



East Lothian
Council

What to do when a council tenant dies

**Who to
notify and
next steps
guide**

We would like to offer you our condolences at this difficult time. Along with coming to terms with the loss of a loved one, there are practical matters to consider. During this time, you will want to settle their affairs and this guide details what you need to do regarding their tenancy with East Lothian Council.

Contents

Ending a tenancy

Notifying the council

Tenancy succession

Rent and financial support

Who else do I need to inform?

Additional service providers to contact

Removal of belongings

Return of keys

Contact & support



Versions of this leaflet can be provided in Braille, large print, audiotape, or your own language.

For assistance please call: **01620 827 827**

British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us via **www.contactscotland-bsl.org**

Ending a tenancy

Notifying the council

The council Housing Team should be notified as soon as possible following the death of a person with a council tenancy.

Visit any council area office, call **01620 827 827** and ask for Housing, or email via **www.eastlothian.gov.uk/housing-contacts**

Once you have notified us, the tenancy will legally come to an end on the date of death. The Housing Officer responsible for the management of the tenancy will write to you confirming this.

Visit: **www.gov.uk/register-a-death** to register a death.

We will also be notified by our Registrars once the death is formally registered.

Tenancy succession

If the tenant shared their home with another person, that individual may be entitled to succeed the tenancy. Succession is where a co-habiting partner, family member or carer qualifies to inherit a council tenancy upon the death of the original tenant.

Information on 'qualifying person' tenancy succession criteria, and the conditions that must be met are set out in the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2014.

You can discuss succession and the process of this with one of our Housing Officers. Visit: **www.eastlothian.gov.uk/succession** to find out more.

Rent and financial support

Rent must be paid right up to when the tenancy ends.

Funds left in the deceased person's estate should be used for this purpose.

If financial support was in place to help the deceased to meet their rent costs, these benefits will end on the date the person passed away.

Who else do I need to inform?

Tell Us Once is a service that lets you report a death to most **government organisations** in one go. Visit: www.mygov.scot/tell-us-once

These include:

- **Social Security Scotland**
- **HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)**
- **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)**
- **Passport Office**
- **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)**
- **Your local council**
- **Veterans UK**

and some public sector pension schemes.

Additional service providers to contact

- **GP**
- **East Lothian Council Social Work**
if there is support at home e.g. home help
- **Blue Badge Return please**
- **Electoral Commission** Remove from Electoral Register
- **Energy provider(s)**
- **Council Tax / Scottish Water**
- **Telephone / mobile / broadband providers**
- **TV Licensing**
- **Employer/JobCentre Plus**
- **Bank / Building Societies**
- **Insurers**
- **Private pension providers**
- **Public sector pension schemes**

We recommend using the Royal Mail's redirection service to ensure you receive any mail sent to the tenant's address.

Visit: www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection

Removal of belongings

You will need to remove all of the deceased person's belongings and furniture within fourteen days from date of death. There are no rent charges made during this time.

If you would like a longer period of time to remove belongings, it is important that you speak to the Housing Officer to agree this as soon as possible. Please note that there will be a property charge, equal to the weekly rent charge, for any extended period of time. This charge is payable in advance.

You may wish to donate any unwanted furniture to local charities. Furniture in good condition may be collected free of charge and be used to help others. The Housing Officer may be able to provide contact numbers for furniture recycling facilities in the area e.g. Recycling First Project in Macmerry. **Any furniture or other items left in the vacated property will be removed by us and the relevant cost will be passed to the deceased's estate for payment.**

Any gas cooker needing to be removed must be disconnected by a registered engineer.

Please ensure that any mobility aids such as walkers, commodes, bath seats or other aids are returned to the correct agency – usually Adult Social Care. The property will also need to be cleaned by the next of kin or person dealing with the deceased person's estate.

Return of keys

Keys to the property must be returned before 12 noon at the end of the agreed period. They must be returned to the Housing Officer, or, if the property is in a sheltered scheme, you can return the keys to a Sheltered Housing Officer. Keys can be handed into any council area office.

Contact & support

Call our Contact Centre and ask for the service you require such as 'Registrar' or 'Housing' on **01620 827 827**

Or visit: **www.eastlothian.gov.uk/manage-tenancy**

For more information or guidance such as meeting funeral costs please visit Scottish Government's website:

www.gov.scot/collections/what-to-do-after-a-death-in-scotland

Comments, complaints and suggestions.

We follow the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's standard complaints handling procedures and welcome all feedback on our services, including comments, complaints and suggestions.

Visit **www.eastlothian.gov.uk/complaints** or call our Customer Feedback Team on **0131 653 5290**