



First Priority Housing Association Damp & Mould Policy

Scope	The policy applies to all of First Priority Housing Association's tenants
Policy relates to	Tenancy Policy Repairs and Maintenance Policy Complaints Policy
Version	1.0
Release Date	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Review Frequency	No more than 3 years
Review Date	1 October 2027

1. Purpose

2. This policy sets out our approach on managing reports of damp and mould from tenants, their appointees and support providers in relation to their homes and communal areas.
3. This policy applies to all properties for which we are responsible for carrying out repairs as determined by their tenancy agreement and the lease we have in place with the superior landlord.

4. Introduction and Aims

5. FPHA is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard which adds value to the homes and their surroundings.
6. Maintaining high quality, secure homes can improve the lives of our tenants and achieve high levels of tenant satisfaction. Our homes give people the space and security to create meaningful lives and the foundation to build the best possible life.
7. This policy has been written to ensure that wherever possible, residents are not adversely affected by the causes of damp and mould and drives forward an agenda of proactive action to tackle/manage the causes of damp and mould.
8. This policy and associated procedure will take into account recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – Oct 2021.

9. Legislation and Regulation

10. First Priority Housing Association will deliver a service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure the health, safety and security of people and property are maintained at all times.
11. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) provides The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from 2012 including 'The Home Standard'.
12. The key areas of legislation in this policy are:
13. Defective Premises Act 1972 (Section 4)
14. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
15. Building Regulations Act 1984
16. Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
17. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
18. Housing Act 2004
19. Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
20. Equality Act 2010

21. Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
22. Data Protection Act 2018
23. Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018

24. Definitions

25. There are differences between damp and mould. Below are commonly used definitions we have adopted for the purposes of our Policy and to inform our understanding of damp and mould.
26. **Damp** - Structural dampness is the presence of unwanted moisture in the structure of a building, either the result of intrusion from outside or condensation from within the structure
 - 1.1. **Mould** - Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. It is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present.

27. Damp causes

28. There are four different causes of damp and mould in the England. Each cause of damp and mould will require a different solution to resolve the issue.
29. **Water leaks** – a leak could stem from defective pipework in the property (either internally or externally) or through the actions of our tenants or Support Providers
 - 1.2. **Rising damp** – when moisture rises up from the ground, up through the structure of the property
 - 1.3. **Penetrating damp** – water that has penetrated the external walls or internal leaks that cause damage to surfaces or structure
 - 1.4. **Condensation** – moisture that is found in warm air that when it comes into contact with cold air or surfaces, condensing and causes water droplets

30. Reporting damp and mould

- 1.5. Damp and mould should always be reported immediately. Tenants, their Support Provider or someone else supporting them can report cases directly using the methods below:
 - Telephone
 - Email
 - Online portal
 - Face to face (through their Housing Manager or Officer)
- 1.6. FPHA staff and contractors should also report damp and mould cases, where they are identified or suspected. These can be reported internally and must always be consistently recorded on our repairs reporting system, before following the same policy and process thereafter as tenant reported cases.

- 1.7. When reporting damp and mould, we encourage the person reporting the case to send us supporting information like photographs if they are able to. This helps us to better diagnose the damp and mould.
- 1.8. We do also check other information about the effected tenant, taking their individual circumstances into account such as health conditions and disabilities.

31. Our approach to damp and mould

- 1.9. When a report of damp and mould is made we will attend to inspect within 10 working days of the case being reported.
- 1.10. A report on the damp and mould hazard (if present) will be produced within this 10 working day period, outlining the treatment plan.
- 1.11. Repair works should then begin within 5 working days of the report being received by FPHA.
- 1.12. Each reported case is risk assessed. Not all cases of damp and mould are the same, some being more severe than others. We risk assess cases on the extent and severity of the damp and mould itself, other property factors and the location of the damp and mould. We also take into account the individual circumstances of the tenant including any disabilities or medical conditions that may worsen the impact of the damp and mould. This falls into 4 categories (Extreme/ severe, Serious, moderate and low).

Categorisation	Description	Reaction/ response
Extreme/ severe (Category 1)	Extensive damp and mould in multiple bedrooms and living areas, very vulnerable tenants with chronic health and vulnerability factors (e.g. respiratory conditions) <i>(Note: this could also apply to tenants' where their mental health condition or learning disability limits their capacity to take the necessary</i>	Emergency attendance within 24 hours, triage with possible follow up and surveyor appointment. Relocate to temporary accommodation if required

	<i>precautions to avoid harm)</i>	
Severe/ serious (Category 2)	<p>Multiple areas of extensive damp and or mould growth in main living area for the tenant, tenants with levels of known vulnerabilities that exacerbate risk.</p> <p><i>(Note: this could also apply to tenants' where their mental health condition or learning disability limits their capacity to take the necessary precautions to avoid harm)</i></p>	Urgent attendance within 7 days, likely surveyor follow up
Serious/ moderate (Category 3)	<p>Multiple areas of damp and mould identified but limited in area and location (e.g. under stair cupboard or another non-habitable space).</p> <p>Could be some low level risk factor to the tenant such as their age, but no specific known vulnerabilities or health conditions.</p>	Routine repair to be attended with 28 day timescale.
Moderate/ low (Category 4)	<p>Little to no or minor damp or mould (e.g. condensation around windows), no known vulnerability identified</p>	Provide advice to tenant and care provider, monitor in ongoing property visits every 8 weeks.

2. Post completion inspections

- 2.1. All damp and mould cases will be subject to 3-month post completion reviews. This period begins from the date that the works are confirmed as completed. A member of our housing team will attend to complete a visual inspection. If any issues are discovered that have not already been reported, the case will be reopened and reinvestigated using the same process as outlined above.

3. Staff training

- 3.1. All staff will be trained on damp, mould and condensation awareness.

4. Reporting and monitoring

- 4.1. Reports on all damp and mould cases are monitored on a weekly basis by the senior management team.
- 4.2. Bi-monthly reports are included as a standing item within the Operations Report presented to Board.

32. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

33. Our tenants who have learning disabilities and or mental health conditions can experience difficulty in “self-managing” cases of damp and mould. They are often reliant on the support of their Support Provider or appointees.
 - 4.3. We provide an Intensive Housing Management service that includes regular visits to our properties and meetings with our tenants and Support Providers. This provides opportunities to identify cases of damp and mould, as well as offer support to tenants with cases.
34. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and can be found within Section 12 of this Policy.

35. Monitoring and Reporting

36. There is a central damp and mould case tracker that is maintained by our managing agent.
37. Cases are monitored on a weekly basis by senior management alongside the managing agent.
38. Updates are presented to Board as a standing item of the Operations Report at each meeting.
39. As part of our monitoring, we will identify themes and trends in damp and mould reporting. This could, for instance, help inform programmes of work or campaigns to tenants.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristic		Explanation (if required)	Controls
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on minority ethnic groups? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact due to gender (including pregnancy and maternity)? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact due to disability? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Y	<p>Our tenants by their nature are some of the most vulnerable in society. They can therefore be impacted more when cases of damp and mould are present.</p> <p>The nature of their disabilities combined with any medical conditions could make self-managing cases of damp and mould challenging.</p>	<p>Anyone that is supporting the tenant is able to report damp and mould on their behalf to support the tenant.</p> <p>Support Providers are offered guidance by the housing team on how to identify damp and mould, as well as management actions where cases are in progress.</p>
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to sexual orientation? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their age? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their religious belief (or none)? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people with	N		

dependants/caring responsibilities? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to them being transgender or transsexual? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their marital or civil partnership status? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		

8.1.