



27 June 2025

Dear Applicant

Our Ref: FOI 799

Your request for information received on 05 June 2025 has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Request

1. *In the past 12 months, how many individuals who are current employees of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, or immediate family members of such employees, have been allocated social housing?*
2. *What was the average number of housing points held by these applicants at the time of allocation?*
3. *What was the average time spent on the waiting list before their allocation?*
4. *If possible, please provide a breakdown by council district or local housing area where these allocations occurred.*

If NIHE claims this information is not available in the format requested, please clarify the following:

- *Does the Northern Ireland Housing Executive collect or record any information regarding whether an applicant is an employee or an immediate family member of an employee?*
- *If no such data is collected, please explain how the organisation identifies and manages potential conflicts of interest in housing allocations involving its own staff.*
- *If such information is recorded but considered difficult to extract, please specify what limitations prevent this data from being provided under FOI.*

Our response

1. In the past 12 months, how many individuals who are current employees of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, or immediate family members of such employees, have been allocated social housing?

During the assessment process for all applications, housing customers are asked whether they are a staff/board member or related to a staff/board member of the Housing Executive or housing association. The NIHE Code of Conduct sets out the definition of relevant personal/family relationships for its own staff in this context. This is detailed below*. If the answer is yes, an electronic identifier is added. Where an allocation of a social dwelling is to be made to any of these applications, not solely for NIHE employees/close relatives, it must be approved by the relevant Housing Executive Regional Manager/HA designated officer.

In the 2024/25 financial year**, the Housing Executive made 22 allocations to applicants on the waiting list with relevant personal/family relationships.

2. What was the average number of housing points held by these applicants at the time of allocation?

The table below provides information on the mean & median*** points of applicants on the waiting list with relevant personal/family relationships at the point of allocation. The table should be viewed in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Allocations from 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025 to relevant applicants* by Mean & Median Points on the waiting list at the point of allocation		
No. of allocations to relevant applicants	Mean Points at the point of allocation	Median Points at the point of allocation
22	139.9	144.0

3. What was the average time spent on the waiting list before their allocation?

The table below provides information on the mean & median*** waiting time (in months) of applicants on the waiting list with relevant personal/family relationships at the point of allocation. The table should be viewed in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Allocations from 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025 to relevant applicants* by Mean & Median Waiting Time (in months) on the waiting list at the point of allocation		
No. of allocations to relevant applicants	Mean Waiting Time (in months) at the point of allocation	Median Waiting Time (in months) at the point of allocation
22	43.9	31.0

4. If possible, please provide a breakdown by council district or local housing area where these allocations occurred.

The table below provides the breakdown requested.

Breakdown of Allocations* by Local Government District	Count of Allocations* by Local Government District
Antrim & Newtownabbey	2
Ards & North Down	2
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	2
Belfast	3
Causeway Coast & Glens	5
Derry & Strabane	1
Lisburn & Castlereagh	4
Mid & East Antrim	2
Newry, Mourne & Down	1
Grand Total	22

**A relevant family relationship shall be deemed to exist between an officer and another person if they are;*

- *Married*
- *Civil partners*
- *Cohabiting as if they were married*
- *Cohabiting as if they were civil partners ("partners"),*

or the other person is a Biological, Adopted, Foster, or Step relative to an Officer or of that Officer's married partner, civil partner, or partner under one of the following categories;

- *Child*
- *Parent*
- *Sibling*
- *Son in Law or Daughter in Law*
- *Mother in Law or Father in Law*
- *Sister in Law or Brother in Law*
- *Uncle or Aunt*
- *Nephew or Neice*
- *Grandson or Granddaughter*
- *Grandparent*

For the avoidance of doubt, a personal relationship for the purposes of the Staff Code includes;

- a family relationship other than that specified above*
- a business/commercial/financial relationship*
- a sexual/romantic relationship*
- a friendship*

*** Allocations data held by the Housing Executive, forms part of the Northern Ireland Housing Bulletin, which is published quarterly as a National Statistic by the Department for Communities. Therefore, in order to avoid breaches of the code of practice for statistics, the data provided is based on the most recently published data (01/04/24 to 31/03/25).*

**** When a question of “average waiting times” or “average points” is asked, MEAN and MEDIAN averages are provided.*

Reasons for this include:

The MEAN (arithmetic average) is useful for understanding overall trends but can be heavily skewed by outliers (unusually high or low values) – for example, applicants who have been on the waiting list for a number of years or who have just joined the waiting list.

The MEDIAN (middle value, a measure of central tendency) is less affected by outliers and represents a “typical” case better when the data is skewed.

By presenting both, we ensure that the analysis captures both central tendency and the potential impact of unusually high or low values.

We also note that when the number of applicants is small, statistical indicators become less reliable and have a much lower predictive value regarding the “typical” experience. In such cases, the figures may be more indicative of the specific circumstances of the individual applicant households rather than a broader trend. Caution must be exercised when interpreting the results.

This concludes our response.