



BERGEN KOMMUNE

WELCOME TO THE CITY OF BERGEN

Agency for Housing Services



USEFUL INFORMATION FOR OUR TENANTS

We wish you a warm welcome as a tenant with the City of Bergen – Agency for Housing Services (Etat for Boligforvaltning - EBF). This brochure provides useful information for the prospective tenant in a municipal home. You have rights, but you also have obligations. The key ones are explained in this brochure.

EBF owns, operates and rents out municipal housing in Bergen. We have a total of about 5300 residential units, divided between regular rental homes, mental health housing, sheltered housing/assisted living units, and homes for the disabled. Our homes are found in all the city boroughs.

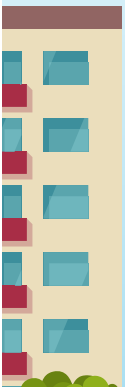
Many city departments play a role in connection with municipal homes. The Agency for Social Housing (Boliagetaten) process applications for regular municipal homes and allocate all regular municipal rental homes. The Offices for Assessment allocate sheltered housing and extended sheltered housing. The Administrative Unit for Mental Health allocates mental health housing, and the Agency for Services for Disabled allocates homes for the disabled.

EBF enters into tenancy agreements (contracts) with those who have been allocated housing from the City of Bergen. Our task is to make sure that your home maintains a standard that is within the requirements.



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WHO DO I CALL?

CITY OF BERGEN – THE AGENCY FOR HOUSING SERVICES (EBF)

Postal address: P.O. Box 7700, 5020 Bergen

Street address: Kaigaten 4, 2nd floor (entrance from Peter Motzfeldts gate).

Email: boligforvaltning@bergen.kommune.no

Webpage: www.bergen.kommune.no/omkommunen/avdelinger/etat-for-boligforvaltning

Here you will find details about EBF, including contact details, application forms, and our information videos in many languages.

CUSTOMER CENTRE

Desk opening hours: 11.00 – 14.00 (thursday 11.00 – 15.00).

Handing in keys, filling in and submitting forms may be done at the EBF letter box weekdays 09.00 – 15.00.

Telephone: 55 56 56 00.

Telephone hours: 08.00 – 14.30.

Maintenance department – Technical problems: **PRESS 1.**

NB! Telephone hours weekdays 12.30 – 14.00.

Housing allowance: **PRESS 2.**

Rent and deposit: **PRESS 3.**

New rental agreement: **PRESS 4.**

Other enquiries: Wait for reply.

DUTY TELEPHONE FOR URGENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: 915 48 222

Only call this number if you need immediate assistance, for example for a water leak or serious damage.

Telephone hours all days: kl. 08.00 – 23.00 .

After 23.00 you can report critical problems to the Security Service.

SECURITY SERVICE: 55 56 78 78

24-hour service for immediate contact with security in case of domestic violence or disruption.



TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

ELECTRIC POWER

Tenants are responsible for paying for electricity used in the home. After you have signed the tenancy agreement, EBF will ensure that the electricity meter for the home will be registered to you with an electricity provider, unless some other arrangement is made. The meter is read automatically. You do not need to read the meter when you start the tenancy agreement or to calculate the correct monthly invoice. As a tenant you may transfer to a different electricity provider or alter your power subscription at any time. We recommend that you check out prices from other providers. A list of available prices in the market and available providers is found at www.strompris.no.

HOME INSURANCE

In case of fire, burglary or water damage, EBF will not replace your home contents. Home contents include clothing, furnishings, devices, and other loose items that you have in the residence. All tenants should therefore sign a home contents insurance. Call an insurance company or your bank to set up a contract.

NOTIFY WHEN MOVING

As a tenant you are responsible for registering your new address with the Population Register and Post Office. Your Moving Notice giving your new address should be registered with skatteetaten.no. You cannot receive housing allowance at any address apart from your registered address in the Population Register. Remember to mark your new letter box with your names.

TV AND INTERNET

Many residences are connected to cable TV. However, TV and internet subscriptions are not included in your rent. Tenants must contact the cable provider to open a subscription. If your home does not have a cable inlet, RIKS-TV or mobile broadband may be an alternative. You are not permitted to set up your own receiver dish on any EBF units.

COMPLAINTS

If you think your neighbours have broken the house rules, and you want to report it, you need to write a complaint. The complaint form is available on EBFs website. Your complaint should contain:

- Name of persons or which housing unit the complaint concerns
- A description of what you are complaining about
- The exact time and date of incident

COMMON AREAS

Certain areas are for the common enjoyment of all tenants. These areas are the basement, the attic, hallways, and outside areas surrounding the house. It is important that you store your possessions in the storage room(s) you have been allocated. You must not leave possessions in the basement areas, hallways, stairs, or the attic, and you must not occupy empty storage rooms that belongs to other apartments. Any items left in such may be disposed of without notice. Common areas are to be kept tidy and smoking is not permitted. Please contact us if you discover anything amiss, such as broken light bulbs, broken windows, intercom system that does not work, broken doors and similar. We do not have a caretaker in the building.

REFURBISHMENT

If you feel the need to redecorate or upgrade your home, be sure to contact EBF beforehand, to get permission before work starts. You may well think that redecoration is vital, but that does not mean that we as landlord will carry out the work or pay the expenses. You must expect to pay this yourself. Your expenses will not be refunded, even if you subsequently move out of the home. Our job is to maintain the home in good condition.

SOCIAL VENUES

Some housing areas have a common room/social venue which tenants may use for children's birthdays and similar. Please contact our Residential Environment Coordinator in your area to borrow or rent suitable premises.

RENT

Rent is due on the first day of each month and is to be paid using the invoice sent to you. The invoice is sent once a month. EBF's bank account number is: 5202.05.53812.

If you arrange for a direct debit, you will receive a notice seven days before due date, and your account will be charged automatically on the 21st of the month (no fee). You avoid having to pay the bill in your bank or online bank. If payment is overdue, you will first receive a reminder from us. If you still do not pay, the matter is forwarded for collection to the City of Bergen, care of the Wages and Accounting Agency (LRS).

DEPOSIT

Before you move in, a deposit equivalent to 2 months of rent is required. Payment must be made to a separate bank account made for the tenancy, or via a guarantee from your local NAV-office. For further details, please call our Customer Centre. When you move out, your deposit will be refunded, provided you are up to date with rent payments, and the home is clean and without defects or damage. If these things are not in order, we may claim your deposit.

TENANCY AGREEMENT RENEWAL

Most of our tenants have a time-limited tenancy agreement. If you have a time-limited tenancy agreement, the duration of your tenancy will be stated in article 6 of the tenancy agreement. As the end of the tenancy approaches, you will receive information from EBF regarding renewal. You will have to apply online to Boligetaten to extend your tenancy contract. If Boligetaten approves your application, you then need to contact EBF on the phone to make an appointment to sign a renewed tenancy agreement. Please note that the tenancy agreement will not be renewed if the terms of the tenancy agreement have been violated or if you have failed to pay your rent.

APPLYING FOR ANOTHER MUNICIPAL HOME

In case of major changes in your household, you may apply for a bigger or smaller municipal home. The following criteria must be met:

- Changes in family size
- Illness causing the present home to be unsuitable

Applications for a different municipal home must be sent online to the Boligetaten.



TERMINATION

If you decide to terminate the tenancy, we must receive 30 days written notice before you vacate the property. A termination form is found on the EBF's website. The notice period is 30 days, which runs from the date when EBF receives the notice. The keys to the home must be returned to EBF within the notice period.

When you vacate the property, it should be properly cleaned and free of damage or defect. If the unit is not cleaned or is damaged or has defects, the tenant will be held financially liable. EBF will send you an invoice for the extra costs.

SUBLETTING

Tenants are not permitted to sublet the home to others (subletting). You have been allocated the home because you have applied for and documented a need for municipal housing. If you sublet our unit, we will assume that you no longer need municipal housing. If we detect such a breach, you are liable to lose the home and the possibility of obtaining other municipal housing.

Temporary subletting may be permitted in certain cases. In such cases an application, with documentation of the cause, must be sent to EBF. Application forms are found on our webpage online.

RENT BENEFIT

The City of Bergen and the Norwegian Housing Bank have support schemes for persons and households with a low income and high living costs. You can apply for local and national rent benefit online via Boligetaten.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

PESTS AND VERMIN

Pests such as rats, mice, cockroaches, bedbugs, ants and long-tailed silverfish are unpleasant to live with and can damage the home and the building. Pests multiply quickly. If you discover pests in your home, or in the common areas, it is very important that you inform EBF without delay. Please note that tenants are not permitted to feed the birds, as this tends to attract pests and vermin.

EBF will book a pest control service, and make sure the pests are exterminated. It is vital that you let the pest controllers into your apartment to do their work. If you prevent their work, the pests can spread to neighbouring apartments.

Bedbugs

- Bedbugs are small insects, about 6 mm long, which hide in homes and residential buildings.
- If you suspect the presence of bedbugs, please report to EBF without delay. Professional pest controllers are required. Household soaps and washing have no effect. Clear a path for the controllers and vacuum the area before they arrive.
- A sign that you have an infestation, is that members of your family are getting bitten or have itchy skin, or that you find small blood spots or excrement in or along the edge of your bed.
- You can reduce the risk of an infestation by not purchasing second-hand furniture like beds, mattress, or sofas. When returning from travels, it is wise to vacuum your suitcases and wash clothing at 60+ degrees, or you can dry them for 1-2 hours in a tumble dryer.
- EBF will normally cover the cost of bedbug control/extermination, but as a tenant you must contribute to a success-full extermination process by tidying up, throwing away rubbish, and packing away all clothes and belongings.



VENTILATION AND HEATING

Bathroom

- Make sure the bathroom is well ventilated when showering.
- Be sure to mop up liquids on the floor and wipe down wet surfaces.
- Long-term humidity can cause serious moisture damage and mould growth in walls and floor.
- It is important to have some heat on in the bathroom to allow the room to dry.

Kitchen

- When cooking food, it is important to turn on the extractor fan and open the windows to allow in fresh air.
- The extractor hood and filter must be kept clean so they will work properly and to avoid fire.
- Wipe away water on the countertop when you are finished.
- Do not allow food waste or cooking oil to get into the sink or drain.
- If you detect a leak, please report it to the EBF.

Ventilating your home

- High humidity in the home creates an uncomfortable living space, which can even be harmful to your health. You must therefore not block the air vents in the apartment.
- Be sure to air out the home daily by opening the windows, to release humidity and allow fresh air in.
- Windows should not be covered by curtains all day long.
- It is important to air bedrooms by opening windows and air vents.
- Avoid drying clothes inside the home.
- Use the drying room if the building has one. Alternatively, clothes can be hung to dry outdoors on a drying rack or in a drying shed.
- If there are no other options, a drying rack in the bathroom can be used, but make sure the window or a ventilator is open and turn on some heating.
- Do not place beds or other furniture against an exterior wall, because air must circulate along the wall to avoid damage due to dampness.
- Do not cover heaters with clothing, curtains or similar, as this may cause a fire.
- Places with high humidity are liable to be susceptible to mould and rot.
- Damage due to mould will destroy the home and make living there unhealthy.
- Contact EBF for advice if you discover mould in the building.

FIRE SAFETY

- In case of fire, it is vital that you are familiar with the fire exits in the building.
- Batteries in smoke detectors must be replaced once a year. New batteries are available from EBF's reception.
- Smoke detectors need to be tested regularly by pressing the button and checking that the alarm sounds. If the detector starts to beep, that is a sign that the battery is low and must be replaced.
- Each residential unit must have either a fire-extinguisher or a firehose. The appliance needs to be hung or placed where it is clearly visible inside the home.
- The appliance must be checked (by turning it upside down and shaking) a couple of times each year. Check that the arrow points to green, and contact EBF if it does not.
- Try to avoid using too many devices on extension cords with multiple outlets.
- There is a fire hazard if you use an extension cord for an electric heater.
- When heating food, place the saucepan or casserole on the cooking element while still cold, then turn up the heat.
- The saucepans and cooking elements should be the same size. Once the water boils, you can turn down the heat.
- Some homes have a cooker alarm. If the sensor detects a fire hazard, it turns off the power behind the cooker or in the fuse cabinet. If there is a risk of fire, the sensor will trigger an alarm. If there is no response, the sensor will cut the power to the cooker. If there is no fire, you can consult the instructions for use, and reset the alarm, so that the power returns (instructions for use should be posted inside the extractor fan cabinet or similar location).



Fire Hazards

Smoking: One of the most common causes of fatal fires is smoking in bed. If you smoke indoors, be sure to use large, stable ashtrays.

Cooker: Never leave the cooker unattended when making food.

Candles: Never leave a room with lit candles. Avoid using flammable candle holders or decorations that may catch fire.

Electrical appliances: Keep an eye on small household electrical appliances, like coffee makers and water kettles. Unplug the appliance after use.

Extension cords: Having many electrical devices combined with extra sockets on extension cords may cause a power overload and risk of catching fire.

Chargers: Electrical chargers can catch fire and should be taken out of the power socket when not in use. Do not charge your phone or other electrical devices overnight.

Drying laundry: Do not hang clothes to dry on electric heaters.

Clogged extractor fan: The extractor fan filter needs to be cleaned once a month. Grease from cooking sticks to the filter. This grease may cause a fire.

Fire exits: Do not block common corridors or stairwells. Remember that they are intended to serve as escape routes in case of fire.

Fire in the building?

Save life – Sound alarm – Extinguish fire: The correct sequence may vary depending on the situation and depending on the person.

- 1. Save life:** Be sure to notify everyone in the building. Help everyone to get out and try to check that everyone has escaped.
- 2. Sound alarm:** Call the Fire Brigade on emergency phone 110. State the exact address. Do not hang up before they tell you to do so. The Fire Brigade will be on its way as you speak.
- 3. Extinguish fire:** If the fire is not too big, attempt to extinguish it. Do not expose yourself or others to danger. Remember that the smoke is highly toxic.



- Receive the Fire Brigade and orient on the situation when they arrive. Notify them immediately if any persons were unable to escape from the building. Do not enter the building to save pets or personal possessions. Leave that to the Fire Brigade.
- Do not try to escape through smoke. If the stairs are filled with smoke, you should stay in your apartment, and await help.
- If the stairs are clear of smoke, make your way out of the building.
The majority of fire fatalities are overcome by smoke in common areas.

Fire in your apartment?

- Try to extinguish the fire using the fire-extinguisher. Pull out the pin and aim the hose at the base of the flames.
- If you have a fire hose, open the water tap and roll out the hose. Open the spray nozzle and aim at the base of the fire, then move up.
- Keep all doors and windows shut. Close the door behind you if you leave the apartment. This will prevent the fire from spreading.
- If there is a fire in a cooking pot, put the lid on, or cover with a woollen blanket. Do not use water!
- If the alarm sounds, you must alert and tell everyone in the home or building to get out.
- If your building has a central fire alarm system, everyone will be alerted by the fire alarms.

FUSES

- Fuses are intended to prevent overload of the electrical circuits.
- Automatic fuses may be reset by lifting the switch lever.
- For a home that has screw-in fuses, you will need to replace the fuse if it breaks. Unscrew the old fuse, insert a new fuse of the same type, and screw firmly in place. Do not touch any metal parts when you change a fuse.



WASTE

- Food waste and similar should be put in a plastic bag, which must be tied shut.
- Take the bag and discard it in the appropriate waste bin. Be sure to close the lid of the bin.
- Bins that are not closed, and bags thrown on the ground, will attract birds and rats, which is unhygienic and unpleasant.
- Keep the area around the waste bins tidy.
- Paper, cardboard, and drink cartons should be discarded in the paper bin.
- Bottles, glass, and metal should be taken to the nearest recycling point, where special bins are provided.
- Hazardous waste like paint, fluorescent tubes, batteries and similar may be taken to the nearest recycling point for hazardous waste, or to a recycling station that accepts such waste.
- Learn more about plastic return schemes online at bir.no.

WATER

- Water that collects around the sink must be removed immediately to avoid damaging the kitchen countertop.
- It is important to mop up water and moisture on walls and floors. If moisture is not removed, the air in the home can become humid and unpleasant. This humidity may cause health problems and, in severe cases, fungi and rot can also damage your home.
- Use a minimum amount of water when cleaning the home. There are good alternatives, like a vacuum cleaner or dry mops.
- Large rugs, carpets etc. cannot be washed or dried inside the home. Use the shared washroom if the building has one.
- The hot water tank provides hot water for the apartment. If water is dripping from the tank, contact EBF.
- In case of a major water leak in the home, you can turn off the water supply at the stopcock. You must then call EBF for help.
- Some apartments have a magnetic shutoff valve below the kitchen sink, which shuts off the water supply if there is a leak. The magnet is sensitive and may react to water spills. First it will beep, then it will shut. If the water is just a spill, you can dry it up with a paper towel and then reset the valve using the reset button. If there is a leak, call EBF.

Drains and overflows

- Do not throw any type of waste into the toilet, as this blocks the pipes. The only thing you can throw in the toilet bowl is toilet paper.
- Drains from sinks and bath drains may become blocked by soap, food waste, hair and similar. Regular cleaning is required to allow the water to drain.
- You can open and clean floor drains yourself. Remove the lid and remove all hair and soap residue. This must be thrown in the rubbish bin. If the drain is still blocked, you can use a liquid drain cleaner, which can be purchased from your local supermarket. Remember to rinse with lots of water afterwards.
- If the drain is still blocked, call EBF.

JOINT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- Tenants are jointly responsible for keeping indoor and outdoor common areas clean and tidy, as described in the House Rules.
- The entrance hall, stairwells, laundry room, attic and cellar must be kept free of waste. Common areas are to be kept clean and tidy and with clear access.
- Old furniture and similar should be taken to the nearest waste recycling station.
- Be considerate towards your neighbours. There must be no noise in the building after 11 PM. Make sure that your activities do not bother other tenants.
- Say hello to your neighbours. Ask about common chores and duties in the building, and other important details about your new residence.
- The residential environment is supposed to be a safe and pleasant place to live for all age groups. By being considerate towards neighbours you help to create a good neighbourhood.



USEFUL INFORMATION

CITY OF BERGEN, CITIZEN SERVICE POINT

The Citizen Service Point is the City's central help desk and public face. The Citizen Service Point is responsible for the main switchboard for the City of Bergen.

Do you wish to enquire about municipal services in Bergen? Please ask the Citizen Service Point in Kaigaten 4, who will assist you if you show up in person, or answer enquiries by telephone, post, email, chat, and Facebook.

Telephone: 55 56 55 56

Email: innbyggerservice@bergen.kommune.no

Opening hours: 08.00 – 15.00

Webpage: www.bergen.kommune.no/omkommunen/avdelinger/innbyggerservice

THE AGENCY FOR SOCIAL HOUSING (BOLIGETATEN)

Boligetaten deals with applications for housing, extension of tenancy contracts, financing for home purchase, and rent benefit. All applications may be sent in online, and if your application is already being processed, you can submit comments via Min side (My page).

Telephone: 55 56 65 76

Webpage: www.bergen.kommune.no/omkommunen/avdelinger/boligetaten

EMERGENCY TELEPHONES

Fire: 110

Police: 112

Medical assistance 113

Emergency Clinic: 116117

FILM: ADVICE AND HINTS ON HOW TO LIVE SAFELY AND WELL IN A MUNICIPAL HOUSING UNIT

EBF's webpage has a link to a video film providing useful hints and tips on how to take care of your home. This film is available in 18 languages.



HOUSE RULES

Art 1 Peace, quiet and good order

All residents in the building must contribute to peace, quiet and good order. The tenancy must not cause a nuisance to others. These house rules apply to every tenant, household member, and visitors. Violation of the house rules may result in termination of the tenancy, and eviction.

Art 2 Securing the main door

The main door to the building must be kept locked at all times. People entering or leaving must make sure that the door lock clicks in place. Tenants are responsible for locking the door after visitors who leave the house.

Art 3 Music, TV and household appliances etc.

Use of radio, TV or music systems must not cause a nuisance to others. Quiet is required after 11 PM, and you are not permitted to vacuum, wash clothes, use tools, or perform other noisy activity.

Art 4 TV dish and other technical equipment

Tenants are not permitted to erect a TV dish on the outside of the building, roof or elsewhere on the property. Other technical systems may only be installed on the building or in the outside areas if a written permission is obtained from EBF.

Art 5 Pets etc.

Pets should be avoided. Tenants who own pets must ensure that they do not cause a nuisance to others. In case of complaint, keeping a pet may jeopardise the tenancy, see House Rules Art 1.

Art 6 Storage rooms

Tenants are not permitted to store possessions, rubbish or waste in corridors or stairwells, or in outdoor areas. Items placed here may be removed and discarded without notice.

Private possessions must be stored in separate, marked storage rooms belonging to your apartment. You are not permitted to use empty storage rooms that belongs to other apartments.



Art 7 Common areas

Common rooms and common areas must not be used for purposes other than those they are intended for and must be kept clean and tidy at all times.

Smoking is not permitted in the common areas.

Bicycles and prams/strollers are only permitted in the places allocated in cellar rooms or your own storage-room. Laundry rooms and drying rooms should be used in turn according to the rules set for each house.

Art 8 Fire alarm system

In buildings with a central fire alarm system, tenants are required to study its use. Instructions for use are provided next to the fire panel/ exit door.

Art 9 Balconies

Balconies are to be kept clean and tidy. Tenants are not permitted to store waste and rubbish on balconies. Carpets and mats must not be shaken from the balcony or windows. Feeding of birds from the balcony or windows is not permitted, because of the risk of attracting pests and vermin.

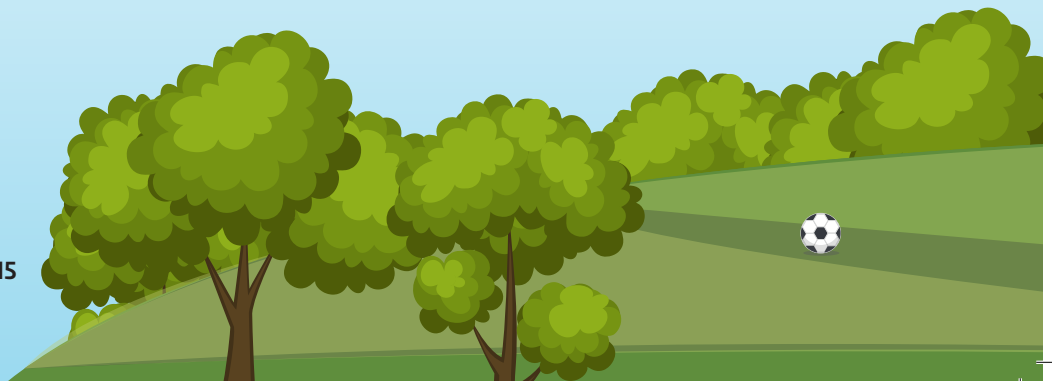
Art 10 Waste

Waste is to be collected in a suitable bag that is closed and placed in the approved bin/container. The bin room and garbage containers are to be cleaned by tenants collectively.

Food waste, nappies, rags and similar must not be discarded in toilet bowls. If any blockage or leaks occur as a result of failure to observe this rule, the tenant will be held financially liable for the damage.

Art 11 Housing associations and condominiums

If the home is part of a housing association or condominium complex, the tenant is required to study and abide by the House Rules and articles of association that apply for the housing area.



THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO ASSISTED LIVING UNITS FOR ELDERLY OR DISABLED:

Art 12 Cleaning and tidying of common areas

The tenant must provide for cleaning of his/her corridor, stair landing, and stairs down to the floor below. Residents on the ground floor will have to clean the hallway as far as the entry door. Cleaning should be done at least once a week.

All tenants are jointly responsible for cleaning and tidying the common areas, including removal of loose items and waste from common areas outside and indoors.

Art 13 Sweeping, snow-clearance, and maintenance of outdoor areas

Sweeping and snow-clearance of the steps from the street, and sidewalk outside the property, is to be performed by the tenants in turn as required. If the building has its own garden or outdoor spaces the tenants are to ensure that they are maintained.



