

A guide for autistic and/or learning disabled people in Greater Manchester who need help due to threat of eviction



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Thank you to Citizen's Advice and Shelter as most of the information in this leaflet has been taken from www.citizensadvice.org.uk and www.Shelter.org.uk

Introduction

Eviction is a stressful and frightening process for most people and it can be hard to understand what support is available.

This resource has been developed by the Greater Manchester Autism and Learning Disability Housing Implementation group. The group is made up of autistic people and their families and professionals from many different sectors including housing. The purpose of the resource is to support autistic people and people with learning disabilities to identify support if they are under threat of an eviction.

Although we have linked autistic and learning disabled people together in this document, it is important to state that the needs of the two groups are often very different and we strongly advise that the support offered is person- centred and that assumptions are not made about needs and adjustments.

There are five documents dealing with different aspects of support on housing for autistic and learning disabled people .

This one is for autistic and learning disabled people who are facing threat of eviction. The others are as follows.

A guide to autistic and learning disabled people who need housing advice

A guide to Private Rented Sector Landlords on working with autistic and or learning disabled tenants

A guide to Council/Housing Association Landlords on working with autistic and learning disabled tenants

A guide to Housing Advice organisations on customers with autism or learning disabilities.

All the guides can be found on the GMAC website www.autismgm.org.uk

Mari Saeki- On behalf of GM LD and Autism Implementation group,
September 2020

Eviction

If you want to stay living in your rented home but your landlord wants you to move out they will ask you to leave either by telling you face to face, over the phone or in writing. If you don't move out they may start a process to **evict** you. This means to apply to court to force you to leave the house or flat you are renting from them.

We suggest the first thing you do is show your letter about eviction to one of the organisations mentioned on p 7- 13. **Do not move out until you have had some advice about this letter and what to do about it. You have a number of months to try to do something.**

If you have a diagnosis of autism or a learning disability, it is really important to mention this to whoever is helping you because otherwise people may not understand that they should be making a reasonable adjustment for you (see p6 about what those are). The council might also be able to advise you with other issues such as debt and mediation.

What are the steps?

You can only be evicted if your landlord has followed the proper steps. They must:

1. give you a valid section 21 or section 8 notice
2. get a possession order from court if you haven't left by the date on the section 21 or section 8 notice
3. ask the court for a warrant of possession if you haven't left by the date on the possession order
4. get an eviction warrant from the court - this means bailiffs can make you leave your home

What is a Section 21 notice?

A section 21 is a legal notice that a landlord can give to start the process to end an assured shorthold tenancy. Most private renters have this type of tenancy.

A section 21 gives you notice to leave your home. But your tenancy continues if you stay past the date in the notice.

Your landlord will then have to apply to court if they still want you to leave.

What is a section 8 notice?

A section 8 notice is a landlord's first step towards ending either:

- an assured shorthold tenancy
- an assured tenancy

Your landlord needs a legal reason to use a section 8 notice called a 'ground for possession'. They must prove the ground in court and may use more than one ground.

Your landlord can't evict you without a court order. The process takes time and sometimes the court can stop an eviction. You should get legal advice on your situation.

A section 8 notice lapses a year after you're given it unless your landlord starts court action within this time.

Keep talking to your landlord. They may delay court action if you can get back on track with your rent and pay off any arrears.

If your landlord hasn't gone to court yet, it's worth checking (or asking someone else to check), your section 21 notice or checking your section 8 notice first to make sure it's valid.

You might be able to challenge your eviction if your landlord has discriminated against you, for example if they're evicting you:

- because of who you are

- in a way that's more difficult for you compared with other people
- for a reason that's connected to your disability
- because you complained about discrimination before

It's worth asking the council if they can help with this.

If you have nowhere to stay tonight

Your local council might be able to give you emergency housing straight away, for example, if you've got health problems or you've got children that live with you.

You can get short-term emergency housing straight away if the council think all these things might apply:

- you're eligible for help
- you're legally homeless
- you're in priority need

If you're threatened with homelessness you can't get emergency housing, but if you later become legally homeless you might be able to get it.

If you're offered emergency housing you could be placed in a bed and breakfast or hostel while the council decides if you qualify for longer-term housing.

If you can't get emergency housing your local council might be able help you find a hostel or night shelter.

There is more information about your rights in the links below:

Shelter UK:

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/eviction

Citizens Advice:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-privately/ending-your-tenancy/get-help-if-youre-being-evicted-england/>

Reasonable Adjustments

If you are autistic or have a learning disability, you have a right to be protected under **The Equality Act 2010**. These protections are called **'reasonable adjustments'**. Any organisation who is trying to support you needs to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that you are not at a disadvantage or discriminated against

It is important that you tell people about your diagnosis as if the housing advice organisations or landlords do not know you have this diagnosis, they may not know that they need to make any reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments can be changes that would:

- Help you be able to look for a home
- Help you to understand how to have and keep a tenancy
- Changes in how your landlord does things
- Changes to your tenancy agreement

- They could also be changes like **equipment** or getting some extra help from someone in your home.

The landlord might have to make adjustments if you being autistic or learning disabled means that it is harder for you to find a property or live in the property compared to someone who is not autistic or leaning disabled.

To find out more about reasonable adjustments you could ask for with regard to your housing needs, visit the Citizens Advice website:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/discrimination-in-housing/taking-action/asking-for-adjustments-to-help-with-your-disability/>

Example of Reasonable Adjustments you might ask for

Here are a list of examples of reasonable adjustments you could ask for. Everyone is different so these will not be the same for everyone:

- To be able to communicate via the best communication method for you. This may include email, text, phone or face to face, whichever form of communication works best. The autistic or learning disabled person or supporter, may need to explain which form of communication you prefer.
- To make sure that you have understood what is being said/ explained. The staff member need to check understanding and not make assumptions.
- To have a named contact or a consistent support.
- To be shown understanding about hypersensitivity to certain things like noise and light which may lead the autistic or learning disabled person to become very stressed or anxious.
- To avoid automated letters and have information communicated in a more person- centred way.
- To consider some kind of mediation if there are issues with neighbours lading to protential conflict
- To have rules about tenancies clearly explained and if necessary have provision of an accessible tenancy agreement.
- To explain the more informal rules about the tenancies such as where Bins should be kept, and what constitutes an unacceptable level of noise.
- Allow longer transition periods for autistic and learning disabled people

- To allow the autistic or learning disabled person to communicate though a support person or family members if needed
- If you feel it would calm you down, to ask about opening a window for fresh air. This is often better than just air conditioning because of the noise.

Charity	Website
Citizens Advice	www.citizensadvice.org.uk/
Housing LIN	www.housinglin.org.uk/
Learning Disability England	www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/
MENCAP Learning disability charity	www.mencap.org.uk/
The National Autistic Society	www.autism.org.uk/
Shelter	www.shelter.org.uk/

- Ask if you can bring you own drink when in a meeting as it may also help you to feel less stressed.
- Ask if you can have a longer appointment or two shorter appointments if it would help you process better
- Ask if any of the information is in a visual format including videos

Useful Information and sources of help

National information

General support and advice organisations in Greater Manchester for autistic and learning disabled people

Organisation	Contact
Advocacy together Hub- Rochdale	01706 645 830 / 07867 459 340 rochdaleadvocacy@together-uk.org www.together-uk.org/projects/advocacy-hub-rochdale/
<u>Autizma</u>	07956 002933 / 07950 940030 info@autizma.co.uk www.autizma.co.uk/
Bury People First	0161 705 4342 www.burypeoplefirst.co.uk/

The Greater Manchester Autism Consortium	0161 998 4667 mari.saeki@nas.org.uk www.autismgm.org.uk/
Manchester People First	0161 839 3700 mcrpeoplefirst@gmail.com www.manpf.org/
People First Tameside	www.peoplefirsttameside.org/
Salfordautism	07713 903224 support@salfordautism.org.uk www.salfordautism.org.uk/
Stepping Stones Across the Spectrum	07976896351 (Karen) steppingstones55@yahoo.co.uk
Stockport Speaking Out group	0161 480 8979 info@stockportadvocacy.co.uk www.stockportadvocacy.org.uk/speaking-out-group-sog/
Trafford Advocacy Hub	0300 323 096 admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk www.advocacyfocus.org.uk
Wigan and Leigh People First	01942 728748 info@wlpf.org.uk http://wlpf.org.uk/

Housing advice services across Greater Manchester

NB Citizens Advice Service, Shelter, Tenants Union, GM Law Centre and MIND offer housing advice in all areas.

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice Greater Manchester	www.citizensadvicegm.org Online Chat and also available 7 nights a week from 7pm- 10pm
GM Law Centre	Tel. 0161 769 2244 reception@gmlaw.org.uk
Greater Manchester MIND	www.gmmind.org.uk/about/
Shelter Greater Manchester	www.england.shelter.org.uk/get_help/local_services/manchester/services Tel:0161 820 7589

Tenants Union	www.tenantsunion.org.uk/ If you need help with a deposit www.billhelp.uk/manchester-rent-deposit-scheme-programmes/

Bury Council services

Service	Contact
Bury Council	www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10387 www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14177
Bury housing assessment team	www.theburydirectory.co.uk/kb5/bury/directory/service.page?id=phRRKbMQKKI
Bury Council - Urgent Housing Advice	0161 253 5537 (9am-5pm Mon-Fri); 0161 253 6606 (out of hours)
Bury Council – Central Access Point (CAP)	CentralAccess@bury.gov.uk Tel. 0161 253 5940

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice Bury & Bolton	www.cabb.org.uk/ 0300 300 9071
Bury Law Centre	St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND 0161 272 0666 info@burylawcentre.co.uk
Bury Red Door	Caritas Centre, St Joseph's Presbytery, Peter St (off Walmersley Road), Bury BL9 6AB 0161 272 0771 reddoor@caritassalford.org.uk
The Housing Link (young people 16+)	12 Mather Street, Radcliffe M26 4TL 0161 723 2040 info@thehousinglink.org.uk

Bolton

Council services

Service	Contact
Bolton Council	www.bolton.gov.uk/housing-options-advice
Bolton Housing Advice Services	Tel. 01204 335900 E.housing.options@bolton.gov.uk

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Bolton at Home	Tel: 01204 328 000, website: www.boltonathome.org.uk/contact-us – webchat facility available.
Citizens Advice Bury & Bolton	www.cabb.org.uk/ 0300 300 9071
Urban Outreach	info@urbanoutreach.co.uk Tel.01204 385848

Manchester

Council services

Service	Contact
Manchester City Council	www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500341/housing_help_and_advice
Housing Solutions	Tel. 0161 234 4692 hss@manchester.gov.uk

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Barnabus	45 Bloom Street, Manchester M1 3LY 0161 237 3223 www.barnabus-manchester.org.uk/im-homeless-and-need-help-1
Booth Centre	For people 18plus Pimblett St, Cheetham Hill, Manchester M3 1ET 0161 835 2499 www.boothcentre.org.uk/
Centrepoint	Supports homeless 16-25 year olds. Based in city centre and Wythenshawe): www.centrepoint.org.uk/youth-homelessness/get-help-now

	0161 228 7654 or 0808 800 0661; Webchat available.
Cheetham Hill Advice Centre	0161 740 8999 triage@cheethamadvice.org.uk ; Text 07823 495307
Citizens Advice Manchester	www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/ 03444 111 222 Facebook messenger; Online Chat available. People can self- refer in and they will give you a call back www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/housing-advice They also have free phones in 7 of the libraries which have now reopened (Wythenshawe, Longsight, Newton health, Gorton, Withington, Didsbury and central library.) When the libraries are open, people can go in and call Manchester CAB for free from one of their phones.
Cornerstone Day Centre	104B Denmark Rd, Manchester M15 6JS 0161 232 8888 www.cornerstonecds.org.uk/

Lifeshare	First floor, 27 Houldsworth St, Manchester M1 1EB 0161 235 0744 www.lifeshare.org.uk/
NHS GM mental health	www.gmmh.nhs.uk/housing-advice-service/
Shelter Manchester	www.england.shelter.org.uk/get_help/local_services/manchester 0344 515 1640; Online Chat available www.england.shelter.org.uk/get_help/webchat
Reach Out to the Community (South Manchester only)	488 Wilbraham Rd, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester 0161 862 9415 www.reachouttothecommunity.co.uk/

Oldham

Council services

Service	Contact
Oldham Council	<p>www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200257/homelessness</p> <p>www.oldham.gov.uk/info/100007/housing/1821/housing_advice_and_support</p> <p>www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200904/housing_advice/2267/housing_options</p>

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice – Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Trafford (CASORT)	<p>www.casort.org/contact 0300 330 9073; Facebook, Twitter, Online Chat</p>
Keyring	<p>Tel. 0161 628 4133; 24-hour helpline Tel. 0333 000 0321</p>
Key To The Door (young people)	<p>www.keytothedoortoyproject.co.uk/ 8 Eldon Precinct, Ashton Road, Oldham, OL8 1JP</p> <p>0161 633 9242 keytothedor@btconnect.com</p>

Rochdale

Council services

Service	Contact
Rochdale Borough Housing	0300 303 8548 housing.homelessness@rbh.org.uk www.rbh.org.uk/

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice – Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Trafford (CASORT)	www.casort.org/contact 0300 330 9073; Facebook, Twitter, Online Chat
Gaddum	www.gaddumcentre.co.uk/getting-help-rochdale/
Key To The Door (young people)	www.keytothedoortoyproject.co.uk/ 8 Eldon Precinct, Ashton Road, Oldham, OL8 1JP 0161 633 9242 keytothedoor@btconnect.com
Rochdale Law Centre	www.rochdalelawcentre.org.uk/housing.html 15, Drake Street, Rochdale OL16 1RE 01706 657850; admin@rochdalelawcentre.org.uk Housing advice tel. 01706 657766 (limited hours)

Salford

Council services

Service	Contact
Salford Housing Options Point (SHOP)	www.salford.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice-and-support/salford-housing-options-point-shop/ 7 Wesley Street, Swinton, M27 6AD 0161 793 2020; or 0161 794 8888 (out of hours).

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice Salford	www.salfordcab.org.uk/ 0300 330 9074; Email form on website
Salford Loaves & Fishes	www.salfordloavesandfishes.org.uk 1 Paddington Close, Salford, M6 5PL; Tel. 0161 737 8775; E. info@salfordloavesandfishes.org.uk
Spirit of Salford	www.salford.gov.uk/spiritofsalford ; Tel. 0800 952 1000; Online enquiry form
Manchester City Mission (under Salford)	Windsor Christian Centre, Churchill Way, Salford M6 5BU 0161 736 7959
Mind in Salford	www.mindinsalford.org.uk/coronavirus-update/ 0161 710 1070

Stockport

Council services

Service	Contact
Stockport Homes	www.stockporthomes.org/find-a-home/homeless-advice/ Cornerstone, 2 Edward Street, Stockport SK1 3NQ. Online advice or fill in enquiry form on website. 0161 474 3780 or 0161 217 6016

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice – Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Trafford (CASORT)	www.casort.org/contact 0300 330 9073; Facebook, Twitter, Online Chat
The Prevention Alliance	www.stockporttpa.co.uk/ 0161 474 1042 info@stockporttpa.co.uk
The Wellspring	Harvey Street, Stockport, PO BOX 456, SK1 1YD 0161 477 6344 info@thewellspring.co.uk Also on Facebook & Twitter.

Tameside

Council services

Service	Contact
<p>Tameside Housing Advice</p>	<p>www.tamesidehousingadvice.org/ 119-125 Old Street, Ashton – under-Lyne OL6 7RL 0161 331 2700 info@tamesidehousingadvice.org</p>

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
<p>Citizens Advice Tameside</p>	<p>www.tamesidecab.org.uk/ 0300 330 9076; Textphone: 03444 111 445 advice@tamesidecab.org.uk Online Chat available</p>
<p>Key To The Door (young people)</p>	<p>8 Eldon Precinct, Ashton Road, Oldham, OL8 1JP; Tel. 0161 633 9242; E. keytothedoortoyproject@btconnect.com www.keytothedoortoyproject.co.uk/</p>

Trafford

Council services

Service	Contact
Housing Options Service Trafford (HOST), Trafford Council	<p>Waterside House, Sale Waterside, Sale, M33 7ZF; Tel. 0161 912 2230; Tel. 0800 218 2000 (out of hours); E. HOST@salixhomes.co.uk</p> <p>www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-advice/Housing-advice</p>

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice – Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Trafford (CASORT)	<p>www.casort.org/contact 0300 330 9073; Facebook, Twitter, Online Chat</p>

Wigan

Council services

Service	Contact
Housing Options Team, Wigan Council	<p>www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Housing/index.aspx</p> <p>www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Housing/Council-homes/Find-a-home/What-are-my-housing-options/index.aspx</p> <p>www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Contact-us/Life-Centres/index.aspx</p> <p>01942 489005</p>

Other local services

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Advice Wigan	<p>www.cawb.org.uk/ 0300 3309 077; advice@cawb.org.uk</p>
The Brick	<p>10 Arcade Street, Wigan, WN1 1LU</p> <p>01942 236953 www.thebrick.org.uk/ enquiries@thebrick.org.uk</p>