

## Policy details

Name of policy: <b>Recharge policy</b>	Author name: James Glass
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## Policy Statement

The objective of the 'Rechargeable Repair' policy is to clearly define Rechargeable Items and explain the process for the recovery of rechargeable repairs.

Co-op Homes aims, via the recharge policy to:

- Recover the cost of "Rechargeable Repairs" from tenants and former tenants when the repair carried out is their responsibility.
- Minimize financial loss and deter customers from missing appointments by recharging repeat offenders for missing confirmed appointments.

Co-op Homes may recharge tenants and former tenants for damage to their property resulting from misuse or neglect by tenants or third party visitors to their property.

- This includes damage and/or neglect to fixtures and fittings both internally and externally that cannot be attributable to fair wear and tear through the duration of their tenancy.
- Co-op Homes will seek reimbursement from all tenants and former tenants providing it is financially merited and that they can be traced and identified as being responsible for the damage/neglect.
- Wherever practical and it has been identified that a repair is rechargeable, the customer should be advised that Co-op Homes will seek recovery of the full costs of the works before issuing the repair order

If a customer fails to pay the invoice for the recharge then Co-op Homes may provide a 'reduced' repair service. This is designed to act as a method of reinforcing to customers their responsibilities in maintaining their home and to ensure appointments are kept.

Failure to pay or maintain payments of the recharge may result in the instigation of legal action for the recovery of costs. In accordance with Co-op Homes' internal transfer policy, tenants who have recharge repayments outstanding will be prevented from transferring to another property until all outstanding debts have been cleared

## Definitions

**Rechargeable Repairs** are defined as repairs that are caused by damage to any fixture or fittings internally and externally or to a communal area by a tenant, or by a member of

the tenant's household or any visitor to the tenant's property that cannot be attributed to fair wear and tear through the duration of their tenancy.

This also covers any repairs which are carried out that should have been the tenant's responsibility as defined in section 3.2 and 3.3 of Co-op Homes Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

**Rechargeable costs** include those for abortive call outs or missed confirmed appointments (including those for Gas Safety Checks) with customers or former customers.

### Rechargeable repairs

When a repair is identified as being the responsibility of the tenant and a cost has been incurred by Co-op Homes then an invoice will be sent to the tenant explaining why the charge has been made. A payment plan or one-off payment must then be arranged.

Co-op Homes, being a customer focused organisation understands that accidents happen and there may be occasions where a tenant has caused damage to their home but is not able to pay. The Head of Operations or an authorised employee reviews each rechargeable repair and will agree whether or not to sign off or apply the recharge. This decision will be made taking into consideration but not exclusively limited to the following:

- The cost of the repair.
- The potential impact on customer satisfaction.
- The nature of the damage.
- The customer's behavior (any recent Anti-social Behavior).
- Vulnerability of the customer.

These considerations are designed to ensure that Co-op Homes is able to deliver a fair but flexible service which meets the needs of its customers and its corporate objectives.

All tenants are required to seek permission for any improvement works made to their home. Thus, if a tenant has made alterations to their home which were not authorized in advance of starting the works /or the agreed works are not completed to an acceptable standard, Co-op Homes can recharge the tenant for the cost of making good the work done.

Co-op homes will not withhold permission for improvements without due cause. In these circumstances Co-op Homes will inform the customer of the reasons for the decision.

### Missed appointments

Where a tenant has requested a repairs appointment including a gas servicing appointment and does not permit access to the contractor, or is not at home at the pre-arranged time, this shall be deemed to incur a call-out cost which can be recharged to the tenant.

Where the appointment is for a gas or electrical repair or safety check and the operative is unable to complete the task because of no fuel credit, the cost of this call out may be recharged to the tenant

The cost of this recharge will depend on the type of call-out, for example out of hours appointments cost are likely to be significantly higher than a missed appointment during normal working hours.

Co-op Homes retains the right to apply an additional £50 administration fee to all rechargeable works, including missed appointments, where tenants persistently abuse the service.

### Reduced service

Where it is decided to only offer a tenant a reduced repairs service they will be notified in writing of the change.

The reduced service will be in force until a payment plan is agreed or the debt cleared in full.

If no payment is received from the tenant or an agreement plan is not put in place then Co-op Homes may offer a 'reduced repairs service', subject to the considerations outlined above. In this instance Co-op Homes will only carry out emergency repairs or any repair affecting the health and safety of the customer.

The reduced service will only entitle the customer to repairs that are classed as emergencies or that have a health and safety risk as defined in the Co-op Homes Repairs policy.

After the payment is received, a full repairs service will be reinstated. Any future missed appointments will result in a reduced service being enforced once again.

### Appeals and complaints

Appeals, concerning decisions made by Co-op Homes, should be sent in writing to the Head of Operations and are dealt with in line with Co-op Homes' complaints procedure

### Financial Control