



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt,
Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce
Department of Justice,
Home Affairs and Migration

IPAS House Rules

Updated June 2026

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1 Introduction to the IPAS House Rules

The International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) provides accommodation and associated services for people applying for International Protection. IPAS is a part of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. Accommodation centres are managed on behalf of IPAS by companies under contract to IPAS.

This document outlines the rules that must be followed while living in accommodation provided by IPAS. The House Rules set out in this document have been made in accordance with Section 83 of the International Protection Act 2026 (referred to hereafter as “the Act”). This Act came into operation on 12 June 2026 and lays down the standards for the reception of international protection applicants while their international protection application is being determined. While you are a resident in IPAS accommodation, you must observe the rules as set out in this document and under the Act.

By residing in accommodation provided by IPAS you are agreeing to abide by these House Rules.

2 Breaches of the IPAS House Rules

When a breach of the IPAS House Rules by a resident has occurred, and the breach is considered to be of a minor nature and is not part of a pattern of breaches, the Manager will draw the issue to the resident’s attention and try to resolve the issue locally – either through a verbal warning or a written warning.

However, if the House Rule breach is serious or repeated, centre management is required to submit an incident report directly to IPAS. To submit the incident report, the centre manager will:

- examine the breach; and
- seek the views of the resident/s involved, unless unsafe to do so.
- send an incident report to IPAS.

If there are any concerns or issues relating to children (anyone under the age of 18 years), the centre is required to notify both Tusla and IPAS. If the breach also constitutes a breach of Irish law or presents a significant threat to the good running order of the centre, the centre manager will be required to notify An Garda Síochána (the Irish police).

Under the Act a resident must comply with the House Rules. If a serious breach or repeated breaches of the House Rules has occurred, the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and

Migration can reduce or withdraw (Section 86 of the Act) or re-designate reception conditions (Section 76 of the Act). This means that if you have breached the House Rules, you may be transferred to a different IPAS accommodation centre, or have your reception conditions, which includes your accommodation, other relevant supports and the daily expense allowance, reduced or withdrawn.

Transfer to a different IPAS centre

In line with Section 76 of the Act, if a decision is made to transfer you to a different centre, IPAS will write to you with your transfer date and new IPAS accommodation centre. IPAS will also send a copy of this letter to the centre manager.

Withdrawal of reception conditions

In line with Section 86 of the Act, if a resident has seriously or repeatedly breached the House Rules, the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, in the interest of maintaining good order and the safe and effective management of accommodation centres, can immediately and without notice, withdraw reception conditions from a resident. This means that you would no longer be accommodated by IPAS.

Where a decision is made to reduce or withdraw reception conditions, and the resident is no longer offered accommodation by IPAS, the Minister will write to the person with the reasons for the decision.

If you are unhappy with the decision to reduce or withdraw accommodation services, you may request a review of the decision by IPAS. In line with Section 89 of the Act, you may appeal this decision.

IPAS provides reception conditions for international protection applicants. If you have been issued a final decision, IPAS may withdraw your reception conditions.

3 The Rules

3.1 The Law

You must obey Irish Law. You must not engage in any criminal activity. While you are a resident of IPAS accommodation, any criminal activity in the State will be treated as a serious breach of the House Rules. This applies to criminal activity which has taken place in IPAS accommodation, and criminal activity that has taken place outside of IPAS accommodation within the State.

If anyone breaks the criminal law, they will be reported to An Garda Síochána (Irish Police). Managers have a duty to report all criminal issues to An Garda Síochána and they have no discretion in this matter. For any matter concerning child protection, managers have a duty to report these issues to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, and also have no discretion in this matter.

Criminal activity referred to here includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- violence, including domestic violence
- theft
- vandalism
- consuming, supplying or storing illegal drugs
- being drunk and disorderly
- sexual harassment or sexual assault
- racism, homophobia or intimidation of any kind
- deliberately making false, malicious and defamatory statements, or
- endangering or harming the health and safety of other residents or centre staff.

Such conduct is illegal under Irish law.

3.1.1 ‘Report and Reside’ requirements

If you are subject to the ‘report and reside’ requirements of section 102 and 103 of the International Protection Act 2026, you must live at the place specified by the Minister. If the place specified is the accommodation offered to you while the State decides on your application for protection, then you must reside there unless the requirement is varied or withdrawn by an immigration officer.

Any specific reporting requirements and the penalties for failure to comply with them are as stated in the letter provided to you when being assigned to your accommodation.

If you do not cooperate with these requirements, you will be committing an offence and may be penalised under section 86 of the International Protection Act 2026. This may result in the material reception conditions available to you being reduced or withdrawn. If you fail to comply with the reporting requirements, or if you do not remain available as required to the competent

authorities, your application for International Protection may be implicitly withdrawn under Section 71(f) of the Act.

3.2 Behaviour

3.2.1 Respect

You must behave in a respectful manner and you must treat everyone you meet with respect. You must also respect the property in the centre and the property of other residents. You must not do anything that would compromise the safety or good order of your centre. In IPAS accommodation you will encounter many persons in addition to those working and living in the centre including IPAS, other Government departments and agencies, NGOs, members of the community, and residents' visitors. All residents must treat all persons with respect at all times.

3.2.2 Violent or aggressive behaviour

There is a strict policy of zero tolerance to acts of violence or aggression within IPAS accommodation. You must not act in a violent or aggressive manner in IPAS accommodation. Acts of violence to a person, including a family member, or animal includes slapping, punching, grabbing, kicking, choking, pinching, biting, burning, stabbing or shooting. Acting in a violent or aggressive manner also includes making threats, shouting, blocking doorways by standing in them, use of physical size to intimidate, throwing objects, or punching walls.

You must not engage in derogatory, discriminative, racist or homophobic behaviour. This includes the use of slurs or making offensive jokes or remarks.

You must not engage in harassment or bullying behaviour. Harassment or bullying is persistent behaviour aimed at causing distress in others and can include verbal abuse, threats, demeaning remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts towards others.

3.2.3 Possession of weapons

You may not have or store anything that is commonly used as a weapon, including knives, imitation firearms, ceremonial swords etc.

3.2.4 Noise

You must not create excessive noise, especially between 10 at night and 8 in the morning. You must consider other residents and neighbours and remember that all residents have the right to quiet enjoyment of the centre.

3.2.5 Smoking

You must not smoke or vape (e-cigarettes) anywhere inside the centre. You must not cover any smoke detectors as this could be a serious fire risk.

3.2.6 Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

You must not consume or store alcohol or illegal drugs in the centre. Persons under the influence of alcohol, non-prescription drugs or substances which affects their behaviour will not be permitted onsite.

3.3 Health and safety

3.3.1 Centre Manager instructions

You must not do anything that would impede the general health and safety of the centre. This includes, but is not limited to, having in your room or possession items that may impact the fire safety of the centre or could be hazardous to people's health.

In the interest of the smooth running, good order, and safety of the centre and persons in the centre, you must follow the directions of centre management and centre staff in relation to all accommodation matters.

3.3.2 Room Inspections

Centre management must carry out regular inspections of all rooms within a centre. You must cooperate with these inspections. You will be notified when inspections take place, this will usually be on a recurring predictable basis. There may be a need for inspections outside of this schedule; in such cases after three requests to see your room without success, the manager may give you formal notice that they will inspect the room on a specified date and time. The manager may enter rooms unannounced if they believe there is an immediate health and safety risk.

Your room may also be inspected by:

- staff from the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration including IPAS staff, or
- other inspectors appointed by the Department.

The purpose of inspections by IPAS or on behalf of IPAS is to make sure that all health and safety requirements are met; that the company providing your accommodation is meeting its contractual obligations; and that you are receiving all relevant associated services.

These inspections by or on behalf of IPAS are unannounced. Neither the centre manager nor you will be told when these inspections will take place. If you are not there, the inspection may take place in your absence.

3.3.3 Your Room

You are responsible for ensuring you keep your room clean, tidy and aired at all times. You must notify centre management if an issue arises such as persistent damp, mould, or excessive insect activity.

Small electrical items and adapters can be a fire hazard, all such items must be approved by the centre manager who will ensure they meet the necessary safety standards.

You may not have large electrical items such as fridges or freezers in rooms. If you do not already have access to a fridge and you require fridge space for temperature-controlled medicines or breastmilk please speak to your centre manager who will provide a solution. The solution may be a small fridge provided by the centre which can safely be stored in a room or it may be access to a fridge elsewhere in the centre.

You may not have furniture in your room that is not provided by the centre.

Excessive belongings causing clutter or obstructions is not permitted.

You must keep you room free of fire risks. This includes keeping entry and exit ways clear and not storing items that could be potential fire hazards.

3.3.4 Food and Cooking

You must not store, cook or prepare food in your room. You may not store cooking or food preparation equipment such as blenders, toasters, kettles, microwaves, slow-cookers etc. in your room.

3.3.5 Rubbish

You are responsible for cleaning up after yourself in all areas of the centre, including putting all rubbish in the bins provided and wiping down surfaces.

3.3.6 Pets

You cannot keep pets or animals of any kind in the centre. Properly accredited, registered and verified assistance dogs are permitted. Permission must be sought from IPAS before any assistance dog can be permitted onsite, in line with the IPAS Service Dog Policy.

3.3.7 Vehicles and Light Electric Vehicles

Car parking is not a service provided by IPAS. Should there be parking at a centre, the management and allocation of parking is done at the discretion of centre management. If you have a vehicle parked on the centre grounds, you must be able to prove that:

- you own it;
- it is fully taxed; and
- it is fully insured.

The charging or storage of e-bikes, e-scooters, e-skateboards, their batteries or similar items, is strictly prohibited within the centre building. Some centres may be able to provide outdoor storage or charging facilities; where provided, it is done so at the discretion of centre management and is not guaranteed in any centre.

3.3.8 Visitors

Visiting is generally allowed between 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 8pm. The centre manager may restrict visitation hours and the overall the number of visitors at any time if they believe there might be a health and safety risk.

Visitors may be permitted to enter designated visitor or communal areas. Access to residents' bedrooms or private living areas may be restricted or prohibited depending on the layout and safety requirements of the individual centre. Residents and visitors must follow all instructions provided by centre management regarding visitor access.

Centre managers or security can also deny entry, restrict visitor numbers, or ask visitors to leave if:

- There are identified health and safety or security risks.
- The visitor poses a threat to the anyone present in the centre or centre or residents' property.

In this case, the centre manager will notify IPAS and the resident the reasons for such a refusal. IPAS, and centre management with IPAS approval, may amend the visiting times of a given centre, the length of time visitors can remain at the centre for, and the number of visitors residents can have at any time.

In addition, the following must be observed at all times:

- Visitors must inform staff who they wish to visit and fill in the visitor log.
- Residents must meet their guest.
- Residents must make sure that their guest respects other residents' rights.

- Visitors must sign a form saying they will follow the IPAS House Rules and policies.
- Visitors must sign a waiver in relation to any loss or injury sustained during the visit.
- All visiting minors must be accompanied by an adult and it is not possible for non-resident children to be in the centre without a parent or guardian being present.

While you have a visitor in the centre you are responsible for ensuring they follow the rules and may be responsible for any issues that arise as a result of their behaviour.

3.3.9 Fire Safety

Please ensure you are aware of the nearest fire evacuation route from your room. Details of your evacuation route should be displayed in your bedroom. If they are not, please contact your centre manager. There are fire notices on the walls throughout the centre to help you to understand what to do if there is a fire or a fire drill.

You must co-operate with staff in your centre if they are evacuating the centre due to a fire or a fire drill. The centre will hold fire drills reasonably often, to make sure you know what escape routes you can use and where you should assemble if there is a fire. If there is a fire or fire drill, the alarm will sound continuously. When you hear this alarm, please leave the building immediately by the nearest exit and go to the assembly point.

Parents and guardians should (where it is safe to do so) make sure that they take their children with them when they evacuate the centre. In addition, parents and guardians should tell centre management if any of their children are not on the premises at the time, for example if they are at school.

You must not interfere with fire doors, fire exits, fire notices or fire safety equipment. You must keep fire exits clear at all times. You must not prop open fire doors for any reason. You must not interfere with fire safety equipment including fire extinguishers, fire hoses, or fire alarm equipment.

If you discover a fire, please activate the nearest fire alarm call point and then leave the building immediately. Do not try to tackle the fire yourself.

3.4 Designation of accommodation

Under Section 76 of the Act, the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration will designate the centre where IPAS offers you accommodation. You must comply with IPAS and the centre management's directions in relation to occupying and vacating your room. For operational reasons, IPAS may need to transfer you from one location to another. Within a centre, you

may be required to move from one room to another at the instruction of IPAS or of centre management. You must cooperate with any location transfers and room transfers.

If you refuse an offer of IPAS accommodation for any reason it may be considered a refusal of reception conditions and you may not be entitled to subsequent offers of accommodation.

The only instance in which requests for accommodation in specific locations can be considered are in exceptional cases of serious medical needs. Please refer to the IPAS Protocol for Medical Transfer Requests, if you wish to make a request: [https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/7027f7e8/IPAS Medical Transfer Request 2026.pdf](https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/7027f7e8/IPAS_Medical_Transfer_Request_2026.pdf)

Requests for specific accommodations with IPAS accommodation such as single-room occupancy, can only be considered in exceptional circumstances where it is evidenced that it is essential to meet your health care needs. Please refer to the IPAS Protocol for Requesting Additional Consideration on Medical Grounds, if you wish to make a request:

[https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/191e37d5/IPAS Medical Consideration Request 2026.pdf](https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/191e37d5/IPAS_Medical_Consideration_Request_2026.pdf)

3.4.1 Moving Accommodation Centre

No one has the right to live in a particular centre. You may be required to transfer to a different centre. You will be informed of any transfer ahead of it happening. Refusing to cooperate with transfers is a breach of the House Rules. Absence from IPAS Accommodation for those with 'report and reside' requirements

If your application is subject to the asylum border procedure, you are required under section 184 of the Act to reside in an Asylum Border Procedure centre while your application is being examined. You must live in the centre and confirm your presence on a daily basis. Persons in the Border Procedure will not be eligible to avail of the notified IPAS holiday periods. Your presence will be confirmed using the electronic means or other means provided. Your centre manager can explain this to you. If you are going to be away from the centre overnight for medical reasons, let your centre manager know as soon as possible.

If you fail to report on 3 consecutive days you will be in breach of your reporting duties under the Act and this will be communicated to the IPO.

As a consequence of your absence from your designated accommodation without authorisation, access to your accommodation will be withdrawn and the IPO may decide to deem your application as implicitly withdrawn under Section 71(f) of the Act. IPAS have no input or involvement in this decision.

3.4.2 Absence from IPAS Accommodation for residents not subject to 'report and reside' requirements

In line with Section 76 of the Act, accommodation is offered to you on the understanding that you will be living in your allocated accommodation centre on a daily basis. It is the responsibility of IPAS to ensure that accommodation is available to all international protection applicants without sufficient means and that all allocated beds are used on a continuous basis. Attendance in centres is monitored by centre managers and by IPAS.

IPAS advises centre managers of the permitted holiday periods. These holiday periods allow for residents to be absent for a specific period of time (this does not apply to those with report and reside requirements, see above). Please ensure to complete the necessary form and provide this to your centre manager if you wish to be absent during this permitted time.

It is important to note that outside of the notified holiday periods, absences are only permitted in exceptional circumstances and where authorised in advance by your centre manager.

If you, or your children, plan to be absent from your accommodation centre, you must notify your centre manager of your planned absence in advance. You must complete the documentation (Notice of Absence from Accommodation form) available from your accommodation provider. This documentation must then be submitted to your centre manager who will either approve or refuse your request.

IPAS centre managers operate a verification system to verify residents' absence from the centre. As part of the House Rules, you are obliged to cooperate with this system. Unauthorised absences will be reported to IPAS.

3.4.3 Absent Without Authorisation

If you are absent for a period outside the permitted holiday times, and without authorisation as described in 3.4.2, this absence will be deemed as "absent without authorisation" for the purposes of 3.4.4 and 3.4.5.

3.4.4 Duration of Unauthorised Absences

Where an unauthorised absence exceeds the following periods, you will be in breach of the House Rules and subject to the actions outlined in 3.4.5:

- Absent without authorisation for 7 consecutive days
- Absent without authorisation for 10 days within a continuous 4-week period.

3.4.5 Removal of Access to Accommodation

As per Section 86(3)(f) of the Act, where you are absent without authorisation, for the periods outlined in 3.4.4, the following steps may be taken:

For International Protection Applicants

- Accommodation at your location will be withdrawn. You may be offered accommodation at an alternative location, if such accommodation is available.

Or

- Reception conditions will be withdrawn in accordance with Section 86 of the Act and access to IPAS accommodation will be removed.

In both cases, your bed at your current accommodation centre will be reallocated to another International Protection applicant.

For those in IPAS accommodation whose application has been determined

There is no legal requirement to provide accommodation for IPAS residents who have been issued with a final decision by the Minister of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. Where you have received such a permission and are deemed to be “absent without authorisation” from your accommodation centre, your accommodation will be withdrawn and reassigned to an International Protection applicant.

3.4.6 Absences may affect Daily Expenses Allowance

Being absent from your centre may affect whether or not you are entitled to the Daily Expenses Allowance. Please also see Rules 3.5.5 regarding children’s absence from centres.

3.4.7 If you are moving out permanently

You must tell the centre manager if you are moving out of the centre permanently.

3.4.8 Change of Address

If you are a resident in one of IPAS’s centres and you change your address, including being transferred to another accommodation centre, you must write to the relevant authorities including the International Protection Office to let them know. These forms are available online from the IPO at the following address:

<https://www.ipso.gov.ie/en/ipso/pages/customerservicehomepage>

If you do not let the authorities know you are changing address you may fail to receive important notices about your application. This could mean you fail to meet time limits for

lodging documentation, appeals and so on. Under Section 65(2)(b) of the Act, it is your responsibility to update your address with the IPO.

3.4.9 Independent Departure

If you leave Ireland, you need to let the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration know. You will need to provide proof of departure (e.g. boarding pass or passport re-entry stamp) to: voluntaryreturns@justice.ie and the Department will then close your case. Failure to do so may result in a lifetime ban on entry to Ireland and the EU.

3.5 Children

3.5.1 School

You must make sure that your child attends school.

Every child between the ages of 6 and 16 must attend school or otherwise receive an education as per the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Children must complete at least three years of post-primary/secondary school prior to leaving school. Most children begin school in the September after their fourth or fifth birthday.

Once your child is enrolled in school they must attend every day. You must tell the school if your child is missing from school due to illness or other reasons.

3.5.2 Care and Safety

As a parent or legal guardian, you have responsibility for the care and safety of your children.

In Ireland, up to the age of 18 years, a person is legally a child. You must ensure that your children are cared for by an appropriate adult when you are not in the centre.

In Ireland, slapping or hitting a child is not allowed by any adult either in the home or at school and all forms of corporal punishment of children are against the law, such as under Children First Act 2015 and Education Act 1998. This will be treated as a crime and Managers have an obligation to refer such incidents to An Garda Síochána and Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.

3.5.3 Child Protection and Welfare Safeguarding Policy

IPAS has a child protection policy in place in each of its centres. IPAS has published [Child Protection Policy and Welfare Safeguarding](#). Each centre has their own Child Safeguarding Policy and Statement and you can get a copy of it from the centre's staff. Under the terms of

this policy, you must make sure that children and young people are treated with respect. You must always make sure to keep them safe and to look after their general welfare.

3.5.4 Supervising Children in the Accommodation

Parents and guardians have responsibility for their children at all times. Parents and guardians must ensure their children have adequate supervision while resident in IPAS accommodation.

It is parents and guardians' responsibility to ensure that their children are safe and cared for. If a child is believed to be at risk, it is the duty of centre staff to follow IPAS's Child Protection and Welfare Safeguarding Policy, and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

Centre staff cannot care for your children. Please make appropriate childminding and babysitting arrangements if you are not in the centre. Children must not be left overnight with other residents except on exceptional basis, with prior approval of centre management. If you leave your child in the care of another adult resident in the centre for any amount of time, you must complete the form found in Appendix 5 of the Child Protection and Welfare Safeguarding Policy – your centre manager will be able to provide you with this form.

If a parent leaves a child unsupervised, ignores the house rules, or places a child at risk, staff are **required by law to report the matter to Tusla** as a child welfare and protection concern. Tusla is the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children.

3.5.5 Overnight Stays Elsewhere

As part of the Child Protection and Welfare Safeguarding Policy, you must tell the centre manager in advance if your child is going to stay overnight somewhere other than the centre.

You must give the manager the name and address of the person with whom your child is staying, and the date you expect them to return – this must be done by completing the form found in Appendix 5 of the Child Protection and Welfare Safeguarding Policy – your centre manager will be able to provide you with this form. If you do not do this, your child may be reported as a missing person to Tusla and An Garda Síochána (Irish Police).

4 Complaints Procedure

This section sets out the IPAS Complaints Procedure. If you have a complaint in relation to your accommodation you must follow this procedure in order to have the matter handled quickly and efficiently.

In exceptional circumstances you may make a complaint directly to IPAS without speaking to your centre manager. This should only be done in cases where you feel there is a genuine risk associated with speaking to your centre manager or where there is an allegation of abuse or harm to a resident by centre staff. You must explain why you are making the complaint directly to IPAS and IPAS may agree to consider the complaint without the procedure being followed.

Making a complaint will not affect your international protection application.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively and, insofar as possible, in confidence by centre staff and IPAS. However in order to investigate a complaint they may need to consult other people involved.

Third party acting on your behalf

You may nominate an individual to speak to IPAS on your behalf; they may be a friend, family member, solicitor, or support worker. If another person is contacting IPAS on your behalf, they must provide written and signed authorisation from you which states that the Department may communicate with them on your behalf.

When making your complaint, you may seek assistance from a friend, relative, member of a support group, or another person you would like to assist you. However, IPAS and centre management retain the right to communicate directly with you regarding your complaint.

The steps

The IPAS Complaints Procedure has four steps:

Step 1: Informally to Centre Manager

When you first encounter an issue relating to your accommodation or the associated services provided in your centre you must speak to your centre manager and give them the opportunity to address the issue informally.

Step 2: Formally to Centre Manager

If you have spoken informally to your centre manager and are not satisfied with the outcome, you can make a formal complaint, in writing, to your centre manager. Your manager has 14 days to respond in writing to this complaint. The complaint can be submitted via email or it can be handwritten.

In a formal complaint to the centre manager you must include the following information:

- Your name
- Your TRN
- Details of the complaint
- Details of bringing the complaint informally to the attention of the centre manager including any outcomes proposed or actioned.

Step 3: Formally to IPAS

If you have submitted a formal complaint to your centre manager and are not satisfied with the outcome, or if they have failed to respond within the 14 days, you can then make the complaint directly to IPAS by emailing the IPAS Helpdesk at ipasinbox@justice.ie or by post to IPAS Customer Services team, PO Box 11487, Dublin 2.

In order to investigate your complaint IPAS may seek further information from you and may consult your centre manager and other persons involved.

In a complaint to IPAS you must provide the following information:

- The name of your centre
- Your name
- Your TRN
- Details of the complaint
- Copies of the formal complaint to centre management and their response
 - Or
- Details of why you haven't brought the complaint to centre management

Step 4: Appeal to Ombudsman or Ombudsman for Children

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint to IPAS you can appeal the outcome by contacting the Office of the Ombudsman or the Office of the Ombudsman for Children as appropriate.

Office of the Ombudsman:

Telephone - 01 639 5600

Website – www.ombudsman.ie

Office of the Ombudsman for Children:

Telephone - [01 865 6800](tel:018656800)

Website – www.oco.ie

