

## Coronavirus (Covid-19) Bulletin- 6 January 2021

### Information for DOI Tenants and First Time Buyers

Further to the Chief Ministers announcement of 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the subsequent advice we have been given, we would like to inform you of changes to our services and how they may affect you.

We have taken steps to ensure that the majority of our workforce will be working from home, which may cause slight delay to response times for general requests and administrative processes.

#### Contacting us

You can still contact the housing team in the usual way and on the numbers below:

All housing and maintenance queries	685955	Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm
Out of hours <b>essential</b> maintenance repairs (see overleaf for details)	494012	after 4pm until 9am each weekday and 24 hours over weekends/bank holidays

Please note that during busy periods you may find the telephone line busy until an officer is available to take your call, your patience in this matter is greatly appreciated. The officer who initially takes your call may need to refer your query to other officers working remotely, you may be provided with an alternate number to call or we can arrange for a colleague to call you back.

Our counter services will be closed until further notice.

#### Paying your rent

Your rent is required to be paid weekly as per your tenancy agreement, there has been no change to this arrangement because of lockdown. If Covid related issues have affected your ability to pay rent then please contact us on **685955** as a matter of urgency to discuss this with a member of the housing team. Alternatively, you can email [housing@gov.im](mailto:housing@gov.im).

In response to the coronavirus outbreak, people who receive benefits at the post office using a MiCard can now be paid directly into their bank account instead. For further details, please visit the Social Security [website](#) or call Social Security on **685656**.

We also encourage tenants to pay their rent by Direct Debit, you can request a direct debit mandate form from the Housing team.

### **Essential Maintenance and Repairs**

As per the last lockdown in 2020, we are prioritising **essential repairs and maintenance work only**. This includes but is not restricted to:

- Loss of electricity
- No heating or hot water
- Burst pipe(s) leading to flooding of your property
- Toilets or drainage failing
- Rain water ingress causing flooding of your property

If you are unsure about whether your request is an emergency, please call **685955** and our maintenance team will assess the priority of the work.

If arrangements are made to carry out any works in your home, in order to minimise the risk of spreading coronavirus, please cooperate fully with our customer services and maintenance teams. This will include answering questions regarding your present household circumstance and practicing safe distancing within your home whilst maintenance works are carried out.

### **Other Services**

Reduced housing administration services are now in operation and as a result processing times may be a little longer than usual for application forms and other routine tasks. We will not be carrying out housing visits or inspections during lockdown.

We will continue to work with all necessary precautions following the latest public health guidance, which is available here <https://covid19.gov.im/>