

Policy	Housing Referrals, Assessments and Allocation policy		
Department	Young People Services and Housing Team		
Approval Date	Mar 2025	Issue Date	Dec 2024
Last Amended Date	Nov 2024	Next Review Date	Nov 2027
Other Relevant Policy(ies)			

1. Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for the referral and allocation process for supported housing within the YMCA London City and North (YLCAN). This policy aims to ensure fair and transparent procedures while addressing the diverse needs of individuals seeking support. Additionally, this policy includes a risk appendix focusing on low to medium support needs.

2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for supported housing within YMCA LCN, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Aged 16 or above but not older than 35 years.
- Demonstrated need for support related to housing.
- Low to medium support needs (as defined in the risk appendix).
- Willingness to actively engage in a support plan and work towards independent living.

3. Referral Process

Referrals to YMCA LCN supported housing can be made by:

- Local Authorities.
- Social Service Agencies.
- Health and Social Care providers.
- Charity and Voluntary Organizations
- Referrals must include the following information:
 - Basic demographic details.
 - Current housing situation.
 - Brief assessment of support needs.
 - Relevant medical or mental health information.
 - Consent to share signed.

- Photo ID.
- Bank statements / pay slips
- Proof of benefits.

4. Assessment and Allocation

Upon receiving a referral, YMCA LCAN will conduct a comprehensive assessment (**including a risk assessment**) to determine the individual's support needs. The assessment may include interviews and collaboration with relevant professionals. Allocation decisions will be made based on the following considerations:

- Degree of support required (low to medium, as defined in the risk appendix).
- Availability of suitable housing units.
- Urgency of the individual's situation.
- Commitment to actively engage in support services.
- Care leavers with urgent housing need and meet Ofsted guidelines

Referrals and Outcome Assessor will

- Liaise with the referral agent if more information is required and inform the referral agent if the application is accepted/refused/rejected.
- Contact the applicant to arrange a date and time for an assessment (please document all attempts to contact applicant – a maximum of three attempts), explain the purpose of the assessment and that it will take between one and two hours.
- Inform the applicant that proof of identification and income together with one week's personal service charge must be brought to the assessment. If applicant unable to make payment, the referral agency must consent to pay the initial service charge via a raised invoice from YMCA, LCAN (permission to waive the personal charge may be given by the Housing Manager)
- Explain to the applicant that a photo will need to be taken in keeping with YMCA, LCAN's Safeguarding and Security policies (should the applicant refuse this, the referral may be refused)
- Extend an invitation of applicant's referral agency to be involved in the initial assessment. Keep the referral agency up to date with every step in the process, from initial contact to assessment booked and outcome of the assessment.
- One appointment will be scheduled for each applicant, should the applicant fail to arrive for the assessment without prior notice they may be moved to the bottom of the waiting list, at the discretion of the Housing Manager.
- Inform the applicant that a photo will need to be taken for security purposes (should

the applicant refuse this, the referral will be refused)

- Encourage invitation of partner agencies / others involved in the person's support to the assessment interview.
- Inform the referral agent if an assessment has been booked for an applicant and then confirm the assessment's outcome.
- One appointment will be scheduled for each applicant, should the applicant fail to arrive for the assessment without prior notice they may be moved to the bottom of the waiting list, at the discretion of the Referral and Outcome Assessor.

5. Support Plan

Once housed, young people will work collaboratively with YMCA LCAN staff to develop a personalised support plan. This plan will outline goals, support services, and milestones for achieving greater independence.

Definitions

Risk Appendix: Low to Medium Support Needs

Low Support Needs: Individuals with low support needs typically require minimal assistance. This may include periodic check-ins, assistance with budgeting, and access to community resources.

Medium Support Needs: Individuals with medium support needs may require more frequent assistance with daily living activities, skill development, and coordination of additional support services. This may involve regular support sessions and close collaboration with healthcare providers/ social services.

End of Policy

This policy is subject to periodic review and updates. Any amendments will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Procedure

YMCA LCAN Supported Housing Referral, Assessment and Allocation

1. Referral Submission

1.1. Local authorities, social service agencies, and health care providers are eligible to submit referrals for individuals seeking supported housing within YMCA LCAN.

1.2. Referrals must include the following information:

- Basic demographic details of the individual.
- Current housing situation.
- Brief assessment of the individual's support needs.
- Relevant medical or mental health information.
- Access to public funds/ benefits.

1.3. Referrals can be submitted through the designated online portal to the YMCA LCAN Referrals & Outcome Assessment team.

2. Initial Review

2.1. Upon receipt of a referral, the Referrals & Outcome Assessor (ROA) will conduct an initial review to ensure all required information is provided.

2.2. Incomplete referrals will be returned to the referring agency with a request for the necessary details.

3. Comprehensive Assessment

3.1. Complete referrals will undergo a comprehensive assessment by YMCA LCAN staff to determine the individual's support needs.

3.2. The assessment may include interviews and collaboration with relevant professionals. Structure of the assessment: first assessment and an initial risk assessment.

4. Allocation Decision

4.1. ROA will communicate the decision to the referring agency and the individual in a timely manner. In addition, ROA will communicate admission to respective project Housing & Security Team, and to Income Team.

5. Support Planning

5.1. All new residents will be allocated a Housing Options Officer (HOO), and they will be required to collaborate with YMCA LCAN staff to develop a personalized support plan.

5.2. The support plan will outline goals, support services, and milestones for achieving greater independence.

6. Periodic Review

6.1. The support plan will be periodically reviewed by the allocated HOO to ensure its effectiveness.

6.2. Reviews may include assessments of progress, adjustments to the support plan, and consultation with the individual.

7. Policy Review

7.1. This procedure is aligned with the YMCA LCAN Supported Housing Referral, Assessment and Allocation Policy.

7.2. The procedure will be subject to periodic review, and updates will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 - IDENTIFYING THE RISKS

Appendix 2 - MEASURING THE RISKS

Appendix 1 - IDENTIFYING THE RISKS

What indicates that there is a risk? Consider factors such as: - • History of violence, arson, sexual offences • Inappropriate sexual behaviour • Self-harm/attempted suicide • 'Accidental' dangerous behaviour (e.g. due to falling, poor use of cooking equipment) • Alcohol misuse • Drug/medication misuse • Other substance misuse • Persistent provocative behaviour (provoking verbal or physical attack) • Harassment • Presence of a weapon • Lack of awareness of personal safety (e.g. road sense, fire risks, food hygiene) • Likelihood of perceived vulnerability by other people • Self-neglect • Severe anger management difficulties Are there any other relevant pointers? • Significant criminal offences • Psychiatric admissions under Mental Health Act • User is subject of care programme approach or s117 of Mental Health Act or supervised discharge • Specific psychiatric diagnosis • Prescribed medication: use/misuse, compliance, type, appropriateness. • Client is already known personally to staff that would be involved in their care if accepted. Other factors • Attitude to authority: compliant/defiant	Who poses the risk(s)? • The resident • Resident's friend, partner, or family member • Other members of public • A combination of the above • Environment e.g. wheelchair access <i>Is there a 'general' risk or are there specific individuals who pose a greater risk than others?</i> Who is at risk? • User them self • Other users • YMCA staff and volunteers • Staff from other agencies • Contractors • Neighbours • General public For any of the above, is the risk...? • everyone/anyone • specific individual(s) • property Are new or less experienced staff more/less at risk? Are a particular group of staff more/less at risk (e.g. project worker, finance worker)? Are a particular group of visitors more/less at risk (e.g. family members, friends, and external agency workers)? Is the service user more/less at risk (e.g. City YMCA Staff, family, friends, and external agency workers)?
---	---

• General level of insight into risk/need; • Acceptance/denial of issues and/or risk factors;	
--	--

Appendix 2 - MEASURING THE RISKS

This scoring system exists to help the staff member assess and articulate the level of risk posed by or to the person. The criteria are a guide, but the list is by no means exhaustive for each area. Some or all the criteria may be deemed sufficient to make a clear decision.

The following is an assessors guide to each risk area stating the criteria for each level of risk. Please note.

- **Level 3** is classed as high-risk and will result in a rejection of the application (Reject).
- **Level 2** is medium risk meaning the applicant will need to have a Second Interview including a full Assessment, after which a decision to accept or reject will be made (Second).
- **Level 1** is deemed as low risk; the applicant will be accepted for accommodation (Accept).

Risk Area	Level	Criteria	Action
Drugs	3	• Selling or distribution of drugs • Current misuse of Class A or • Clean of Class A for less than twelve months. • Not engaged fully with relevant agency.	Reject
	2	• Clean for less than three years or currently taking Class B. • May be engaged with relevant agency and can evidence this	Second
	1	• No issues with drugs • Clean for over three years.	Accept
Alcohol	3	• Currently addicted to alcohol or abstinent for less than six months • Not engaged with relevant agency • Has no or little insight.	Reject

	2	• Abstinent for less than three years. • Maybe engaged with relevant agency • Has insight.	Second
	1	• No issue with alcohol • Abstinent for over three years • Has full insight into alcohol issues	Accept
Mental health	3	• Currently experiencing or within last year, severe mental health issues including visual and auditory hallucinations, severe depression. • May have experienced voluntary or compulsory sectioning. • Engaged with relevant agency and can evidence this	Reject
	2	• Currently experiencing low to moderate mental health issues • Engaged with relevant agency and can evidence this	Second
	1	• No experience of mental health issues • Suffering low level depression or similar	Accept
Arson	3	• Conviction or involvement in arson	Reject
	1	• No conviction or involvement in arson	Accept
Violence /aggression /sexual offences	3	• Conviction for serious violent offence such as murder, manslaughter, GBH, offences involving firearms. • Conviction of a serious sexual offence including rape and indecent assault in last 10 years. • Lesser crime committed but has no insight	Reject
	2	• Conviction for less serious violent offence in last five years including ABH or wounding. • Conviction of a serious sexual offence including rape and indecent assault over 10 years ago. • Less serious offence such as indecent exposure. • Has some insight, accepts some responsibility for previous actions • Has been the victim of a serious violent or sexual offence	Second

		Has been the subject of a Court Referral Order	
	1	- Conviction for less serious violent offence over five years ago including, ABH or wounding, or no history of violence. - No history of sexual offences. - Has full insight, has accepted responsibility for previous violent behaviour, can explain warning signs and triggers - Clean criminal record	Accept
Health	3	- Currently experiencing disease that is or could become contagious during normal period of stay such as TB or Hepatitis B. - Needs support taking medication	Reject
	1	Does not have a contagious disease	Accept
Suicide	3	- Has attempted suicide in last 12 months - Is not or has not been engaged with relevant agencies - Has no insight into issues related to suicide attempts	Reject
	2	- Has attempted suicide in last two years - Has experience of close friends/relations committing or attempting to commit suicide - Has some insight into issues related to suicide attempts - Is or has been fully engaged with relevant agencies and can evidence this. - Has appropriate coping mechanisms in place	Second
	1	- Has attempted suicide over two years ago - Has full insight into issues related to suicide attempts and has reliable coping mechanisms in place	Accept
Self-Harm	3	Has self-harmed in last 12 months causing hospitalisation	Reject

		Is not or has not been fully engaged with relevant agencies	
	2	- Has self-harmed in last three years - Has experience of close friends/relations self-harming - Is or has been fully engaged with relevant agencies and can evidence this. - Has some insight into issues related to self-harm - Has appropriate coping mechanisms in place	Second
	1	- Has self-harmed over three years ago - Has full insight into issues related to self-harm	Accept
Children	3	Has conviction for offences against children	Reject
	2	Has been involved in child protection investigations	Second
	1	No convictions or involvement in child protection investigations	Accept
Physical disability	3	Requires high level of support	Reject
	2	Further investigation of needs of applicant required	Second
	1	Does not require high level of support	Accept
Learning/ Literacy	3	Requires high level of support	Reject
	2	Further investigation of needs of applicant required	Second
	1	Does not require high level of support	Accept
Eviction from Previous Hostel	3	Evicted from previous hostel for violence against other residents, selling drugs and serious breach of hostel rules.	Reject
	2	Evicted from hostel due to rent arrears or behaviour	Second
	1	Moving on from previous hostel	Accept
Presentation	3	- Presentation does not match answers given by applicant in an obvious and verifiable way - Major contradiction between referral information from partner agency and applicants own answers - Assessor perceives applicant would be vulnerable to serious abuse from others. - Assessor perceives applicant would pose a risk to other residents and staff.	Reject

		Client breaches Association's Health and Safety policy with regard to other identified risks.	
	2	Seeming contradiction between presentation and answers that requires further investigation.	Second
	1	No contradictions found.	Accept