



## Void Management Procedure

To be used in conjunction with:

[Void Management Process Maps](#)

[Void Classifications, Paths, Stages and Events](#)

[Void Reasons and Terminations Reasons](#)

<b>Implementation Date</b>	<b>29 January 2018</b>
<b>Last Updated</b>	<b>13/11/2019</b>
<b>Revised re converting tenancies due to (COVID 19) – Section 7-10. Please refer to Converting Tenancies Interim Procedure August 2020 on Sharepoint</b>	<b>27/08/2020</b>
<b>Revised re new energy supply process for void properties</b>	<b>19/02/2021</b>
<b>Revised with change management plan details</b>	<b>20/07/2021</b>
<b>Revised to remove flipping tenancies and setting up a secure a tenancy sections – now as separate procedures on SP</b>	<b>10/10/2023</b>

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**Abbreviations used for the purpose of this procedure:**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Job/Team title</b>
AHM	Area Housing Manager
AHO	Area Housing Officer
EHT	Environmental Health Team
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate
HLO	Housing Liaison Officer
HM CA	Housing Management Clerical Assistant
HN CA	Housing Needs Clerical Assistant
HNO	Housing Needs Officer
NUHU	National Ultimus Haeres Unit
QLTR	Queen & Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer
Rents Admin	Rent Admin Team
SA	Supported Accommodation
SAHO	Senior Area Housing Officer
SHQS	Scottish Housing Quality Standards
SHR	Scottish Housing Regulator
VO	Voids Officer

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Moray Council's Void Management Policy defines void management as:  
The term used to define how Moray Council deals with vacant properties to ensure that rent loss is minimised and the most effective use is made of the housing stock in order to meet housing need.
- 1.2. A void is a property which has no tenant for a period of time. The void period is the time - measured in calendar days - between the date of termination of the previous tenancy or repossession and the start date of the new tenancy. The good management of void properties and minimising of void periods is essential to maximising rental income, providing a quality service and meeting housing need.
- 1.3. Void repairs are only intended to address those repairs necessary to meet the [letting standard \(section 2\)](#). Any other repair work, re-charges, modernisation or improvement work will fall outside the scope of void repairs and should not be coded from the void budget, but should be coded to the appropriate budget.

## **2. [Letting Standard](#)**

- 2.1. The [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#) provides that the landlords have a duty to ensure that a house is wind and watertight and reasonable fit for human habitation, both at the beginning of the tenancy and throughout its term. The Council have set a minimum standard that all houses must meet prior to being re-let. It is the standard that makes a house safe and secure for occupation. Therefore, before a property is re-let, all repairs that are considered essential in order to make the property habitable for health and safety and security must be completed.
- 2.2. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that, as far as is practicable, all properties are safe for occupation. The VO must identify all additions, adaptations or alterations made to the property by the previous tenant, however small. The VO must take all necessary steps to ensure that such items will not adversely affect the health of the new tenant or the condition and function of the house.
- 2.3. The minimum lettable standards are:
  - The property will be wind and watertight;
  - The property will be in a clean condition;
  - The property will be secure;
  - Access to the property will be safe;
  - Doors and windows will be checked and will operate as intended;
  - Gas and electrical supplies and systems will be checked for safety and will be in good working order. A copy of the report on the last gas servicing visit will be made available to the tenant;

- Internal glazing will be intact and will comply with safety standards;
- There will be a functioning bath or shower, toilet and wash hand basin;
- Smoke alarms will be checked and in good working order;
- Banisters, balustrades and stairs will be safe; and
- Installations by former tenants will be left if they are safe.

### 3. Reason for void

3.1. A void may occur as a result of the following:

- **formal termination** – where the tenant provides at least 28 days written notice of their intention to leave the property;
- **transfer of tenancy** – where the tenant provides at least 7 days written notice of their intention to leave the property;
- **death of a tenant** – where there is no successor, or two rounds of succession have occurred, the tenancy will terminate;
- **abandonment** – where a second Abandoned Property Notice has been served on the tenant(s), the tenancy will terminate; or
- the **Council recovers possession** of the property.

### 4. Occupancy rights

4.1. On receipt of the [Notice of Termination of Tenancy Form](#) the HM CA will carry out a basic check to make sure it has been signed and completed properly. If any errors are identified the staff member will inform the AHO. Particular care will be taken to ensure the consent of any joint tenant(s) and non-entitled spouses, civil partners and non-entitled partners are gained. More Information is provided in the [Occupancy Rights](#) document.

### 5. Joint tenants

5.1. The consent of any joint tenant(s) must be obtained before the termination of tenancy will be accepted. The onus is on the joint tenant to obtain this consent. In line with the [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#), a joint Scottish secure tenant/short Scottish secure tenant is entitled to end their tenancy provided that they give both the Council and any other joint tenant(s) four week's written notice. This does not end the tenancy of the other joint tenant(s). Please refer to the [Procedure for Joint Tenancies](#).

### 6. Document retention and recording of information

6.1. All documentation must be scanned and uploaded to the property's Void Document Set in SharePoint which will normally be created by the mailroom when the termination form is scanned in.

6.2. **It is the responsibility of all Housing staff involved in the voids process to ensure that:**

- a Voids Doc Set has been created for the void property;
- all information regarding the void management process is recorded in the Void Document Set;
- iWorld is managed and updated at every stage of the void process, completing all void events where necessary so other staff can check the stage of the void by the completed events.

**Please note - Due to the impact that the void process has on other procedures, communication between relevant staff is vital. All staff involved in the void process must ensure that there is accountable and efficient management of the void property, including a clear audit trail.**

## 7. Tenancy Termination – formal termination by a tenant (28 days)

7.1. Any tenant(s) who wishes to end their tenancy can advise us of this:

- phoning the contact centre who will direct them to the online [Notice of Tenancy Termination Form \(28 day\)](#) and 'Ending your tenancy with us' leaflet to download, complete and return the form to us as soon as possible. If they are unable to download the form, a form and a leaflet will be posted out to them;
- online via our website by downloading the online [Notice of Tenancy Termination Form \(28 day\)](#) and returning it to us;
- calling in to any of the four access points; or
- during discussion with a member of the Housing team.

7.2. **If the tenant is a joint tenant the staff member will provide them with a joint tenancy termination form to complete (please refer to the [Procedure for Joint Tenancies](#)). The property will only become void where every joint tenant ends their interest in the tenancy.**

Commented [EA1]: Upload to web and link? Why not on web?

## 8. Date of termination (28 days)

8.1. The standard tenancy termination date must be a minimum of 28 days from the notice date given on the tenancy termination form (except for transfer, death and abandonment cases). The tenant(s) will be liable for the payment of rent and utilities for this period. The AHO must check that the tenant has provided 28 days' notice on tenancy termination form when it is returned.

### Example

A tenant notifies the Housing Service of their intention to terminate the tenancy on 2 January 2019. The tenancy termination date must be at least 28 days from this date. The termination date is 29 January 2019.

## 9. Notification of termination (28 days)

- 9.1. The tenant can either hand the termination notice in at one of the access points, or send it by post which must be passed to the mailroom who will scan the form in to the Void Doc Set in SharePoint. This will automatically create a Lagan case which will be sent to the Housing Management queue.
- 9.2. The AHO will:
- monitor the Housing Management queue in Lagan;  
follow the '[Allocations – 28 day standard tenancy terminations](#)' iWorld procedure and enter the date the termination was received, which should be the same date the Lagan case is received. This will automatically put the 'Notice Given by Tenant/NOK' NOTI Void Event against the void property. The 'Anticipated Date of Tenant In' being 1 month from the date of departure. If the date of departure is 5 May 2016, the anticipated date of tenant in should be 5 June 2016, unless the tenant has given us extra notice then the date entered should be date tenant is leaving the property.
  - complete the master [TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report](#) template on Sharepoint following all the comments on the template to ensure the correct information is recorded:
    - The 'primary contact' should always be HM CA as they carry out all the billing for void properties;
    - The 'secondary contact' should always be the VO/**Void Admin** so the EDF engineer can contact them if there is any issues while they are at the property or with access;
    - You will not have the keysafe code at the time of completing the Move Out Report so contact details for VO/**Void Admin** should be added and EDF will contact them for code;
    - The report asks if the gas or electric meters is above 6 ft as they would need two engineers for health and safety purposes. The DLO have confirmed that they have no gas meters above 6ft but there may be some electric meters above 6 ft. VO will need to check this at the pre-term or the tenant contacted to advise.
  - save the [TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report](#) Housing Admin will email it to the TSM Void Support Team at [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) every Tuesday and Friday morning;
  - re-assign the Lagan case to the correct Super Patch queue.
- 9.3. An AHO within the super patch will;
- take the Lagan case from the super patch queue;
  - action the termination form within 2 working days from the date the form was handed in/received by the Council (allowing 1 working day for the

form to be processed by the mailroom and a further day for the Housing Service to process);

- confirm all signatures on the termination form ensuring all [qualifying occupiers](#) have also signed;
- confirm the void on iWorld and set it to the 10 day void path on the 'Confirmed' classification;
- set the Void Status to 'OFFY - Offerable';
- raise the 'Acknowledgement Letter', using ACKL Void Event, via the context report tools on iWorld within 2 working days from receiving the termination and pass to the mailroom to send to the tenant. The Scottish Government leaflet '[Right to Compensation for Improvements](#)' and the 'End of Tenancy Survey' should be included; and
- **email the VO to request a pre-termination inspection (See section 15).** The email must contain the contact details provided on the termination form by the tenant.

**Commented [EA2]:** Should this be to generic email address?

- 9.4. If the AHO has reason to believe the property is in poor condition, they will immediately notify the Allocations Team by emailing [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk). This will ensure no offers are made until after the property has been inspected.

## 10. Withdrawal of termination

- 10.1. If at any point during the notice period, the tenant advises they no longer want to terminate their tenancy the AHO will:
- remove the 'Expected End Date' from the iWorld tenancy record;
  - immediately contact Allocations by emailing [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk) and copy in the relevant VO to make sure they are aware that the tenancy will not be terminated; and
  - ensure evidence of discussions or emails are stored in the appropriate Void Doc Set in SharePoint.

## 11. Pre-termination inspections

- 11.1. **If the VO is unavailable, the XXXX will be responsible for making sure the inspection takes place.**

**Commented [EA3]:** Check who under new structure

- 11.2. On receipt of the email the VO must:
- attempt to complete a pre-termination inspection within 5 working days of the termination received date;
  - record in iWorld the date arranged for the pre-termination inspection using the 'PRTI' void event;
  - where access is denied and the inspection cannot take place, record a 'Non Access Pre-termination Inspection' event on iWorld using 'NAPI' and add comments to explain why;



- not complete a pre-termination inspection if a tenant has not given their consent or if the tenant (or their nominated representative) is not present.

11.3. During the pre-termination inspection visit the VO will complete the carbonated 'Property Inspection Form' and will:

- agree the condition which the house must be left in with the outgoing tenant, including which items can be left at the property and which items must be removed by the tenant ([see Letting Standard leaflet](#));
- identify the type of boiler in the property for any potential heating upgrade;
- identify any response repairs to be carried out during the notice and void periods in an attempt to shorten the void period and advise the tenant(s) that access must be given for these;
- identify any rechargeable repairs (See [Section 16](#) for more information);
- advise the tenant where and when the keys must be handed in;
- explain the tenant's continued liability for rent;
- advise the tenant to take meter readings on leaving the property;
- take details of the electricity and gas meters (including serial numbers and meter readings) and advise the tenant that if the meters are key/card meters, the tenant must leave the key/card at the property when they leave;
- advise the tenant that access may be required to carry out an asbestos report before they move out (within the 28 day notice period). Advise that a contractor will be in touch with them to arrange a suitable date and time;
- check the property has the appropriate bins and recycling boxes for the area. The VO must explain to the tenant that if any bins/boxes are missing at the termination date, they may be charged. If any bins are missing, the VO must order replacements by emailing [waste@moray.gov.uk](mailto:waste@moray.gov.uk);
- identify any alterations the tenant has made to the property and discuss compensation for improvements if appropriate;
- ensure that they have signed the carbonated Property Inspection Form and that it is also signed by the tenant/tenant's representative. A copy of the form will then be given to the tenant/tenant's representative; and
- if necessary, arrange an appointment to revisit before the tenancy ends.

11.4. Following the pre-termination inspection the VO will:

- update the 'Pre-termination Inspection' PRTI void event in iWorld;

- upload the carbonated Pre Term Inspection Form to the Void Doc Set in SharePoint;
- raise gas safety check (GSC) workflow if Vokera/Marathon boiler identified (see [Section 35](#) below);
- raise any response repairs (coded to the repairs budget) on iWorld within 1 working day of the inspection;
- record any rechargeable repairs and SOR codes on V Recharges List – (under the New Document icon in Doc Set) and email to AHO with link and costings;
- request an asbestos survey where necessary;
- if the property has a stair lift email the [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk) inbox, within 1 working day, so Allocations can identify if there is anyone on the housing lists who has a need for that property. Once allocations have confirmed that there are no potential allocations for that property, it should be removed and returned to Ashgrove Stores.
- ensure monitoring and completion of works requested. Where paper works order is necessary, email DLO Co-ordinator;
- check if any upgrades are required. If so, email the Sharepoint link to the Property Inspection Form to the Asset Technical Assistant responsible for recording the property upgrades;
- make sure all the property elements on the Property Inspection Form, including any alterations/adaptations are updated in iWorld. These are essential for the Allocations team to be able to allocate the property to someone with the same or similar needs.

**Commented [EA4]:** Workflow from V Voids Repair Sheet? Add in notes to do rechargeable repairs too from Pre Term Insp Form

**Commented [EA5]:** Who and email address?

## 12. Rechargeable repairs

- 12.1. The [Rechargeable Repairs Policy](#) states that tenants will be recharged for work that may be required when moving out of their home in order to bring it up to an acceptable standard for a new tenant. The policy defines a rechargeable repair as a repair that is either:
- the responsibility of the tenant;
  - damage which has been inflicted on the property and is a result of wilful damage, neglect, misuse, or abuse by the tenant, their family or visitors to the property; or
  - a repair, which has been caused by the tenant and is required when moving out of a house to bring it up to an acceptable standard.
- 12.2. Where rechargeable repairs are identified during the pre-termination inspection the VO will;
- explain the procedure for carrying out the repairs to the tenant; and
  - note the details of each repair on the Property Inspection form, making sure that all parties sign the document, leaving the original

copy with the tenant (or nominated representative) to give them the opportunity to carry out the repairs in the notice period.

### 13. Terminating the tenancy

13.1. The AHO must:

- enter the termination date on iWorld on the same day as the keys to the property are returned, provided the keys are returned on or after the 28 day notice period (see [section 26](#) for more information on key management);
- immediately inform their AHM and HMO if there is a person staying with the tenant that is not a qualifying person or has been refused succession and has remained in the property, for example a lodger, as the property will not be void. The occupant will be charged a rent substitute for the time they occupy the property;
- explain to the person that the tenancy has now ended, they have no occupancy rights and will need to fill in a housing application, explaining the procedure involved.
- refer the person to the Housing Options Team and any other agencies, where necessary, for information and advice, for example, the Citizens Advice Bureau.

### 14. Transfer of tenancy

14.1. All applications to transfer a tenancy will be processed in accordance with the Moray Council's [Allocations Policy](#) and procedure. For an overview of the offers process please see [section 41](#).

14.2. When an applicant accepts the offer, they will be asked to complete a [Tenancy Transfer Termination Form](#) providing at least seven days' notice of their intention to terminate their tenancy and either hand it in to one of the access points, or send it by post. The completed form must be passed to the mailroom who will scan the form in to the Void Doc Set in SharePoint. This will automatically create a Lagan case which will be sent to the Housing Management queue.

14.3. The AHO will:

- regularly monitor the Housing Management Queue;
- enter the date the termination was received in to iWorld on the same day. Please note - guidance notes for this process are held by HM CA can be found [here](#); and
- re-assign the Lagan case to the correct super patch queue.

Commented [EA6]: Are CAT still doing this?

14.4. The AHO from the superpatch will be responsible for taking the Lagan case from the queue and will, within 2 working days of the Council receiving the termination form:

- Confirm all signatures on the termination form ensuring that all [qualifying occupiers](#) have also signed;
- Confirm the void on iWorld;
- Update the 'Expected End Date' of the tenancy. The tenancy will end the day before the new tenancy begins;
- Set the Void Status to 'OFFY - Offerable'; and
- Raise the acknowledgement letter **within 2 working days** via the context reports tool on iWorld and pass it to the mailroom to the tenant including the Scottish Government leaflet '[Right to Compensation for Improvements](#)' and the 'End of Tenancy Survey';
- need to ascertain, to the best of their ability, whether the property will still be void in 22 days' time.
  - If yes - complete the master [TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report](#) template on Sharepoint with all the required details. Housing Admin will email it to the TSM Void Support Team at [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) every Tuesday and Friday morning (as per 13.4 above).
  - If no – do not complete TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report.

If it is a credit meter – AHO/VO should contact the current supplier on move out day and ask them to put the account in MC name to get power immediately.

If it is a prepayment/pay as you go meter and it has a debt on it, AHO/VO will email TSM/EDF Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) including:

- Full address of property including postcode
- Debt amount
- Previous Tenant Name
- Tenancy Termination date/Move out date (or when you were advised)

14.5. The AHO will run both tenancies where necessary and end the former tenancy on the date the keys are handed back, making every effort to ensure the final rent is paid on the former rent account to avoid any former tenant arrears.

## 15. Transfers – Liability for rent

- 15.1. For a standard transfer the outgoing tenancy will end the day of the termination and rent will be due on that property until that date. The new tenancy will start the day after and the tenant will be liable for the rent on that new tenancy from the start date of the new tenancy.
- 15.2. Where the tenant requests to overlap the tenancies to allow extra time for moving this should be considered on a case by case basis, depending on circumstances and any vulnerabilities. AHOs should only approve this where necessary. The tenant will be responsible for paying rent on both properties until the keys are handed back. The AHO will be responsible for ensuring the rent is paid and no arrears are left from the transfer period. Former and current tenant arrears have to be reported to the Regulator annually. Once the tenant has moved house it can be more difficult to recover the former arrears and Rents Admin cannot transfer the debt to the new address. Where possible every effort should be made to recover all rent from the previous tenancy prior to the tenant moving.
- 15.3. If the tenant is in receipt of Housing Benefit, there [are occasions where Housing Benefit will be paid on two properties](#). The tenant must request this. For example, where the tenant is liable for rent payments in respect of both their old and new homes, Housing Benefit can be paid on both homes for a maximum of four weeks. The tenant must have moved into their new home, and could not reasonably have avoided liability for both homes. This is not an automatic right however and Housing Benefit will assess each case on its own merits.

Different rules apply if the tenant is in receipt of the [housing cost element of Universal Credit](#). Support through Universal Credit can be paid on 2 homes if:

- Liability for 2 homes has arisen because of fear of violence in the normal home as long as there is an intention to return to the original property; or
- A disabled person can't move into a new home because it needs adaptations.

- 15.4. If a tenant does not return keys to the property by the date specified, they will continue to be liable for rent and where applicable, for costs associated with rechargeable repairs and lock changes.
- 15.5. On the rare occasion that a tenant signs up for a new tenancy then changes their mind, the AHO will advise that they need to put in a 28 day standard termination and will be liable for the rent until that date.

## 16. **Death of a sole tenant**

- 16.1. Where a tenant has died, the tenancy will terminate when either:
- there is no qualifying person;
  - each qualifying person declines the tenancy; or
  - two rounds of succession have taken place.
- 16.2. We can be notified of a tenant's death by a representative in the following ways:
- by attending one of the four access points or contacting the contact centre in which case the customer service advisor will immediately contact an AHO. If an AHO is unavailable, the customer service advisor will raise a Lagan call back case and send it to the super patch queue for the AHO to call the tenant rep. back the same day;
  - from another external source such as Police Scotland; or
  - through the 'Tell Us Once' system.
- 16.3. The HM CA will check the 'Tell Us Once' system twice weekly and where there is a notification of a Council tenant who has died will:
- email the relevant AHM, AHO, EC and Supported Accommodation Team to ensure garage leases and anything else is also ended; and
  - check if there is an active transfer application for the tenant;
- 16.4. The AHO will:
- try to obtain a photocopy of the tenant's death certificate unless the notification has come through the 'Tell Us Once' System advising the tenant's representative that they should attend the access point with an original copy of the death certificate.
  - establish if there is a member of the household eligible for succession. Please see the [Succession Procedures](#) for more information;
  - immediately notify the following of the tenant's death using the Sharepoint workflow:
    - the Council Tax and Housing Benefits department by emailing [revenues@moray.gov.uk](mailto:revenues@moray.gov.uk); and
    - Rents Admin.
- 16.5. The AHO will advise the tenant representative:
- that they are eligible for a rent free grace week starting from the date of death to allow for property clearing;
  - any Housing Benefit entitlement/Housing cost element of Universal Credit will cease from the Sunday following the date of death; and
  - in the event the keys are not returned to us by the agreed date, we may seek to recover rent loss from the estate.
- 16.6. The AHO must then:

- check the rent account of the deceased tenant and ensure that all arrears recovery actions cease immediately;
- update the correspondence name on iWorld in order to ensure users can see that the tenant has passed away;

## 17. Notification of termination (death)

- 17.1. The tenant's representative can either hand the termination notice in to one of the access points, or send it to us by post. The completed form must be passed to the mailroom who will scan the form in to the Void Doc Set in SharePoint. This will automatically create a Lagan case which will be sent to the Housing Management queue.
- 17.2. The AHO will regularly monitor the Housing Management Queue and, on the same day the Lagan case is received will:
- enter the date the termination was received in to iWorld on the tenancy record. Guidance notes for this process are held by the HM CA and can be found [here](#);
  - need to ascertain, to the best of their ability, whether the property will still be void in 22 days' time.
    - If yes - complete the master [TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report](#) template on Sharepoint with all the required details. Housing Admin will email it to the TSM Void Support Team at [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) every Tuesday and Friday morning (as per 13.4 above).
    - If no – do not complete TSM/EDF Move Out 22 Day Notice Report.
- If it is a credit meter – AHO should contact the current supplier on move out day and ask them to put the account in MC name to get power immediately. If SSE, fill out [SSE out form](#) and [send to SSE](#) and save the completed form and email in the Void Doc Set in SharePoint
- If it is a prepayment/pay as you go meter and it has a debt on it, AHO/VO should email TSM/EDF Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) including:
- Full address of property including postcode
  - Debt amount
  - Previous Tenant Name
  - Tenancy Termination date/Move out date (or when you were advised)
- Re-assign the Lagan case to correct Super Patch queue.

- 17.3. An AHO within the Super patch will be responsible for taking the Lagan case from the super patch queue and will:
- confirm the void on iWorld and set it to the 10 day void path on the 'Confirmed' classification;
  - set the property Void Status to 'OFFY - Offerable'; and
  - notify the allocations team if they have reason to believe the property may be in poor condition to make sure no offers are made until after the property has been inspected.

Commented [EA7]: OFFN until inspection?

- 17.4. When the AHO terminates the tenancy they will update the person's iWorld record with an 'End Date' and corresponding Termination Reason 'DEA' and Void Reason 'DEA'. The iWorld guide to [updating a person record](#) is available on SharePoint. This will ensure they do not receive any other correspondence. If iWorld shows an error message stating the person cannot be ended, the AHO must pass the information on to the relevant team who will be responsible for taking the appropriate action and updating the person record with an end date and reason. For example, if the error message shows the person has a Housing Advice case open, the AHO will email the Housing Support/Housing Options Team. That team will then be responsible for removing the person from or ending the advice case and closing down the person record.

- 17.5. Where the Police are involved with the death and have retained the keys for the property the AHO should end the tenancy as in 21.4 above and the rent account in the normal way as set out in 23.3 below. These are important void exclusions for the Regulator.

## 18. Death of a tenant – no next of kin

- 18.1. Occasionally, the Area Housing Team will be notified of the death of a tenant by a person who is not the next of kin. This will usually be:
- a neighbour;
  - Police Scotland; or
  - Environmental Health.
- 18.2. On receipt of this notification, the AHO will:
- attempt to find the deceased tenant's next of kin to sign a [Tenancy Termination Form](#), making use of local knowledge; OR
  - where no next of kin is found and there is no known will, refer the case by email to the [National Ultimus Haeres Unit](#) or phone the General UH Unit on 0300 020 4196 to report the case. Where there is no answer a voicemail should be left and they will reply as soon as possible;
  - record the referral and any correspondence with the NUHU in the Voids Doc Set in Sharepoint.



22.3 The [National Ultimatus Haeres Unit](#) (NUHU) is part of the Fiscals Office. They deal with the estates of persons that have no next of kin and no will. They will carry out their own investigations to try and establish if there is an estate and any living relatives.

22.4 **No staff should enter the property until the NUHU have conducted a house search.** The only exception to this would be where the property is unsafe and Environmental Health department should be notified.

22.5 The NUH Unit will:

- carry out initial investigations before visiting the property to try and obtain details of any possible family. Where these investigations are successful the NUHU will advise the AHO and ask the family to get in touch to progress the termination;
- where initial investigations are not successful, visit the property within 7-10 days of notification;
- remove any relevant paperwork, passport, bank details, photographs, jewellery (for safe keeping) and contact relevant organisations;
- advise the AHO where an auctioneer is required for saleable goods within the property;
- return the keys or send them back to the AHO by Special Delivery.

22.6 The UH Unit will then:

- advertise for 8 weeks in an attempt to trace any family member;
- start investigations to find any living relative; and
- refer to Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (QLTR) where no relative found.

22.7 The QLTR will then advertise for a further period of 12 weeks in an attempt to trace any family member before starting their own investigations and passing to a solicitor for the administration of the estate. These investigation periods combined can take up to a minimum of 5 months for advertising alone without any investigations periods which can be quite lengthy.us

#### Personal Belongings

22.8 The AHO should get a valuation for any remaining belongings within the property and follow the [Abandoned Property Procedure](#). Where the goods are:

- Less than the cost of 6 months storage – then we have no duty to store the property but it would be reasonable to expect the storage of the

goods until initial enquiries are made by NUHU/QLTR therefore goods must be stored and invoices forwarded to NUHU/QLTR.

- Equivalent or more than the cost of 6 months storage – duty to store the property for at least six months from the date of repossession of the house.

22.9 Any invoices for valuation, removal, storage of personal belongings, rent arrears, housing related debt (such as council tax etc), can be forwarded to the NUHU who will include it in the paperwork they forward to QLTR who will decide what debts are to be paid but it must be noted that there is no legal obligation on the QLTR to pay these so any ongoing expenses need to be balanced against what is reasonable given the circumstances of each individual case.

22.10 Where goods are in storage and NUHU or QLTR investigations are not successful it will be unreasonable for the storage costs to continue to be met by the local authority for an infinite period of time until the investigation concludes. A period of a year will be deemed to be reasonable amount of time to store any belongings in an intestate case. The AHO should make final contact with NUHU/QLTR to ensure no progress has been made with their investigations and then take steps to dispose/sell the goods, keeping costs to a minimum and use any monies received for expenses associated with the storage to offset any outstanding rent arrears.

## **19. Keys received (death)**

19.1. When the keys are received by the Access Point the Customer Services Advisor will notify the HM CA who will collect the keys and email DLO Voids Team [DLOvoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk](mailto:DLOvoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk) and the relevant Super patch informing them that the keys have been received.

19.2. On the date of the termination the AHO will check if the keys have come in. Where the keys are not returned or the property is not empty, the AHO will attempt to contact the next of kin and arrange for the locks to be changed as soon as possible.

19.3. Once the keys are returned the AHO will:

- terminate the tenancy on iWorld – if the keys are received before 12 noon the termination date should be the date before. If the keys are received after 12 noon the termination date should be that day;
- update the 'Keys received from outgoing tenant' KEYS Void Event in iWorld;
- send the [memo notification of death](#) to the Rents Admin using the [Approval workflow](#) on SharePoint; and

- notify DLO Voids Team [DLOvoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk](mailto:DLOvoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk) that the property is void and a post termination inspection can take place (see [section 27](#)).

19.4. If the keys are being returned from Police Scotland the AHO must follow 23.3 above but instead of sending the memo of notification of death to Rents Admin (as this will have been done at the time of death as per 21.5 above), the AHO must email the Rents Admin Team so they can exclude the void period for the Regulator.

## 20. Rent free weeks (death)

20.1. On the day the tenancy is terminated on iWorld, the AHO must immediately email the Senior Clerical Assistant, Rents Admin requesting an adjustment for the obligatory 'free period' to allow for the house clearance by next of kin.

20.2. Where keys to the deceased tenant's property are not returned within 7 days following the notification of the tenant's death, rent will continue to be charged. The deceased tenant's estate will be liable when the AHM has agreed to an extended period, for example, if relatives of the deceased tenant are not local to the area and require additional time to empty the property. The AHO will explain this to the person(s) notifying the Housing Service of the death.

20.3. Rents Admin are responsible for any adjustments required on rent accounts. In accordance with the [Procedure for Rent Arrears](#), if there are still any outstanding arrears following adjustments to the rent account, Rents Admin will send a letter to the tenant's next of kin to establish if there is any estate from which the arrears can be paid, saving a copy in the Rent Arrears Doc Set. If there is no estate, Rents Admin will require a letter from the next of kin to advise them of this before any arrears can be written off.

## 21. Abandoned property

21.1. In the case of abandoned property, the property will only become void when a sole tenant or both joint tenants have abandoned a property and the Council has followed the [Abandoned Property Procedure](#). In tenancies where there are joint tenants, for a property to become void, every joint tenant must have abandoned the property.

21.2. The AHO will:

- email the Allocations Team at [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk) to notify them that an Abandoned Property Notice will be served on the property and the date the Notice will be served;

Commented [EA8]: Add Voids Team to this email?

- notify the Allocations Team as soon as possible if the abandonment is cancelled;
- terminate the tenancy with immediate effect if a second Abandoned Property Notice is served on the tenant(see [section 17](#)) ensuring the Void Status is set to 'OFFY - Offerable' in iWorld so the void property can be relet;
- contact the energy company as per Para 21.2 (above); and
- ensure that the locks are changed upon tenancy termination as per the [Abandoned Property Procedure](#).

## **22. Key Management**

- 22.1. Keys can be returned by the tenant or their representative person by handing them in to the Access Point. Tenants are requested to return keys for the property no later than 12 noon on the day after the termination date.
- 22.2. The Customer Service Advisor who received the keys will:
- complete a key receipt and give the customer a copy;
  - enter a note using the lagan script, recording the number and type of keys that have been returned; and
  - notify the HM CA that keys have been returned.
- 22.3. The HM CA will:
- collect the keys from the access point;
  - update the 'Keys received from outgoing tenant' KEYS Void Event in iWorld;
  - label the keys and write the address on the label;
  - record the keys on the key log spreadsheet;
  - record the details on the 'Keys received' KEYS Void Event in iWorld;
  - store the keys in the designated locked key safe; and
  - email DLO Voids Team [DLOVoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk](mailto:DLOVoidsTeam@moray.gov.uk) and relevant super patch to advise that the keys have been returned.
- 22.4. If a tenant vacates a property and fails to return keys, the AHO must raise a works order 'WOR' for a lock change and the tenant will be recharged. When the locks have been changed the AHO will notify the VO and HM CA who will update the 'Keys received from outgoing tenant' KEYS Void Event in iWorld.
- 22.5. Staff must ensure that the location of keys is known and recorded at all times. Staff must be vigilant and ensure that keys are signed in and out and the management of keys is recorded both on the key log spreadsheet and on iWorld using the void events.

22.6. The VO will collect the keys from the HM CA and will update the 'Keys from AHO to HPO' KEYP Void Event in iWorld.

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### 23. Post termination inspections

23.1. All post termination inspections will take place **within 2 working days** of the property becoming void. The aim of the post termination inspection is to identify all work needed to bring the void property to an acceptable standard for relet as per the Letting Standard ([Void Management Policy](#)).

23.2. VO will receive and email or Lagan notification that the keys to a void property have been received and must notify the relevant or the XXX in their absence who will collect the keys from the HM CA and update the 'Keys from AHO to HPO' KEYP Void Event in iWorld.

Commented [EA10]: Who under new CMP?

23.3. If the VO is aware that the property needs a lot of work, the inspection will be carried out jointly with the DLO Void Supervisor. The VO will use their discretion when deciding whether a joint inspection should be carried out.

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23.4. During the post termination inspection the VO will:

- identify any void works that are needed to bring the property back up to the Letting Standard and SHQS which must be carried out before re-letting, including gas, electric and chimney sweep checks recording them on the [void repairs schedule](#), see [section 34](#);
- ensure that the property meets the Council's [minimum standard for properties to be relet](#), in particular the gas and electricity safety checks;
- complete the [Property Inspection Form](#) if not already done so at pre-term stage;
- if the property has pre-payment utility meters or debt on the meter, note the meter serial number, meter readings and amount of debt on the meter. If EDF have installed Smart Meter they should have left a card with meter serial number and meter reading which the VO should put on Void Repair Sheet so HM CA can use it for the opening reading for void billing purposes;
- check and record if the meter is above 6 feet high to report to EDF;
- inspect the garden paying particular attention to shrubbery or trees that may be encroaching on the buildings or any telegraph poles (any roots or branches etc. that could cause damage to the structure of a building or encroach on a telegraph pole will be cut back or removed as appropriate);
- identify the priority of the void repair ticket (5, 10 or 15 days);
- identify and photograph any outstanding rechargeable repairs that are the responsibility of the outgoing tenant;

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- review qualifying improvements for compensation;
- review the decoration pack to be provided to the incoming tenant (if any); and
- record the general condition of the property on termination.

23.5. Within one working day of the post termination inspection the VO will:

- create the Void Repairs Sheet from the Void Doc Set detailing all repairs and save it to the Void Doc Set;
- upload all documentation to the Void Document Set in SharePoint and raise all required works/repairs;
- review the current void classification and path on iWorld. If the current classification/path is not suitable, the VO will update the void and place it in the correct classification/path OFFY/OFFN;
- upload all photographic evidence to the void document set in SharePoint;
- pass the keys to the Building Services (DLO) void supervisor and request that a key safe is installed at the property. The VO will request that the DLO email them and provide the keysafe code;
- record the date the keys were passed to the DLO using the 'Keys to contractor' KEYC Void Event in iWorld;
- consider notice type.
  - If 28 day notice and debt on meter - email TSM/EDF Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) giving address, tenant name, amount of debt and termination date and request RTI codes and meter reset to ensure there is a gas and electric supply available for the void works and essential safety checks.
  - If short notice (7 day, transfer, debt, abandonment) –
    - If it is a credit meter – contact the current supplier on move out day and ask them to put the account in MC name to get power immediately.
    - If it is a prepayment/pay as you go meter - and it has a debt on it, email TSM/EDF Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) giving address, tenant name, amount of debt and termination date (or when MC advised) and request RTI codes and meter reset.
- record the date of the post termination inspection using the 'Post Termination Inspection' PTPI Void Event in iWorld;
- raise the void repairs;
- raise any rechargeable repairs;
- if the property has a gas supply, to start the Gas Approval Workflow to request the gas safety check (see section 16 of the [Gas Safety](#)

[Management Procedures](#) and ['Workflow for Gas Safety Check in Void Property Process Map'](#))

- email the AHO advising:
  - where damage has been identified and the tenant has undertaken repairs themselves (or employed someone else to undertake the work on their behalf)
  - whether the prospective tenant can view the property before the repairs are completed;
  - whether the post termination inspection has identified any outstanding rechargeable repairs; and
  - If a decoration pack should be provided to the incoming tenant.
- upload Post Termination Form into the Void Doc Set using the 'V Post Termination Inspection Form' content type;
- Upload any photographs to the Void Doc Set in Sharepoint by selecting Housing Services > Property Search > V Set Most Recent > Library > Open with Explorer > Drag to Sharepoint > Close and refresh;
- find the Void Repair Sheet saved by the VO in the Voids Doc Set;
- email the DLO Technical Assistant for a servitor number for the void property;
- complete the details at the top of the Void Repair Sheet:
  - issue Date (today's date);
  - servitor Number for DLO Technical Assistant;
  - asbestos Information – check Asbestos Database - if a report is available or one has been ordered fill in the notes. 5 day minor works voids do not need a report;
  - target dates from iWorld.
- raise any void repairs in iWorld making sure they are coded to the voids budget. Please see [Section 34](#) below on how to raise voids repairs;
- send a PDF version of the Void Repairs Sheet to the Void Supervisor/Co-ordinator. This avoids any alterations being made to the works without consultation with the VO.
- raise any re-chargeable repairs within 1 working day of the inspection, making sure they use the correct 'Liability code' of 'Tenant' to ensure they are re-charged back to the tenant;
- record any rechargeable repairs and SOR codes on V Recharges List – **CPT** (under the New Document icon in Doc Set) and email to AHO with link and costings;
- update all property elements in iWorld from the Property Inspection Form, if not already done so from pre-term;

- Update the Voids Spreadsheet (DLO housing > Voids > Master Void Spreadsheet > Voids Spreadsheet). Note, some VO's may have already entered some dates. Open relevant VO tab. Enter relevant dates in columns D–I and drag link for the Repair Sheet to column O.
- Update the EPC sheet (DLO housing > EPC Information > EPCs Sent to Ed/current year)
  - Under 'Voids due in' look for the address, if it's there move it up to bottom of list above 'Voids due in'. If it's not there, ignore as Clerical Assistant (responsible for EPC's) will have dealt with it.

## 24. Void Classifications and Paths

24.1. When confirming the void the AHO will always assign the void to the 10 day void path, on the 'Confirmed' classification.

24.2. The VO will be responsible for:

- reclassifying/changing the path whenever they identify a change in requirements for the works, for example following the pre and post termination inspections, or if the DLO advises extra work is required to bring the property up to the Council's Letting Standard; and
- deciding on the most relevant classification for the void by considering the amount of works required and the length of time it would take to complete them. If the void works are due to be completed within 20 working days, the VO will assign the void to the 'Confirmed' classification. Works that will require more than 20 working days will be assigned to the 'Long Term' classification.

**NOTE** - There is no limitation on the number of times a void can change classifications and/or paths. Therefore, VOs must constantly review current voids to ensure they are on the correct path. **This keeps other teams updated. Other parts of the process rely on this information.**

### Confirmed classification

28.3 The VO will consider the amount of time required to complete the void works when assigning the void to a path in the Confirmed classification.

28.4 If the works are predicted to take up to 15 working days the VO will assign the void to one of the following paths, where appropriate:

- 5DAY – Up to 5 Days void;
- 10DAY – Up to 10 Days void;
- 15DAY – Up to 15 Days void.



28.5 If the void is predicted to take longer than 15 working days but no more than 20 working days, the VO will assign it to the 'Extended' void path.

Long term classification

28.6 Voids that have been classed as Long Term by the VO will be placed on one of the following paths:

- **Asbestos works** – Voids that have been identified as having major asbestos present for example, Asbestos water tanks;
- **Fire, Flood and Structural works** – voids that are subject to an insurance claim i.e. due to fire or flood damage;
- **Major works** – voids waiting for major repairs/structural work (i.e. modernisation) during which period it would be unsafe for the property to be occupied;
- **Decant** – the property is to be used for housing tenants decanted out of their main homes; or
- **Committee** – It has been agreed by committee that the property is will be subject to a disposal order.

**25. Rechargeable repairs**

29.1 Where damage has been identified and the tenant has undertaken repairs themselves (or employed a third party to complete the repair on their behalf), the VO will inspect the repair to assess if it meets with the Council Standard. If the repair does not meet the standard, further rechargeable repairs are identified (which were not noticed/did not exist at the pre-termination inspection), or if the tenant failed to complete the repair identified during the pre-termination/pre-offer inspection the VO will:

- process it as per the [Rechargeable Repairs Procedure](#);
- ensure that photographic evidence is taken, uploaded to the Void Document Set and details sent to the appropriate AHO;
- process the works orders.

29.2 The AHO will:

- be responsible for liaising with the outgoing tenant in accordance with the [Rechargeable Repairs Procedure](#);
- email the HM CA and request the invoice be raised containing the total amount to be invoiced;
- upload the email request to the Void Doc Set.

**30 Abandoned goods at the property**

- 30.1 Where the property has been abandoned, the AHO must refer to the [Abandoned Properties Procedure](#) and follow the Scottish Secure [Tenants \(Abandoned Properties\)\(Scotland\) Order 2002](#).
- 30.2 In all other circumstances, goods will be disposed of. The VO will request the DLO clear the house of all belongings and the former tenant will be recharged as per the [Rechargeable Repairs Procedure](#).

### **31. Decoration**

- 31.1 Only the basic preparation work and no decoration will be carried out on void properties, unless the AHO specifies the incoming tenant is elderly, disabled, etc. and assistance would be needed to decorate. Paint packs will be assigned to all voids with the exception of those that have been decorated.
- 31.2 During the post works inspection, the VO will:
- Liaise with Housing Needs who will advise capability of ingoing tenant to decorate;
  - assess if a paint pack is needed and what level of paint pack is to be issued to the incoming tenant in accordance with the [Decoration Allowance Policy](#);
  - record it on the Post Termination Inspection Form; and
  - email the AHO at [house.type@moray.gov.uk](mailto:house.type@moray.gov.uk), within at least 3 working days prior to sign up, using the 'Decoration Voucher Request' email template available in SharePoint who will follow the [Interim Procedure – Paint Packs](#).

### **32. Asbestos Surveys**

- 32.1 Prior to any works commencing, the VO will check the asbestos database to determine if a current full refurbishment and demolition survey (R&D survey) is required. If the property has a valid survey, or is not at risk of containing asbestos (due to age etc.) this information will be passed to the DLO.
- 32.2 If there is no asbestos survey information available or there is any doubt, the VO will arrange a full R&D survey to be carried out. The outcome of this survey will then be passed to the DLO and added to the Asbestos Database. No works will commence in any property without asbestos information being provided.
- 32.3 If asbestos containing material is present (ACM), a risk assessment will be carried out to determine whether or not work can start without the need to disturb any ACMs. If ACM is present in the loft (e.g. redundant asbestos coated tank), a decision will be made by the VO to either remove the tank or debris before work starts.

32.4 If the survey reveals that the property requires major works to remove the Asbestos, the VO will immediately update the void classification to 'Long term' and the path to 'Asbestos'.

**33. Long term voids**

33.1 Works that are defined as long term are those which will exceed the 20 working day void target. Generally these are:

- Major works;
- Asbestos removal;
- Decants; and
- Fire and Flood.

33.2 Where work required will result in a long term void the VO must, on the same working day as the post termination inspection, notify the Allocations team by emailing [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk). The email will include the target date for when all the void works is to be complete.

33.3 The property Void Status will only be changed to 'OFFN - Not Offerable' if the works will take more than 4 weeks to complete. The status will be changed back to 'OFFY - Offerable' 4 weeks before the target completion date of all void works.

**34. Void period and repairs**

34.1 Void repairs should only address the repairs needed to meet the [Letting Standard](#). **Any work that falls out with this must NOT be coded to the Voids Budget:**

Response repairs should be raised immediately following the pre-term inspection and carried out during the notice period where possible and **be coded to the Repairs Budget.**

Rechargeable repairs – should be raised after the post term making sure the correct liability code is used in iWorld to ensure it is **re-charged back to the tenant.**

Upgrades identified at the pre term inspection (heating/ kitchen/bathroom) will be carried out during the void period to try and avoid any disruption and inconvenience to the ingoing tenant. DLO will hold stock of kitchen materials for this purpose. The planned maintenance programmes should be updated accordingly – **these should be coded to the relevant upgrade budget.**

Where any response repair or upgrade work will not be complete within the void period, i.e. due to waiting for parts etc., the VO will complete the 'Outstanding Works' form and pass it to the AHO. The AHO will inform the ingoing tenant that the work is still to be complete and the expected timescales for completion.

34.2 **CPT Admin** will:

- raise all void repairs detailed on the Voids Repair Schedule on iWorld using Budget Code M-V2011 using the following SOR codes:

C1V1000	Works up to £1000 (this is to be used on 5 day voids only)
C2V25	Works up to £2500

C2V50	Works up to £5000
C2V75	Works up to and over £7500

- Record as either a 'Normal' void (within 1 working day of the post termination inspection) or as a 'Long term void' (no defined target due to the nature of the repairs. For example, drawings may be required before the repair can be raised);
- Open iWorld > My Portal > Properties and search and select the correct property;
- Raise a Works Order - Refer to iWorld procedures ['Works Order Creating – Contractor is DLO'](#) where necessary;
- In the Priority field change the target date to a 5, 10 or 15 day void (as per VO instruction);
- In 'Loc Code' field write 'PRO';
- In description line on 3<sup>rd</sup> screen, delete text after 'CATVOID' and add 'As per schedule';
- In Access Notes Field write 'Keysafe';
- Add 'Target Date' into header of Voids Repair Schedule and format form;
- ensure that the:
  - estimated target labour hours for each trade are reasonable and realistic;
  - 'Raise Post Inspection' tick box to instruction is highlighted; and
  - 'Works Order Raised' WOR Void Event in iWorld is updated which will automatically complete the 'Expected Completion Date' Void Event in iWorld. The Allocations Team will use this when considering offers.
- send the Void Repair Sheet by email, as a PDF (including the Works Order Number 'Please see attached Void Schedule – Work Order no.....') to:

<b>Contact Group – Void Repair Sheet (Copy in VO and AHO)</b>	
Vanessa Mitchell	Jed Jamieson
Andrew McPherson	Linda Willox
Steven Mitchell	DLO Schedulers
Chris Ewan	Lucy Gerrie
Allan Stewart	Michele Green

- 34.3 The DLO will arrange for all void materials to be delivered to the void property by Stores staff so trades have everything they need to carry out the work on site.
- 34.4 The DLO Void Supervisor/Co-ordinator will routinely monitor the progress and the quality of the works in the property. If an extension for the timescales of void works is required, the DLO Void Supervisor/Co-ordinator will seek agreement from the VO. If agreement is reached the VO will:

- update the 'Target Date' of the 'WORC All Works Complete' event on iWorld and select the appropriate extension reason from the drop down list.

Extension Reason	
Code	Description
ASBESTOS	Asbestos
EARLY	Completed ahead of target
ELECTRICAL	Electrical upgrade
EXTRA	Extra work not identified at inspection
HEAT	Heating upgrade
HOUREQ	Housing request
NOACCESS	Unable to gain access to the property
NOPTIDATE	PTPI not entered so HPOI tgt incorrect
RESOURCE	Insufficient resources

Comments should also be added to record and explain the reason for the extension;

- confirm the agreement by emailing the Void Supervisor/Co-ordinator;
- notify the Allocations team by emailing [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk); and
- notify the relevant Super patch.

34.5 The VO will use Moray Council cleaners for basic cleaning of void properties where possible to ensure a quicker allocations process.

### 35. Essential safety checks

35.1 Moray Council's letting standard states that we will carry out gas and electrical safety checks on all empty properties before the new tenants move in.

35.2 Electrical safety checks will be requested on the void repair sheet sent through to the DLO by the VO following the post termination inspection (see [Section 27](#)).

Gas safety checks will normally be requested following the post-term inspection using an approval workflow triggered by the VO. See section 16 of the [Gas Safety Management Procedures](#) and '[Workflow for Gas Safety Check in Void Property Process Map](#)'.

However, a pre-term inspection will identify if the boiler in the void property is a baxi boiler i.e. Vokera/Marathon. These are at greater risk of failing a gas safety check due to being past their life expectancy so the VO **must start the approval workflow for a gas safety check as soon as possible following the pre-term inspection**. This allows time to plan the

upgrade within the notice period and carry out the upgrade within the void period where possible.

- 35.3 The workflow will be sent to the DLO scheduler responsible for gas servicing, copying in the Senior Scheduler in case of any absence.
- 35.4 The DLO Scheduler will:
- check the property's current anniversary date and will schedule a gas service if the anniversary date is within the next 3 months. If not, the scheduler will book in a gas safety check. (Please see the [Gas Safety Management Procedures](#) for more information); and
  - return the gas safety check workflow to the VO as complete and email a copy of the CP12 from GAS TAG to [capital.programmes@moray.gov.uk](mailto:capital.programmes@moray.gov.uk).
- 35.5 The VO will then:
- forward the workflow notification to the relevant VO as soon as possible; and
  - upload the CP12 to the Void Doc Set on Sharepoint for the VO to check for signing off the Letting Standard Checklist.
- 35.6 **The VOs must update the Gas Safety Check Completed Date 'GCHK' void event in iWorld using the date from the CP12 and record it as complete on the Letting Standard Inspection Form. No property will be handed back to the housing team until the check has taken place.**
36. **Energy performance certificates – Please refer to the [CPT EPC Procedures](#) on SP**
- 36.1 [The European Directive on the energy performance of buildings](#) states that the Council have a legal responsibility to ensure that energy performance certificates (EPC) are made available to new tenants.
- 36.2 On notification of the void the VO will check the EPC database and see if the property has a valid EPC.
- 36.3 If the property has a valid EPC the team member will request the VO check the property to see if the certificate has been left by the outgoing tenant.
- 36.4 If there is no EPC at the property, the VO will notify the CPT Admin team who will immediately print off a copy. The CPT Admin will laminate the EPC and pass it to the VO. It is the VO's responsibility to ensure that a valid EPC is displayed at the property before the new tenant has signed the Tenancy Agreement.

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36.5 If the VO identifies that the EPC has been left at the property by the outgoing tenant they must notify the relevant Super patch by email.

### **37 Completion of void works**

37.1 DLO void supervisor will email the VO. Where possible this will be prior to the works being completed but will be no later than the works completion date and hand back the keys to the VO.

37.2 Within **2 working days** of the works completion the VO will:

- update the 'Keys from Contractor to HPO' KCPO Void Event on iWorld including a comment that the keys are in the keysafe;
- complete a 'Post Works Inspection' of the property leaving all internal doors, loft hatches and cupboard doors, etc. open to minimise any contact during the viewing or transmission;
- complete and sign (where necessary) the:
  - 'Letting Standard Inspection Form';
  - SHQS Form;
  - 'Outstanding Works Form' where necessary;
- store all relevant paperwork in the Void Doc Set in SharePoint;
- update the 'HPO Post Works Inspection' HPOP Void Event in iWorld;
- update the 'All Works Complete – WORC' Void Event in iWorld.

37.3 **A property must only be signed off by the VO if it meets all areas of the Letting Standard.** If the VO identifies repairs they deem to be unsatisfactory/incomplete, or the standard of cleanliness has not been met, the VO will:

- immediately refer the property back to the DLO void supervisor/Co-ordinator for immediate remedial action; and
- immediately notify the Allocations Team by emailing [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk).

37.4 The DLO will ensure defective/incomplete works are remedied as soon as possible (maximum 3 working days) and will notify the VO of the revised completion date for further inspection.

37.5 The VO will be responsible for ensuring that all details of completion dates are passed to the Allocations Team at [voids@moray.gov.uk](mailto:voids@moray.gov.uk).

37.6 The key safe should be removed and keys handed back to the AHO by the VO. The VO must update the 'Keys from HPO to AHO' KPOB Void Event in iWorld to confirm this.

### **38. Legionella**

- 38.1 Detailed information on Legionella checks for void properties can be found in the [Legionella - Standard Operating Procedures](#). **The text highlighted red applies.**
- 38.2 Voids that have a longer timescale and no heating should be drained down during winter months. This should be requested by:
- the AHO if the void has been handed back with all work complete but is taking longer to allocate; or
  - by the VO if the void works is still being carried out.
- 38.3 Where any void is left for more than a week after the keys are returned to the AHO, prior to sign up, the AHO must raise an order for the DLO to carry out a legionella check. Similarly if there has been a delay in the allocations process and the void works are completed, the AHO will raise an order for a legionella check.

## **55. SharePoint documentation**

- 56.1 The [General Data Protection Regulations](#) (GDPR) controls how the Council use the personal information of its service users. The GDPR includes a statutory duty to make sure information is kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary. In order to meet this requirement the CAT must ensure that all documents and document sets relating to the previous tenancy, including the void document set, have been closed and sent to the Record Centre. A [guide](#) has been created which gives details on how this should be completed.
- 56.2 The Housing Stats and Information Team will supply CAT with a report showing voids ending in the previous month. The CAT will use this report to identify document sets relating to the outgoing tenant(s) and enter the closure date to send all files to the Record Centre.

## **57. Void Period – Energy Billing – CAT Process**

- 57.1 MC may still be responsible for paying the energy used during the void period (from the tenancy termination date until the supply is taken over by TSM & EDF CAT). Energy bills for voids are forwarded to CAT from the Mailroom. Some are from the original supplier as the new supplier has not been able to take over the supply until a certain date. These bills can be incorrect and based on estimated readings. Where SSE are not the original supplier there may be a bill that has been sent to the property so MC not always notified until the new tenant makes us aware of the bill.



57.2 TSM & EDF will email any bills for outstanding void periods to [House.Type@moray.gov.uk](mailto:House.Type@moray.gov.uk). The CAT team will monitor the inbox and deal with the bill by:

- checking the void period;
- checking the void start meter reading. The EDF engineer, when they install the new smart meter within 2-5 days of the property being void will leave a card by the new smart meter with the old meter serial number and meter reading. VO should record this on the Void Repair Sheet, Property Inspection Form in the Void Doc Set in Sharepoint for the CAT Team to access for the void start reading;
- clarify the void end meter reading by emailing TSM Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) and request the smart meter reading EDF take on the tenant start date; and
- email TSM Void Support Team on [partners@tenantssavemoney.com](mailto:partners@tenantssavemoney.com) (or whichever company applies) with the correct opening reading and where possible, if we have it, the closing meter readings.

57.3 Once CAT are satisfied that the bill is correct they will:

- create a Finance AP Data sheet which can be found on the interchange [http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int\\_standard/Page\\_110725.html](http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_110725.html);
- email the bill and the AP Data sheet to the AHM, who then authorises it with electronic signature; and
- email the bill and AP Data Sheet to [Invoices@moray.gov.uk](mailto:Invoices@moray.gov.uk) for payment.

57.4 If there is a credit balance on the bill, the CAT must check the period of the credit as the money may not belong to Moray Council, it may belong to the former tenant. The cheques are then sent to Sheila Strong with a covering Cheque Form (available in the Void Doc Set on Sharepoint). CAT must indicate if the cheque amount is due to MC or if it needs to be paid to the former Rent Account.

**Commented [EA15]:** TSM/EDF should have both these readings as explained in bullets above. Will leave this in until we see how the initial process goes and if not necessary can review and remove.

APPENDIX 1

**VOID CLASSIFICATIONS, PATHS and EVENTS from 1 JULY 2019**

<b>VOID CLASSIFICATIONS</b>	
<b>Provisional</b> – All voids initially sit at provisional until AHOs confirm it as a mainstream void. Supported Accommodation properties remain on the provisional classification for the duration of the void period.	
<b>Confirmed</b> - all voids that are expected to take <b>up to 20 working days</b> to complete the repairs.	
<b>Long Term</b> - captures all void that are expected to take <b>more than 20 working days</b> .	
<b>VOID PATHS</b>	
<b>PROVISIONAL</b>	
<b>No Allocated Paths</b>	<p>All voids recorded will automatically default to the Provisional Path when either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A notice received date is entered into the tenancy screens; or</li> <li>• A tenancy is ended with no notice.</li> </ul> <p><b>It is the AHO's responsibility to change the classification when they confirm the void.</b></p> <p>The Provisional Path will then <b>only be used by the Supported Accommodation Team when TA properties become void.</b>  <b>Note</b> - Provisional Voids are automatically excluded from the Housing Stats reports.</p> <p>There are no paths assigned to the Provisional classification.</p>
<b>CONFIRMED</b>	
<b>Up to 5 Days</b>	Each path represents the number of days expected to complete the void repair work.
<b>Up to 10 Days (*default path)</b>	
<b>Up to 15 Days</b>	
<b>Extended (inc. minor asbestos)</b>	The 'Extended' Path captures voids that are expected to take more than 15 working days but no more than 20 working days to complete the works. Examples of minor asbestos include floor tiles and Aertex ceilings.
<b>LONG TERM</b>	
<b>Asbestos - Major Committee Decision</b>	The paths under the Long Term classification correspond with the Scottish Housing Regulator's <a href="#">technical guidance</a> on exclusion reasons for void performance reporting.
<b>Decant</b>	
<b>Fire, flood, structural</b>	
<b>Major Works</b>	

<b>Keys held by police</b>	
<b>Death – reasonable time to clear house</b>	

AHOs should always:

- place voids into the 'Confirmed' classification and use the 'Default 10 day path' until either the pre-termination or post termination inspection has been completed (depending on the type of termination); and
- change the void classification and/or path depending on the level of works required.

**NOTE** - There is no limitation on the number of times a void can change classifications and/or paths. VOs should constantly review current voids to ensure they are on the correct path. This keeps other teams updated. Other staff and teams rely on this information so they can carry out their part of the process.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Event description</b>	<b>Input Required or System Generated (SG)</b>	<b>By Who?</b>
NOTI	Notice given by tenant (or N.O.K)	SG – by CAT entering termination date in iWorld	-
ACKL	Acknowledgement letter	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>AHO</b>
OFFY	Offerable	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>AHO when first void. VO if long term void has been at OFFN – should be changed to OFFY 4 weeks before All Works Complete Target Date.</b>
PRTI	Pre-termination inspection after notice	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
NAPI	No Access Pre-term Inspection	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
OFF	Offered	SG - by HNOs Offer Letter	-
VIEW	Viewing	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>AHO</b>
REFD	Refused	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>AHO/HNO</b>
ACCD	Accepted	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>AHO/HNO</b>
	Offer Withdrawn	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>HNO</b>
KEYS	Keys received from outgoing tenant	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>CAT</b>
VOID	Property void	SG – once NOTI and KEYS void events being completed.	-
KEYP	Keys from AHO to HPO/VO	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
PTPI	Post termination inspection by HPO/VO	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>

OFFN	Not Offerable – if void works due to take more than 4 weeks (20 working days)	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
WOR	Works order raised	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
KEYC	Keys to contractor	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
GCHK	Gas Safety Check Completed Date	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
WORC	All works complete	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
KCPO	Keys from contractor to HPO/VO	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
HPOP	HPO/VO Post works inspection	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
KPOB	Keys from HPO/VO to AHO	<b>INPUT REQUIRED</b>	<b>VO</b>
LET	Let	SG – once the new tenancy is completed on iWorld.	-