

# Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia, West Midlands

Information for Offenders about your stay in  
Probation Approved Premises



This leaflet will help to answer any questions you have about staying in a hostel. It will also explain what will be expected of you.

## **Why do you have to live in Probation Approved Premises?**

You have been ordered to do so by the courts as a condition of bail/bail assessment OR

As a requirement of a community sentence because the court believes that you need a higher level of supervision in order to protect the public or to reduce the level of re-offending; OR

It is a condition of your release from prison.

## **Who lives in Approved Premises?**

Offenders aged over 18 years of age who have been fully assessed by hostel management as suitable. All hostels are single sex.

## **Who will decide if I can live in Approved Premises?**

Your Offender Manager (home probation officer) will refer you to a hostel, sometimes at the request of the MAPPA . Hostel Managers will decide whether you are suitable for a place.

## **Will I have my own room?**

Not always straight away. Most premises have single and shared rooms.

## **Will my offence stop me from being accepted?**

No. There are no offences which would stop you from being accepted, but it may affect which hostel you go to.

For example, some people will be refused because:

- Accepting them may cause problems with the mix of other people who are staying in the hostel.
- because the hostel is too close to victims or where you have offended.

We also have responsibility to people living near the hostel. So we have to carefully consider any risk that your living there may pose to them.

## **Will I be free to come and go as I please?**

No. You will not be free to come and go as you please.

- You will have to follow strict rules and you must be in the premises every night. Minimum curfews are from 11pm - 6am. Most residents start their residence with longer curfews.
- You will be expected to be out of bed by 8.45am in the morning and available to take part in purposeful activities as agreed with your Offender Manager and hostel staff, unless you are known to be unwell. If you are unwell, then an appointment will be made for you to see the doctor.
- You will be required to account for your movements when you are not in the hostel.
- Hostel staff are in close contact with the police and other agencies including the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel arrangements (MAPPA).

## **What will happen when I arrive at the hostel?**

You will be shown around the hostel and given a room. You will have the hostel rules and other information explained to you. This induction may take up to 2 hours so please allow time for this.

You will be given a “keyworker” – who is a member of the hostel staff who will have special responsibility for working with you during your stay. You will be required to keep regular appointments with your keyworker.

## **Will I have to pay to stay in the hostel?**

Yes. All residents have to pay towards the cost of living in a hostel.

The charges are set by the Ministry of Justice. This includes bed linen and towels. If you are on benefits then part or all of your rent may be paid direct to the hostel.

Most hostels are half board providing a breakfast and an evening meal.

## **How long will I be in a hostel?**

This will be agreed with your Offender Manager. Most residents stay between 3 and 12 months.

Approved Premises staff will support you in your efforts to find suitable move on accommodation. We do not have other accommodation that we can give you.

## **Can I work while I am living in a hostel?**

You will be expected to find work or register for benefit. If you are over retirement age then you will be expected to register for a pension. Staff will give you help if required.

You will be expected to take up opportunities to improve your basic skills – such as reading, writing or numeracy. You will also have to take part in other ‘purposeful activities’ organised by the hostel if you are not in full-time work.

If you are required to attend a probation programme, arrangements will be made for this.

## **What other help will I get?**

Hostels are staffed 24 hours a day. As well as your keyworker, other members of hostel staff will have close contact with you and will be involved with you on day-to-day issues.

You will also have regular contact with your Offender Manager who will also discuss your progress with hostel staff.

You will be offered help with any other needs you may have such as:

Employment, housing, medical issues, drugs/alcohol problems, education.

Leisure activities and equipment is usually available at each hostel.

## **What happens if I am ill or disabled?**

All residents are registered with a local doctor’s practice while they are at the hostel. If you need medical treatment an appointment will be made for you.

If you have an existing illness or disability this will be considered when a place is offered. If you have problems walking or climbing stairs you will only be considered for ground level accommodation. Some premises have can accommodate wheelchair users.

## **Will I be allowed to keep my own medication?**

Not at the moment. Alcohol, smoking and non-prescription drugs are not allowed in the hostel. This is subject to review.

## **Are there any rules?**

Yes. There are National rules and each hostel will have its own house rules. A copy of the rules will be given to you when you arrive.

All hostels have a drug and alcohol testing policy. Smoking restrictions apply in all hostels and will only be allowed in designated bedrooms.

If you break these rules then your place may be withdrawn or you may face return to court or prison. These rules are there to keep you, staff and other residents safe.

You will also be expected to remain clean and tidy and give proper attention to your personal hygiene. At times when a cleaner is not available, residents are also expected to play a part in keeping the hostel clean and safe. You will be asked to carry out small tasks within the hostel.

You will also be responsible for keeping your own room clean and tidy.

## **Do I have any rights while I am living in a hostel?**

You will be treated fairly and with respect while you are in the hostel.

Racist, violent, threatening, disruptive, sexist or other discriminating behaviour or language is not acceptable. Bullying is not tolerated and action will be taken against anyone bullying other residents.

You can make a complaint if you feel you have been treated unfairly or unreasonably. You should try to talk about this with the hostel staff first, or their managers.

If you are not satisfied with the response you get, then you ask for a leaflet on how to make a complaint.

## **What if I have any questions or problems?**

If you have any questions or problems, please ask the hostel staff. They will try to sort things out for you.

# NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE

## RULES OF THE APPROVED PREMISES

1. Be in the building during the standard hours of curfew, which are 11pm to 6am; comply with any additional curfew and other conditions imposed by the Court or contained in your Licence; and comply with any additional curfew hours, imposed by the Approved Premises manager and/or your Offender Manager, which they consider to be necessary in your case.
2. Pay rent and other maintenance charges as instructed by staff and notified to you in writing.
3. Undergo drug and/or alcohol testing if required to do so by staff.
4. Give all prescribed medication to staff, and take medication as prescribed by your doctor.
5. See a medical practitioner, health professional or psychiatric worker if reasonably required to do so by staff.
6. Participate in the Approved Premises programme as instructed, including meetings, key working sessions, group work and any other activities specified in your sentence/supervision plan.
7. Allow staff to search your room and personal belongings at any time without interference.
8. Pay attention to your personal hygiene and keep your room clean and tidy for health and safety reasons.
9. Not smoke on the premises, except in designated smoking rooms as notified to you by staff.
10. Not bring onto the premises (including the grounds), or have in your possession, any weapons, dangerous items, alcohol, solvents, illegal drugs or drugs paraphernalia.
11. Not steal, attempt to steal or damage anything that belongs to the Approved Premises, staff, contractors, visitors or other residents.
12. Not behave in a violent, threatening, disruptive, racist, sexist or other discriminatory way which could cause offence to staff, other residents, the local community or members of the general public.
13. Not bring anyone under the age of 18 onto the premises (including the grounds) at any time.
14. Not bring visitors aged 18 or over onto the premises (including the grounds) without the permission of staff, ensure that your visitors remain in the communal areas of the Approved Premises at all times and that they leave by the time standard curfew begins, or earlier if required by staff.
15. Not bring onto the premises, without the prior written permission of staff, DVD or video recorders/players, combined TV with DVD/video player, personal computers or laptops, cameras or other photographic equipment, games consoles with DVD readability or mobile phones with cameras or Internet access.
16. Not act in a manner that is inconsistent with the aims and objectives of the Approved Premises; that may bring the Approved Premises, its staff or residents into disrepute; that may reasonably be regarded as a nuisance to the local neighbourhood; or that may jeopardise the health and safety of staff, other residents or members of the general public.
17. Comply with any reasonable instruction given to you by staff, which may include the requirement to undertake routine domestic chores.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- Hostel premises includes the hostel buildings and hostel grounds
- Most hostels also have their own house rules, these will be explained to you when you take up residence.

### **SUPERVISION IN AN APPROVED PREMISES MEANS:**

- Strict rules governing your behaviour.
- Curfew requirements are rigorously enforced.
- Focused work on reducing your offending.
- Constructive use of your time.
- Addressing your problems.
- Advice on employment and training.
- Advice about move-on accommodation is available.