stays, catches and restrictors – on occasions we may carry out these works, at the tenants cost, if original parts cannot be sourced.
- \* Draught proofing of windows and doors.
- \* Internal tiles on window sills.
- \* Letter boxes.
- \* Timberwork on windows (internal) You are responsible for painting and maintaining timber work on windows and doors once every 2 years.
- \* Window handles and locks.

## OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE

*You are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items: -*

- \* Maintenance and upkeep of gardens and hedges - that must be kept in a tidy condition.
- \* Fences and garden boundaries.
- \* Front gates, side gates or doors leading to garden areas, including their support and frames.
- \* TV aerials.
- \* Replacement of external sheds (where provided).
- \* External decoration.
- \* Cleaning of silt, leaves or other deposits from gutters.

## ELECTRICAL

*You are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items: -*

- \* Light Bulb replacement.
- \* Burglar Alarm systems.
- \* Replacement of batteries in smoke detectors.
- \* Replacement of fuses, except mains fuses.
- \* Replacement and repairs of all appliances such as cookers / washing machines / shower units if supplied. If replacement is necessary you must notify the local authority for our records.
- \* Electric appliances, fires and heaters not installed by the Council.

## DECORATION

*You are responsible for any damage to fixtures and fittings: -*

Note: If you are terminating a tenancy with the Council the walls and ceiling should be in good decorative repair ensuring complete coverage and no

streaks, runs or other defects, include for preparation of surfaces for painting by filling, sanding etc. Wall colouring should be vinyl matt emulsion washable paint colour 10.B15 (or other agreed colour to match existing). Ceilings should be vinyl matt emulsion paint colour white.

- \* Responsible for any damage to fixtures and fittings.

## PLUMBING

*You are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items: -*

- \* Cleaning gully traps.
- \* Cost of clearing of blocked house drain where a dwelling is served by a single drain and/or the apportioned cost of clearing the combined drain.
- \* Internal waste pipes unless it is a leaking trap.
- \* Taps on sink units / wash hand basins including leaking and dripping taps.
- \* Toilet bowls, except where it is cracked or leaking through wear and tear.
- \* Wash hand basins except where it is cracked and leaking through wear and tear.
- \* Baths except where it is cracked and leaking through wear and tear.
- \* Toilet cisterns and covers except if it is cracked and leaking through wear and tear.
- \* Toilet seat, chains and handles.
- \* Removal of blockages from sinks, baths, showers, shower heads and toilets.
- \* Stopper and chain for bath, sinks and basin.
- \* Venting air locks in central heating systems.
- \* Maintenance of his/her own central heating system.

- \* Maintenance of septic tank / treatment system (where provided).

## COOKING / HEATING APPLIANCES

*You are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items: -*

- \* Any cooking appliances installed by the tenant.
- \* The basket grate in all fireplaces and the replacement of glass panels in doors of room heaters/stoves. Replacement items must be suited to make and model of heater/stove.
- \* Tiles on fireplace/hearth.
- \* Maintenance of gas/oil fired burners boilers - gas/oil fired burners/boilers to be serviced once annually as a minimum. Receipts of services of burners/boilers should be kept for inspection by the County Council.
- \* Maintenance of Heat Pumps - to be serviced once annually as a minimum. Receipts of services should be kept for inspection by the County Council.
- \* Sweeping chimneys twice annually as a minimum (preferably during the heating season). Additional cleaning to be carried out dependant on the type of fuel being burnt. Receipts of chimney cleaning should be kept for inspection by the County Council.
- \* Cleaning stoves externally and internally on a weekly basis.
- \* Solid fuel/gas and other heating appliances.

## GENERAL

*You are responsible for the following items*

- \* Removal of refuse from external areas around the dwelling.
- \* Removal of all materials inside and out upon vacating the property.



## GENERAL CONDITIONS

You are responsible for the repair of any deliberate damage and if the Council undertakes repairs resulting from such damage the cost of such repairs will be charged to the tenant.

You are responsible for the repair to doors, windows, fixtures and fittings in the dwelling caused by destruction or damage by burglary, housebreaking, vandalism, larceny or theft.

You are responsible for meeting the costs of repairing any damage to the property (including fixtures and fittings) caused accidentally, deliberately (e.g. smashed windows. doors) by criminal damage or by your own neglect. The Council has the discretion to decide whether we will carry out the work (and charge you).

You must keep the property free of vermin. You are responsible for the extermination/disposal of vermin in your dwelling or garden and should make contact with a reputable pest control company to deal with the matter. You can avoid getting pest problems by not leaving out food in your back garden or overfilling your bin.

You must keep on record two years evidence of receipts for the maintenance of gas/oil fired burners, heat pumps and cleaning of chimneys for inspection by the County Council. In the event that there are issues with the operation of either the gas/oil fired burners, heat pumps or chimney flues Monaghan County Council may request an inspection of maintenance receipts. If it is found that there is no evidence of proper maintenance to the properties gas/oil fired burners, heat pump or chimney flues you the tenant will be responsible for the repair or the replacement costs of the appliance.

## GAS, ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLIES

All local authority properties have gas (where applicable), electricity and water supplies.

You must obtain permission from the Council if you wish to install a pre-pay meter.

If written permission is granted you must advise your housing authority of the supplier you will be using when you sign up for a meter.

You are responsible for replacing meter doors for electricity and gas boxes that become damaged or missing and you must contact the relevant service provider to replace it.

## SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Monaghan County Council homes are equipped with a fire blanket; mains wired smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

It is your responsibility to notify the local authority immediately if they have a defective alarm. Where the alarm is mains operated with battery back up, or solely operated by battery, the tenant must replace the battery.

Tenants must not interfere with, paint over, or remove any fitted alarm, detector or carbon monoxide detector. The tenant will be responsible for the cost of repair of fitted fire alarms, detectors or carbon monoxide detectors if it is found to have been interfered with. If you think there is an issue with the appliance firstly make sure it is not a battery issue by changing out with new. If then it is determined it is not a battery issue contact the Repair Line immediately.



# WHAT ARE THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES?

The local authority may at their discretion carry out repairs and maintenance resulting from normal wear and tear without removing the responsibilities you have in relation to the maintenance of the property.

*Outlined below are the responsibilities of the Council in respect of your home:-  
The Local Authority is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the following items:*

## STRUCTURE OF THE DWELLING

- ◆ Structural repairs of walls
- ◆ Structural repairs of ceilings
- ◆ Structural repairs of floors
- ◆ Structural repairs of skirting
- ◆ Structural repairs of staircases
- ◆ Structural repairs of the roof (including tiles/slates, ridge cappings and barges)
- ◆ Structural repairs of chimneys (external parts)
- ◆ External repairs to airbricks and ventilators
- ◆ Repairs due to damage caused by wet and dry rot
- ◆ Fire damage repairs (except redecoration)
- ◆ Replacement/repairs of fascia board and soffit

## EXTERNAL REPAIRS

*The local Authority is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of the following items:*

- ◆ Communal amenity areas.
- ◆ Lighting in communal areas.
- ◆ Communal stairs, paths, ramps and drives built by the Local Authorities.
- ◆ Maintenance (not cleaning) of gutters and downpipes. If structural repairs are needed due to lack of cleaning of gutters you the tenant will be responsible for the repair costs.
- ◆ Replacing external doors and frames and weatherboards, where needed and identified by the County Council.
- ◆ Replacing window frames and sashes where needed and identified by the County Council.
- ◆ Replacement of fences where necessary and identified by the local authority.

## ELECTRICAL REPAIRS

*The Local Authority is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of the following items: -*

- ◆ Repairs and renewal of electrical wiring.
- ◆ Repair/Replacement of sockets.
- ◆ Repairs/Replacement of ceiling roses.
- ◆ Repairs/replacement of lamp holders, light switches, immersion heaters.
- ◆ Wired mains smoke detectors installed by Monaghan Housing Authority.

## PLUMBING REPAIRS

*The Local Authority is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of the following items: -*

- ◆ Cistern and Water Storage tanks (cracked and leaking through wear and tear).

- ◆ Stopcocks, back boilers and hot water cylinders.
- ◆ Toilet cisterns, basins, taps, toilet bowls cracked or leaking (through normal wear and tear).
- ◆ External waste pipes and drains – not blockages.

## COOKING AND HEATING APPLIANCES

The Local Authority is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of the following items: -

- ◆ Defective fireplaces where fire risk exists.
- ◆ Defective solid fuel heaters.
- ◆ Fire cheeks, immersion heaters.

## EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Council will consider requests for repairs, which are your responsibility only in exceptional circumstances where it is impossible for you to carry out the work. If you are an old age pensioner, and/or you are unable to look after your house, you should contact the housing maintenance section for more assistance and advice. In these instances work may be carried out on a chargeable basis.

Note: The Council shall ensure that, any project/works/construction/maintenance/ repairs to the dwelling, which arise in accordance with its responsibilities under the Letting Agreement, and performed upon its direction, are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

# LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME



# SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

## ELECTRICITY

- ◆ Know the location of the fuse board so that circuits or power can be switched off in the case of an emergency.
- ◆ Do not overload electric sockets with appliances.
- ◆ Use properly sized fuses on all electrical appliances.
- ◆ Do not tamper with wall sockets, wall switches, the fuse board, or any part of the electric installation in the house.
- ◆ Switch off isolator switches (Disconnect switch) before moving any electrical appliance such as a fridge or washing machine.
- ◆ Make sure that electrical plugs of appliances that are not in use, are removed from wall sockets before going to bed at night.

## FIRE

- ◆ Press test button of all smoke alarms once a week to check for correct operation. Replace batteries when not working. Contact your local authority immediately if the smoke alarm is not working properly.
- ◆ It is recommended that a fire blanket and First Aid kit is stored in the kitchen.
- ◆ Standard pots or saucepans are not recommended for cooking chips due to the risk of life loss from fire. If you do use a chip pan, never leave it unattended and never overfill it.
- ◆ Never smoke in bed or when you are feeling tired.
- ◆ Close all doors to all rooms at night time.
- ◆ Be sure to keep matches, candles and lighters out of reach of children and position candles away from draughts and curtains.
- ◆ Do not leave children alone in the dwelling.
- ◆ Where small children live in the house, ensure that a securely fitted patent type child fireguard is in place at all times around lit open fireplaces, gas fires and electric fires.
- ◆ Ensure a fireguard is placed around all open fires before going to bed at night.
- ◆ Ensure that gas fires and electric fires are turned off before going to bed at night.
- ◆ Check flexible hoses regularly for signs of wear and tear.
- ◆ Clean the chimney at least twice a year.
- ◆ ***In the event of a fire, get out, stay out and dial 999 or 112 immediately.***

## GAS

- ◆ Know the location of the shut off valve for the gas supply to the boiler and cooker.
- ◆ Do not tamper in any way with gas boiler or any gas appliances.
- ◆ Make sure that wall vents are fully open at all times in rooms with open gas fires.
- ◆ **IF YOU SMELL GAS IN YOUR HOUSE**
  - \* Ensure gas appliances haven't been left on and unlit.
  - \* Don't smoke or use a naked flame.
  - \* Don't unplug or switch anything electrical on or off.
  - \* Open windows or doors.
  - \* If the appliances are off but the smell persists, turn off the gas supply at the meter and contact Bord Gáis.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS FOR BORD GÁIS 1800 20 50 50 24 HOUR LINE.  
IF YOU CANNOT GET THROUGH, PLEASE DIAL 999**

*Do not use a phone in the immediate area of the leak, either call from outside of the property or use a neighbour's phone if necessary.*

## PLUMBING

- ◆ Know the location of the stopcock in the kitchen (usually beneath the kitchen sink) and know how to turn off the water supply in the case of an emergency such as a burst pipe.
- ◆ If you have turned the water off the next thing is to try to prevent further damage to the house and your belongings – if leaking water might threaten your homes wiring, turn off your electricity at the fuse board. To reduce water damage use the simple solution – grab a bucket and put it under the leak.
- ◆ If you are going on holidays, make sure that stopcock in the kitchen is turned off before leaving the house.
- ◆ When the house is unoccupied in very cold weather make sure to leave background heat on (or set the timer to come on for a few hours each day and night) to prevent pipes freezing.

## CARBON MONOXIDE

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that has no colour, taste or smell and is produced when any fossil fuel such as gas, coal, oil or wood is burnt without enough oxygen. The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to those of flu and other virus infections and include aches, drowsiness, weakness, headaches and nausea. If anyone in the home has any of these symptoms while a gas appliance is being used, they must stop using the appliance until it has been checked and you should consult a doctor.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO AVOID CARBON MONOXIDE?

*There are lots of things you can do to prevent carbon monoxide from building up in your home.*

- ◆ You should install a carbon monoxide detector.
- ◆ You should make sure any new appliance fitted by an approved installer is serviced at least once a year.
- ◆ You should make sure that flues and chimneys are checked and swept to remove any blockages.
- ◆ You should make sure that permanent ventilation openings are kept clear.
- ◆ You can buy carbon monoxide detectors from most hardware shops and DIY stores.

## CONDENSATION IN YOUR HOME

To avoid mould forming in your home and affecting your belongings, you need to avoid creating condensation. Condensation is created when the moisture in the air from everyday living such as cooking, washing, hot baths and drying clothes reaches a cold surface (such as a wall or window) and some of the water in the air is left behind. This dampness encourages mould to grow.

*How to prevent condensation in your home*

- ◆ Minimise moisture production in the home and try to keep it to certain areas of the house (Kitchen, Bathroom, Utility room).
- ◆ Prevent moist air travelling to other rooms by keeping doors closed when showering/bathing cooking or drying clothes.
- ◆ Open windows for a short while when cooking/bathing is finished to allow the moisture to escape.
- ◆ Provide some level of constant heating. It is better to turn on your heat low, for a long time, than to turn the heat on high for a shorter time.
- ◆ Dry clothes outdoors when you can, if using a tumble dryer provide venting to the outside of the house.
- ◆ Do not dry clothes on radiators.
- ◆ When a room is in use, keep a small window and/or a trickle vents open.
- ◆ Ventilate bathrooms and kitchens (use extractor fans where fitted).
- ◆ Do not switch off, block up or tamper with any ventilation equipment provided in your home.
- ◆ Do not place furniture or belongings in front of radiators as this will stop them heating the room efficiently.
- ◆ If a tenant is found to be responsible for mould growth within their home due to misuse, the tenant will be responsible for the costs associated with mould removal.

# PETS

You are permitted to keep domestic pets only at your home, such as cats and dogs, as long as they do not become a nuisance to your neighbours. You must make sure that you keep your pets under control. A maximum of two cats or two dogs is allowed.

**You or any other person living in the property, including children and visitors must comply with the following:**

- ◆ If you have a dog it must be kept on a lead at all times once it leaves your property.
- ◆ You must not keep any dog or strain of dog under the Controlled Dogs Breeds Regulations.
- ◆ You must not keep any animal which is wild, dangerous, poisonous or livestock.
- ◆ You must not allow any animal you keep at the property to cause a nuisance to anyone in the local area, including our employees, agents or contractors.
- ◆ You must not cause a nuisance by breeding any animals or birds at the property.
- ◆ You must not allow animals to foul on footpaths or in communal areas of your estate.
- ◆ If you do not look after your pet appropriately the Council may ask you to remove it from the property.

## DANGEROUS DOGS

Certain types/breeds of dog are not allowed in Council property. These dogs as defined as 'Controlled Breeds' under the 'Control of Dogs Regulations 1998'.

These dogs include:

- **AMERICAN PIT BULL TERRIER**
- **ENGLISH BULL TERRIER**
- **STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER**
- **BULL MASTIFF**
- **DOBERMAN PINSCHER**
- **GERMAN SHEPHERD (ALSATIAN)**
- **RHODESIAN RIDGEBACK**
- **ROTTWEILER**
- **JAPANESE AKITA**
- **JAPANESE TOSA**
- **STRAINS AND CROSSES OF THESE DOGS**

*Breach of these regulations can incur a heavy fine or seizure of dogs or both.*

## DOGS LICENSING AND CONTROL

Under the 'Control of Dogs Act' 1986, every dog must have a current licence. A dog licence must be renewed annually and is available from your local Post Office. You can be prosecuted if you do not have a dog licence.

Dogs without a lead outside of your home may be considered 'strays' and may be impounded and a fine may be incurred. These dogs if not claimed within 5 days may be destroyed or disposed of. A person reclaiming a stray dog must produce a licence for the dog.

## DOG FOULING

Section 22 of the Litter Pollution Act makes it an offence for a person, in charge of a dog, who allows it to foul in a public place. Please clean up after your dog and dispose of the dirt in a suitable manner (use a paper/plastic bag.) Dog dirt is a health hazard, as it often contains round worm larvae, which causes blindness. Failure to clean up your dogs waste can lead to an **"on the spot fine"** or a summary conviction of a fine of up to €3,000.

## DOG BARKING

Please note a maximum of two dogs is allowed. Excessive dog barking causes nuisance and may be considered as anti-social behaviour. Your neighbours can make a complaint to the District Court under Noise Regulation. Before doing this you must inform the dog owner of your intention by completing a special form under the **'Control of Dogs Act 1986'**. These forms are available from Monaghan County Council.

## CATS

Your Tenancy Agreement states you can only keep pets so long as they don't cause nuisance to others. Please note a maximum of two cats is allowed. If you have cats at your property please ensure they are neutered, and that they do not cause nuisance to others. If the Council deems that your cats are causing annoyance you may be asked to remove them from the property.

## NON DOMESTIC ANIMALS

It is not permitted to keep any animal, bird or livestock that is wild, dangerous, poisonous on your property. This includes chickens, pigs, goats, donkeys and horses. Any non domestic animal will be removed from the property.

## CONTROL OF HORSES

The Local Gardaí work very closely with Monaghan County Council in the control of horses. Any horse found in an estate or public place will be impounded.



# WASTE DISPOSAL & LITTER

We are all responsible for the environment and keeping our community clean and litter free. As a tenant of the County Council you must keep your home and surrounding area clear of refuse, waste and litter free.

**There are a number of things that you can do:**

## RUBBISH & REFUSE DISPOSAL

You are responsible for getting rid of your own rubbish domestic waste on a regular basis. Payment for this service is your responsibility. The County Council may request proof that you have proper refuse disposal in place.

## ON BIN DAY

- ◆ Put your wheelie bin neatly on the footpath or designated collection point on bin collection day.
- ◆ Don't overfill your wheelie bin. Overfilled bins attract birds, cats and rodents.
- ◆ If you lose your bin it is your responsibility to purchase a replacement bin.
- ◆ A build up of rubbish is a breach of your tenancy agreement, so it is important for you to dispose of your rubbish regularly.
- ◆ A build up of rubbish can also result in further problems such as a rat and mice infestation in your home and estate.

## PEST CONTROL

Should your home become infested with mice or rats it is your responsibility to arrange pest control services in your home.

**You can help prevent mice and other rodents getting into your home by:**

- ◆ Using a wheelie bin rather than plastic sacks.
- ◆ Disposing of your refuse regularly (do not store rubbish inside or outside of the house).
- ◆ Not leaving food for dogs, cats or birds in your gardens.

If you do have a pest problem you should contact a pest control company as soon as possible.



# ENERGY SAVING TIPS FOR YOUR HEATING

*Approximately 60% of the energy used in Irish homes goes towards heating it.*



## > TURN DOWN YOUR THERMOSTAT

If you turn down the thermostat by just one degree, you can reduce your heating bill by 10%. The thermostat for your living/kitchen area should be set at 18 – 20°C, while hallways and bedrooms can be cooler, ideally between 15–18°C.



## > KEEP DOORS CLOSED

Close doors between rooms that are heated and unheated to keep the heat in.



## > DON'T BLOCK YOUR RADIATORS

Move furniture away from radiators. When trying to stay warm at home during winter be strategic about your furniture placement. Place your desk, bed or sofa around any heat sources, without blocking them.



## > AVOID DRYING CLOTHES ON YOUR RADIATORS

Avoid drying clothes on your radiators. This lowers the quantity of heat released by the radiators, so the boiler must run for longer to achieve the same room temperature, thereby using more fuel overall.



## > TACKLE ANY DRAUGHTS

Cold air can come up through the floor and from around your skirting board. Close the curtains in the evenings to keep heat in. You can purchase a relatively cheap draft stopper/draught excluder for external doors.



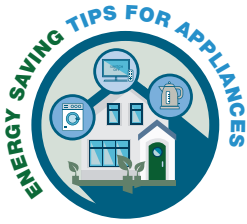
## > BLEED YOUR RADIATORS

Bleed your radiators on a regular basis. If there is air in your radiator your boiler burns longer.

## INSTALL AN IMMERSION TIMER >

Consider installing an immersion timer to ensure you have hot water only when you need it.





# ENERGY SAVING TIPS FOR YOUR APPLIANCES

*Many homes use modern automated electrical appliances which consume considerable amount of electrical power.*



## > BE WASHING MACHINE AND DISHWASHER EFFICIENT

About 90% of the energy used for washing clothes is spent on heating the water. Unless clothes are heavily stained, run your washing machine on a low temperature. Dealing with clothes that require a freshen up or light clean. Only run full loads in your washing machine and dish washer.



## > CLOTHES LINES SAVE MONEY ON DRYING

Using the clothesline is the most energy-efficient alternative for drying clothes. If you do not have adequate outdoor space or live in an apartment, place a dryer rack by an open, sunny window.



## > MANAGE YOUR FREEZER TEMPERATURE

Adjust your fridge / freezer temperature. Your fridge should be between 3-5°C and your freezer should be between -15-18°C.



## > DEFROST YOUR FREEZER EVERY SIX MONTHS

Defrost the inside of your freezer at least every six months to help it run more efficiently.

## TURN OFF APPLIANCES AT NIGHT >

Turn off all appliances at night or when not in use. They can use a lot of energy on standby mode (e.g., TV, computer).



## > CHOOSE A++ RATED APPLIANCES

When purchasing electrical devices, ensure you upgrade appliances to A+++ rated. Low cost devices may not work out cheaper over their lifetime.

## ONLY BOIL WHAT YOU NEED >

Only fill your kettle with as much water as you actually need.



# LOOKING AFTER THE ENVIRONMENT

Monaghan County Council is committed to promoting and protecting a safe and clean environment for everyone. The Environment Section of Monaghan County Council is involved in a number of Environmental awareness raising programmes with schools, businesses, community groups and resident's associations throughout the county. The Environmental Patrol Warden visits estates within the county on a regular basis.

## NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN WEEK

Each spring Monaghan County Council allocates skips to residents committees within housing estates as part of National Spring Clean week. The council also provide skips, brushes, shovels to Residents Committees who arrange their own clean-ups during the year.

## ILLEGAL DUMPING AND LITTERING

Monaghan County Council may prosecute anyone who is dumping illegally. Monaghan County Council has a confidential anti-litter free phone line for the public who may have information about illegal dumping. If you see someone engaged in illegal dumping;

**Tel: 1800 200014**

**Under the Litter Pollution Act 2003, you are breaking the law if:**

- ◆ You create litter in a public place.
- ◆ Your domestic waste (Wheelie bin/refuse sacks) is left for collection in a way that causes litter (overfilled bins, open refuse sacks).
- ◆ Litter is thrown from your car window (even if litter is thrown by someone driving or travelling in your car).
- ◆ You fail to clean up if your dog fouls in a public place.
- ◆ Disposing of your household waste in public litter bins is also an offence.

Under this law, (The Litter Pollution Act 2003) Monaghan County Council has a wide range of powers to tackle the problem of litter. Monaghan County Council can issue on the spot fines of €150 for any breaches of the Litter Pollution Acts. Non payment of these fines can lead to a criminal conviction and a further fine of up to €3,000 if convicted in the District Court.

## BACKYARD BURNING

Burning rubbish in your garden seriously damages the environment and can damage your health and the health of your family and neighbours. The "**Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal by Burning) Regulations 2009**" explicitly make the disposal of waste by uncontrolled burning an offence.

**This means that you or any tenant is not permitted to:**

- ◆ Burn any type of waste including garden waste in your house, garden, yard, sheds or garages.
- ◆ Burn household waste by use of stoves or open fires.

### **DID YOU KNOW!**

Dumping is regarded as a breach of your tenancy agreement. You put your tenancy at risk by not legally disposing of the household rubbish.

## TENANT PARTICIPATION IN ESTATE MANAGEMENT

When you become a tenant of Monaghan County Council you also become a member of a community. Monaghan County Council encourages you to get involved in your local community and is eager to hear any ideas you may have on how your estate or area can be improved.

The Estate Management section and Community and Enterprise within Monaghan County Council works alongside communities and residents committees to improve the physical and social aspects of the estate.

### **THE AIM OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT IS TO:**

- ◆ Increase the role of residents in running their estates.
- ◆ Improve relationships between residents/tenants and Monaghan County Council.
- ◆ Improve the service provided to residents by the County Council and other service providers.

## WHAT IS A RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION?

A residents association is a group/committee of people who live in the same area and work together for the good of their community. They play an important role by representing the views of their community. If you wish to get involved in your local residents committee or would like to be involved in setting up a residents committee in your area please contact the estate management section of Monaghan County Council.

## SUPPORT TO RESIDENTS COMMITTEES

Through the work of the Community and Enterprise Section of Monaghan County Council, support is given to existing and new Resident Committees.

- ◆ Setting up a Residents committee.
- ◆ Training to new and existing residents committees.
- ◆ Materials to help residents committees.
- ◆ Support in accessing funding.
- ◆ Support in developing a plan for your area.

# GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Getting along with your neighbours is an important part of community living. You should try to always respect your neighbour's privacy and not intrude on their property. You should also try to look out for your neighbours, in particular older residents. If you think any of your neighbours are in need of help or support do contact the County Council.

## HOW CAN I BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR?

- \* Welcome new neighbours and say hello to them.
- \* Respect your neighbours right to live peacefully.
- \* Do not engage in behaviour that offends or upsets others.
- \* Maintain your house and gardens.
- \* Make sure you and your visitors park cars safely and in a way that doesn't create difficulties for others.
- \* Take responsibility for your pets.
- \* Help neighbours who are unable to take their rubbish out by taking it out for them.
- \* Warn neighbours when you are going to do something particularly noisy: drilling, hammering or having a party.
- \* Keep noise, in or near your home, right down from 10pm to 8am.
- \* If you have a dog, do not leave it barking constantly in the home, or in the garden, and clear up any mess it makes.
- \* Make sure your children think about how their playing habits might affect neighbours.

Sometimes neighbours don't realise their behaviour is upsetting or disturbing others. Often the easiest way of resolving the matter is to tell your neighbour politely that something they are doing is causing you a problem. If the problem carries on, contact the housing section of Monaghan County Council who will advise you on how best to deal with the problem.



## ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Monaghan County Council takes Anti-social behaviour very seriously. Anti-social behaviour can cause a lot of distress and upset for people and can really impact on their day to day life, and on their mental and physical health. Anti-social behaviour can always cause tension and upset for the community in general.

## WHAT IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

***Anti-social behaviour can range from very extreme behaviour such as:***

- \* Drug dealing
- \* Assault
- \* Violence (including domestic violence)
- \* Harassment
- \* Racial harassment
- \* Intimidation

***The following less extreme behaviour is also regarded as Anti-social behaviour by Monaghan County Council***

- \* Frequent serious disturbances
- \* Vandalism
- \* Damage to property
- \* Making unreasonably loud noise
- \* Verbal harassment

***Problems described as nuisance problems are a breach of your tenancy agreement. This means you have broken the rules of your tenancy agreement.***

- \* Obstructing common areas or exits/entrances
- \* Disturbances or upset caused by pets
- \* Disturbances or upset caused by children/teenagers
- \* Dumping rubbish
- \* Family disputes affecting neighbours

When you become a tenant of Monaghan County Council you agree to be a responsible neighbour and to respect the peace and quiet of others. Monaghan County Council takes all reports of anti-social behaviour seriously. Unacceptable behaviour will be investigated and tenants engaging in anti-social behaviour and their families are at risk of having their home repossessed. Tenants who are evicted due to antisocial behaviour may have no right to be re-housed by the County Council.



## DEALING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

### *How does Monaghan County Council deal with Anti-Social Behaviour?*

It is important to Monaghan County Council that all tenants enjoy living in their home and their community. All tenants deserve the opportunity to live in peace and quiet. Monaghan County Council has adopted a policy in relation to nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

- \* In most cases early intervention and support, including mediation from the County Council can resolve a problem.
- \* If a problem escalates Monaghan County Council will take the appropriate action as the landlord.
- \* Monaghan County Council has the power to evict anyone who is engaged in anti-social behaviour.
- \* Tenants engaging in anti-social behaviour may face legal action which could lead to the eviction of the entire family or exclusion of a member of the family from the home and the vicinity of the home.
- \* Alternatively, a tenant may apply for an Exclusion Order against another member of his/her household who is engaging in anti-social behaviour.

### REPORTING INCIDENTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour, or are aware of someone engaging in any of the activities listed above don't assume the County Council are aware of the situation. Make a complaint to the Housing section in the County Council. In serious cases you should contact the Garda Síochána so they can take action.

When we receive your complaint, we will investigate it and if appropriate we will refer the matter to An Garda Síochána or other relevant authorities.

### ***To make a complaint about anti-social behaviour you should, in writing:***

- \* Give full details of the nature of the complaint. A complaints form is available from the Council or on the Councils website.
- \* List any times/dates the incidents took place
- \* Each report of antisocial behaviour will be assessed individually.
- \* Depending on the nature of the complaint and the evidence gathered the housing section will then decide what the best course of action is to take.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF A COMPLAINT IS MADE AGAINST ME?

You will be contacted by a staff member of the housing section to give your account of any specified incidents. Once this has been done, you will be advised what, if any, action is to be taken against you.

## HOW WE DEAL WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

To people who engage in these behaviours we do the following:

### ***Issue a verbal warning***

This is a warning to stop the nuisance or anti-social behaviour. We will issue you with a verbal warning and we will record it in your tenancy file.

### ***Issue a tenancy notification***

This is a written warning to you to stop the nuisance or anti-social behaviour.

### ***Issue a tenancy warning***

This is a legal written warning asking you to stop the nuisance or anti-social behaviour immediately. If the behaviour repeats within 12 months, we will begin the process to evict you.

### ***Issue a possession order***

This is commonly known as an eviction order, and is granted by the District Court. It gives us the power to remove you from your home, and to take back possession of the property.

### ***Issue an excluding order***

This is a court order to stop you entering a house or an entire estate for nuisance or anti-social behaviour.

### ***Please note:***

***We do not always follow this order of stages when we issue warnings. In very serious cases, we can apply to the District Court for a possession order or excluding order without giving you either a verbal or written warning first.***

## MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

If complaints are found to be made 'maliciously' the complaint will be dismissed and action may be taken against the person making the complaint.

### ***Can a tenant be re-housed if evicted from my home for anti-social behaviour?***

**No.** If you are evicted from a local authority house due to anti-social behaviour, you will be deemed as making yourself intentionally homeless and will therefore not be given another local authority house. You may not be entitled to financial support for your housing needs such as the Housing Assistance Payment.

## OWNER OCCUPIERS

If you have bought your local authority house and a member of your household is found to be causing antisocial behaviour in the estate, Monaghan County Council can apply to the court for an Exclusion Order to prevent that person from living and entering the estate.

# CHANGES IN YOUR SITUATION



# CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

In accordance with our scheme of letting priorities Monaghan County Council allocates housing in a fair way. However we understand that changes in your household or family may mean that you need to review your housing situation. Therefore it is important that you are aware of your housing options.

## CAN I TRANSFER TO OTHER COUNCIL ACCOMMODATION?

**COUNCIL TENANTS CAN APPLY TO TRANSFER TO ALTERNATIVE COUNCIL OWNED OR APPROVED HOUSING BODY ACCOMMODATION IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES:-**

- ◆ Where a transfer makes the best use of the property.
- ◆ Overcrowding.
- ◆ Where there are specific medical/compassionate reasons for a move.

*In order to qualify for a transfer the tenant should satisfy the following requirements*

- ◆ You have held the tenancy for a period of two years.
- ◆ You have a clear rent account.
- ◆ Complied with the Council's tenancy agreement and the property is in reasonable condition.
- ◆ You have no record of anti social behaviour in the last two years.

In order to apply for a transfer you must complete a housing transfer application form which is available from the Housing Section or on the website.

If you are approved for a transfer you will be added to the transfer list for the area or house of your choice. Your application for a transfer may not be approved if the Local Authority deems that you are adequately housed in your current accommodation.

It is not possible to tell you how long before you may be transferred, as it will depend on the area you choose and the availability of houses in that area.

## WILL THE COUNCIL ALTER THE HOUSE I AM IN TO SATISFY MY NEEDS?

In circumstances where adaptations to your house are required to accommodate a person with a disability to continue living in a house the Council may carry out the necessary works under the Disabled Persons Grant Scheme, subject to resources.

You must complete a Tenant Adaptations Form and submit it to the Housing Office for assessment.

If a lot of work is required to make the property more accessible, Monaghan County Council may decide transferring you to a different house is a better solution.

## WILL THE COUNCIL ADAPT MY DWELLING BECAUSE MY HOUSE IS TOO SMALL?

In exceptional circumstances where overcrowding exists, Monaghan County Council may provide additional bedroom accommodation through the provision of an extension to the existing house where:-

- ◆ The Council considers there isn't enough room in the property to house you and your family in its current state. There is insufficient room to accommodate the household within the existing form and design of the dwelling.
- ◆ Where there is room to build an extension to the house.
- ◆ Where there is an available budget to carry out building works.

In most cases if the house becomes overcrowded it will be necessary for you to be transferred to a larger house using the transfer list.

## CHANGES TO YOUR TENANCY

### NAME CHANGES

You may wish to change the name on your tenancy. You will need to contact your housing office and send in proof of your name change. This may include:

- ◆ Marriage Certificate
- ◆ Divorce Decree Absolute
- ◆ Legal Notification e.g. changes by Deed Poll

## SOLE TENANCY TO JOINT TENANCY

If you wish to change your tenancy to a joint tenancy, Monaghan County Council will give you all the information you need about having a joint tenancy. The Council may also need some extra information from you to allow them to make a decision on a joint tenancy.

## JOINT TENANCY TO SOLE TENANCY

Sometimes due to a breakdown of a relationship you may wish to change the joint tenancy to a sole tenancy. This change can only happen when both tenants put a request in writing to Monaghan County Council.

All tenants requesting a change to the tenancy will receive relevant information to ensure they understand the implications of their actions. They will be advised to take legal advice and make independent informed decisions.

## ADDITION OF NEW OCCUPANT

At some stage you may wish to allow another person to live with you in your home. To do this you must complete an addition of new occupant form and submit the form to the Housing Section.

*When assessing your request the council will take into account the following:*

1. The information you put in the “Addition of a new occupant form”.
2. If the property is suitable to meet the needs of an extra occupant or occupants.
3. That your rent account is up to date and not in any arrears.
4. Confirmation that the person applying to move into your home does not have a property elsewhere.

## SUCCESSION TO TENANCY

- > When a tenant dies, their tenancy may pass onto someone else living in the house. This process is called a succession of tenancy.
- > If a tenant dies and the tenancy is a joint tenancy, the remaining tenant will continue as tenant taking on sole rights and responsibilities of the tenancy.
- > If there is no spouse/partner to succeed the tenancy, an adult member of the family may be allowed to succeed the tenancy. This is provided that he or she was living in the property with the deceased or departed tenant for a twelve-month period prior to and up to the date of the death or departure. They must have also been declared on the rent account.
- > You should not assume that you have an automatic right to succeed a tenancy and you must contact the housing office as soon as possible and complete a Succession of Tenancy Form and Housing Support Form.

### YOU SHOULD NOTE THAT

- ◆ Unless you are the spouse or partner of the tenant who has died, you may not have right to stay in your current home if it is larger than you need. To ensure the best use of the housing stock the Council may offer you alternative accommodation suitable to your housing needs.
- ◆ If two or more persons qualify to succeed a tenancy, an agreement may be reached between the parties as to who should succeed between those two parties. If no agreement can be made the Council will decide.

# BUYING YOUR HOME

## TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME

The Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016 allows Social Housing Tenants to purchase the dwelling in which they reside from the Council at a discounted price. The purchaser must be the tenant of the house and the house must be available for sale under the scheme. Please contact the Housing Section in your Local Authority for more information.

## HOUSE PURCHASE LOANS

If you cannot get a loan from a Bank or Building Society the Council can consider you for an Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan. This is a loan that the Council can arrange that allows you to purchase a house of your choice. The loan is dependent on household income, credit history and personal circumstances. Please contact the Housing Section in your Local Authority for more information.

## MOVING ON AND ENDING YOUR TENANCY

You may decide you wish to end your tenancy with Monaghan County Council. Before you do end your tenancy it is important to speak to a member of staff in the housing section who can give you all the information you need to make a final decision.

In deciding to leave a Council property you are giving up all rights and entitlements to the property. Any further housing needs will not be the responsibility of the Council.

*If you do decide to end your tenancy the following procedures will apply:-*

- ◆ Four weeks written notice must be given stating that you wish to end your tenancy. This must be on a formal **“Tenancy Termination Form”** which can be obtained from the Housing Section. You should include in your notification the date you intend to leave the property.

If you give shorter notice than this, or hand your keys in early, it may result in being charged rent for the full period.

- ◆ Arrange with the housing office for a pre-vacancy house inspection. The officer will inspect the property and outline to you what works are needed to be carried out, and the items that are your responsibility to repair, prior to you vacating the property.
- ◆ You must repair or replace any parts of your home that have been damaged whilst you have been living there.
- ◆ You must pay your rent and other charges owing on your property up until the end of your tenancy.
- ◆ You must clear out your property and remove all unwanted furniture before you move.
- ◆ You must return all keys belonging to the property to the Council on the day the tenancy ends.

# MOVING OUT CHECKLIST

1.	Give four weeks written notice.		
2.	Pay all rent and charges up to the day the tenancy ends.		
3.	Make sure all repairs are carried out.		
4.	Leave the property clean and tidy.		
5.	Take final readings from gas and electricity meters and tell suppliers the date you are moving, your new address and final readings.		
6.	All open gas supplies to be capped off by a registered gas fitter.		
7.	The water is turned off at the stopcock.		
8.	All windows and doors are closed and secure, all keys are returned including keys for window locks.		
9.	Everyone must leave the property with you		
10.	Deactivation codes - if you have a Pre-Paid Meter please make arrangements for its deactivation.		

If you don't complete all the items on this checklist you will be liable for any charges including rent arrears. Monaghan County Council will pursue all arrears owed by former tenants.

If you fail to complete the moving out check list you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement and this could have an impact on any future application for housing you may make to Monaghan County Council or any other County Council.



# LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

It is important to Monaghan County Council as a landlord that tenants are safe, well and happy in their home and environment. However from time to time there are things that can get on top of you and make life that little more difficult. There are a few things you can do that can help to lift your mood.

## EAT WELL

There are strong links between what we eat and how we feel – for example, caffeine and sugar can have an immediate effect. But food can also have a long-lasting effect on your mental health.

## KEEP IN TOUCH

Friends and family can make you feel included and cared for. They can offer different views from whatever's going on inside your own head. They can help keep you active, keep you grounded and help you solve practical problems.

## TAKE A BREAK

A change of scene or a change of pace is good for your mental health. It could be a five-minute pause from cleaning your kitchen, a half-hour lunch break at work or a weekend exploring somewhere new. A few minutes can be enough to de-stress you.

## KEEP ACTIVE

Experts believe exercise releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good. Regular exercise can boost your self-esteem and help you concentrate, sleep, look and feel better. Exercise also keeps the brain and your other vital organs healthy.

## DRINK SENSIBLY

We often drink alcohol to change our mood. Some people drink to deal with fear or loneliness, but the effect is only temporary.

## ASK FOR HELP

None of us are superhuman. We all sometimes get tired or overwhelmed by how we feel or when things go wrong. If things are getting too much for you and you feel you can't cope, ask for help.

## DO SOMETHING YOU'RE GOOD AT

What do you love doing? What activities can you lose yourself in? What did you love doing in the past? Enjoying yourself helps beat stress. Doing an activity you enjoy probably means you're good at it and achieving something boosts your self-esteem.

## TALK ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL

Talking about your feelings can help you stay in good mental health and deal with times when you feel troubled. It's part of taking charge of your wellbeing and doing what you can to stay healthy.

**MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES FOR THE PAST NUMBER OF YEARS AND WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO GET HELP IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS FEELING LOW. THERE IS HELP AVAILABLE, ASK FOR HELP.**

## MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

### NEED HELP NOW? IMMEDIATE HELP

If you are worried that you or someone you know is at risk of suicide or self harm, you should immediately contact your local doctor or go to the Accident and Emergency department of the nearest hospital.

### TALK TO SOMEONE NOW

If you need to talk to someone NOW call the **Samaritans (Free call 116123)** for confidential, non-judgemental support 24 hours a day. No matter what problems you are facing or where you are, there will be someone available to offer you support. Calls may not be answered immediately but please keep trying until someone answers.

You can access support and information on where to go for help in a crisis. You can call the **HSE Live number at: 1800 111 888** or log on to: **[www.yourmentalhealth.ie](http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie)**

# A LIST OF USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS



# LIST OF USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

## SERVICE/ORGANISATION

## CONTACT DETAILS

### MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL ..... 047 30500  
..... [info@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:info@monaghancoco.ie)

### GENERAL HOUSING QUERIES

Ballybay / Clones District..... 047 30581  
Carrickmacross / Castleblayney District ..... 047 30529  
Monaghan District ..... 047 73799

### REPAIRS /MAINTENANCE

All districts ..... 047 30515  
or email us at: [housingrepairs@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:housingrepairs@monaghancoco.ie)

### EMERGENCY/OUT OF HOURS NUMBERS

*Emergency repair issues which occur outside of office hours may be referred to the telephone numbers listed below. Please note that a charge may be incurred by the tenant if an emergency call out occurs in a case that is deemed not to be an emergency.*

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL ..... 1800 121 121

## LOCAL SERVICES

CARRICKMACROSS GARDA STATION ..... 042 969 0190  
CLONES GARDA STATION ..... 047 51028  
CASTLEBLAYNEY GARDA STATION ..... 042 974 7900  
MONAGHAN GARDA STATION ..... 047 77200  
NORTH EAST DOCTOR ON CALL ..... 1800 777 911  
IRISH WATER ..... 1800 278 278  
CITIZENS INFORMATION ..... 0818 07 6230  
DOG WARDEN ..... 087 662 3876  
ILLEGAL DUMPING ..... 1800 200 014  
FIRE SERVICE ..... 999 / 112

## SOCIAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICES	<i>www.welfare.ie</i>
MONAGHAN	047 30170
CARRICKMACROSS	042 969 0080
CASTLEBLAYNEY	042 979 5050
CLONES	047 20020
CITIZENS INFORMATION	0818 07 6230 <i>www.citizensinformation.ie</i>
HSE (HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE) <i>Rooskey Monaghan</i>	047 30400

## HELP, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

THE SAMARITANS (24 HOUR HELPLINE)	(116 123)
MONAGHAN MONEY ADVICE & BUDGETING SERVICE	0818 072 690 <i>www.mabs.ie</i>
CITIZENS INFORMATION	0818 07 6230 <i>www.citizensinformation.ie</i>
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL	01 884 8200

## OTHER LOCAL SERVICES

TEARMANN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE	047 72311
ESB EMERGENCY NUMBER	1800 372 999
BORD GÁIS EMERGENCY	1800 20 50 50

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

**HOUSING DEPARTMENT, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL, GLEN ROAD, MONAGHAN**  
047 30500 / *info@monaghancoco.ie*





design: www.ph7.ie



MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL  
COMHAIRLE CONTAE MHUINEACHÁIN

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Housing Department, Monaghan County Council,  
Glen Road, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan, H18 YT50.

tel: **047 30500** | email: [tenants@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:tenants@monaghancoco.ie)