



1. Choice Based Lettings (CBL) - Legislation

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 and Social Housing Allocation (Amendment) Regulations 2016 authorised and obliged Local Authorities to include for Choice Based Letting as part of its Adopted Allocations Scheme. A Housing Authority that has made provision for choice-based letting in its allocation scheme may designate as a bid dwelling any dwelling covered by the Act, other than accommodation provided by Approved Housing Bodies.

2. CBL – DCC Allocations Scheme

Extract from Adopted Allocations Policy 2018:

The Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2009 gives Local Authorities powers to include system of Choice Based Lettings (CBL) in their Allocation Scheme and can be particularly successful in areas with units, which prove difficult to let.

- CBL is a new approach to letting homes, which allows tenants and prospective tenants to bid for the available designated properties in which they are interested.
- Where there are 2 or more bids for the same property, the applicant with the highest Priority Status in accordance with the Allocations Scheme will be offered the property.
- The Allocations Officer may designate properties for CBL.

The general procedures that apply are set out in the scheme.

3. CBL – Operation

Choice Based Letting is an approach to letting homes that allows tenants and prospective tenants to bid for the available designated properties in which they are interested and for which they are eligible in terms of need.

- a) When a property that becomes available for re-let and has been designated to the CBL Scheme, it will be advertised in the Local Area Office, the Allocations & Transfer Section and on the Dublin City Council website.
- b) Expressions of interest are invited and applicants are asked to register their interest with the Allocations Section/ Area Offices. There is a timeframe for applicants to register their interest.
- c) If a number of applicants express an interest in a property, the final offer will be to the applicant deemed eligible in accordance with the order of Priority set out in the Allocations Scheme.

- d) Choice Based Lettings are advertised through the Dublin City Council website, in Local offices and sent to the City Councillors for the area.
- e) The order of selection of candidates is according to the Scheme of Letting Priorities.

4. CBL Applicants with Specific Disadvantages

If an applicant has an issue with low/no literacy or digital literacy, support is available from staff both in the central and local offices and support workers in homeless services.

There are further supports provided by community based services, Citizen Information and advocacy organisations.

DCC is in the process of redeveloping its Housing IT system. We are seeking to include an option for automatic selection of candidates for Choice Based lettings. This would allow a candidate to be automatically included as a bid, where the letting meets the parameters of their housing need and area of choice.

5. CBL – Outcomes in DCC

Choice based lettings allow applicants an opportunity to apply for housing in their chosen area and applicants can be proactive regarding their own housing situation.

Choice Based Lettings takes away from applicants having to refuse properties when they are not interested in a particular area/complex/estate within their area of choice.

Under traditional lettings, applicants who refuse two offers will have their application postponed on the waiting list for a period of 12 months and that period will not count for the purposes of their time on the waiting list. Choice Based Lettings allows for applicants to apply only for properties they are interested in. This reduces the number of refusals per property and the void re-letting period is much shorter.

Over a twelve month period between 2020 and 2021, there were 144 properties let through CBL and a refusal rate of 4%. This compares with a 28% refusal rate on non-CBL lettings over the same period.

6. CBL - Potential Future Development

When DCC's Housing IT system is redeveloped over the coming months, it will allow for increased use of CBLs and will ease the burden of applying, as applicants will be able to save details and access more information. CBL works best where the maximum information about the property is given upfront.

The system should be simple and transparent so that ideally applicants can get a sense of the position of the successful applicant for the most recent house/flat let in this road/complex. This might not be suitable for lists within Band 1, which would identify the household's needs, but lettings to Bands 2 and 3 could have the position of the successful published on the site.

While originally conceived for lower demand it is also useful on a broader scale to facilitate choice. If the system is well-designed, it can give people greater information and options.

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