**TAMESIDE Cold Weather Policy (CWP)**

**Operational procedure**

CWP runs from 1st December to 31st March each year.

If the temperature is due to be below zero for 3 or more consecutive days, the housing authority can exercise discretion and provide temporary accommodation for applicants where there would not normally be an interim duty. This is because extreme cold in itself creates a temporary priority need.

The Tameside Housing Advice (THA) Manager will check the temperature forecast on a daily basis from 1st Dec, and will issue an email to all THA officers to confirm the beginning and end of any CWP placement periods.

**Application Process:**

Applicants requiring accommodation under CWP must present to THA - see website: <http://www.tamesidehousingadvice.org/>

Tameside Housing Advice Centre
119-125 Old Street
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 7RL

* During working hours, applicants must present in person (Monday-Friday 10am-3pm). (Telephone lines are open Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-4pm, 0161 331 2700)
* Out of Hours placements may be made in an emergency. The out of hours number is 0161 331 2888
* Applicants who present to THA between 10am and 1pm MUST receive a full Triage assessment.
* Applicants who present and are placed into accommodation after 1pm MUST represent to THA between 10am and 1pm the next working day for Triage assessment.
* Applicants who have been placed who do not represent for Triage the next day will have their accommodation cancelled.

**Placement Process:**

* In order to be placed under CWP, applicants must:
	+ Have a local connection to Tameside
	+ Be homeless
	+ Have no accommodation available to them (in Tameside or elsewhere)
* Applicants do not have to have priority need, or to be eligible for housing benefit in order to be placed, as long as the placing officer is confident that the applicant’s only alternative option is rough sleeping.
* Applicants MUST accept the first offer of accommodation made to them. NB. This may or may not be in Tameside.
* Applicants will not be placed immediately in supported or licensed accommodation under CWP, but may be referred to suitable accommodation following a needs assessment
* If an applicant is evicted from or gives up accommodation secured under CWP they will not be eligible for alternative accommodation during the same CWP period, except at the discretion of the THA Manager
* If an applicant who has been evicted from or given up accommodation secured under CWP applies for accommodation during a subsequent CWP period, this placement shall ONLY be made at the discretion on the THA Manager
* CWP accommodation will be initially for the 3 nights that the temperature is forecast to be at or below 0oC. Accommodation will then be extended on a night by night basis, for as long as the temperature remains below 0oC
* Accommodation will end once the temperature is forecast to rise above 0oC
* During the period of accommodation, the applicant and his/her advocates should take all necessary steps to secure alternative accommodation at the end of the CWP accommodation
* Once the CWP period had ended, accommodation will only be continued if:
	+ THA have reason to believe there is priority need from other circumstances than cold weather and therefore have an interim duty to accommodate whilst they carry out investigations
	+ THA have carried out investigations and found the applicant to be unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and therefore have full duty to provide temporary accommodation until settled accommodation can be secured
	+ The applicant has requested a review of their homeless decision and Tameside MBC are exercising their power to continue to provide accommodation pending the outcome of review.
* Once CWP accommodation has been ended, the applicant may represent and be accommodated under any subsequent CWP periods where the temperature is forecast to be 0oC for 3 or more consecutive days

**Homeless Decisions**

* If the applicant has received a Homeless Decision within the previous 6 months, a homeless application will only be taken if the applicant can provide evidence of a significant and relevant change in circumstances
* Where possible, the Prevention or Housing Advice Officer should make a same day decision based on the information given at Triage.
* If this is not possible, a homelessness application should be opened and the applicant should be referred for an Options Interview
* Applicants MUST be notified in writing of their Homeless Decision

The above procedure will only be varied in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the THA Manager.