

## OVERCROWDING

Overcrowding can lead to physical and mental health problems, especially those related to child development.

### **How do I know if my home is overcrowded?**

Two pieces of law deal with overcrowding in dwellings.

We use the **Housing Health and Safety Rating System** to assess the risks posed to occupiers when their home provides insufficient space for normal living and the problem results in a housing hazard. If the hazard is serious enough it will be classed as a Category 1 Crowding and Space hazard.

We also apply a separate **overcrowding standard** which relates the number and ages of family members to the number and sizes of the living and sleeping rooms in the dwelling. This standard is called Statutory Overcrowding. It is very old (it dates back to 1937) and by today's standards, very low; we hardly ever find a dwelling that fails to meet it.

### **Getting an overcrowding assessment**

If you think you may be living in overcrowded conditions the first step in the process is to fill in the form attached to this leaflet. This will enable us to judge whether your home is likely to be seriously overcrowded.

Once we have examined the completed form we will contact you to visit your home if it does seem likely to be seriously overcrowded.

If a visit is made, we will make a full assessment of the property under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and may take appropriate enforcement action to resolve any defects we find, whether or not they relate directly to overcrowding.

### **What happens next?**

If when we apply the Housing Health and Safety Rating System we find serious overcrowding we will inform Devon Home Choice. They will consider whether the housing application should have a higher priority than before. Their decision may include placing the application in a higher Home Choice band. This will not be higher than Home Choice band B

Where there is a serious risk; we will discuss your wishes with you and consider your particular case. We will consider if any legal action needs to be taken.

Where there is no risk or the risk is not serious we may make your landlord aware but no further action will be taken.

**Private Sector Housing, Exeter City Council,  
Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter EX1 1RQ**

**Tel: 01392 265193  
Fax: 01392 265844**

**E-mail: [housingprivatesector@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:housingprivatesector@exeter.gov.uk)**



**This information is available in other formats including large print or tape.**

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