

Damp and Mould Policy

VERSION 2.2

Version Control

Note: minor updates increase version number by 0.1, major updates increase version number by 1.0.

Version	Sections Amended	Date of update	Approved by
1.0	New policy	April 2022	Perco - April 2022
2.0	Reviewed - Update to terminology to align with Government definitions & Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.	October 2023	Commercial Services Director 18/03/2024
2.1	Annual Review	January 2025	Commercial Services Director 22/01/2025
2.2	Reviewed - updated to align with change in legislation under s.10A of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (known as Awaab's Law)	October 2025	Commercial Services Director

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1. Purpose

We recognise the serious impact that damp and mould can have on the health of our customers. Ensuring healthy, safe homes now and in the future is fundamental to our repairs and asset management plans.

We're committed to acting quickly to all reports of damp and mould in our customer's homes. Getting to the root cause of the problem and treating all customers reporting such issues with respect and empathy, understanding the potential impacts of the issues they are having.

We take a preventative approach to damp and mould through our See Something, Say Something culture and via planned ventilation improvements when other upgrades are taking place in our homes.

We encourage our customers and all colleagues to report instances of damp and mould. Reports of damp and mould are attended and investigated within 14 calendar days (access and customer availability dependent) investigate and assess using our triage process and taking into account the specific vulnerabilities of our customers and severity of symptoms.

1.2 Definitions

Condensation

Condensation happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind furniture).

Penetrating Damp

Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.

Rising Damp

Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the building in contact with the ground (walls and floors). It can be identified through inspection and testing.

Traumatic Damp

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding.

Mould

Is a type of fungus. It spreads through spores and can quickly grow on surfaces where relative humidity is high for long periods.

Under Awaab's law, Social Housing Landlords are required to act on significant hazards within the following timescales;

- Investigate within 10 working days
- Provide written findings within 3 working days of inspection
- Complete works to remove a hazard (make safe) within 5 working days
- Start further works within 5 days of inspection but if not possible maximum 12 weeks if needed
- If the home cannot be made safe, landlords must offer suitable alternative accommodation and decant the customer
- Further investigations - if a further investigation is required to establish the source of a hazard this must be started as soon as reasonably practicable

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS): places a legal duty on landlords to assess and regularly review the condition of their properties to ensure that properties are safe and free from hazards. This includes issues related to damp and mould.

2. Policy

This Policy applies to;

All Octavia Abri colleagues and customers.

All Abri Octavia customers, for whom we have repairs responsibilities, can report suspected damp and mould through a variety of methods:

- Abri - Calling us directly on 0300 123 1567
- Abri - Online via “My Abri” portal (email / live chat)
- Octavia - Calling us directly on 0208 354 5500
- Octavia - Email: info@octavia.org.uk
- In person to a housing officer or operative who is visiting your home
- Or as a referral to an Octavia Abri Colleague

2.1

We will aim to respond quickly to initial reports of damp and mould by carrying out a damp and mould wash treatment and a ventilation assessment within 14 calendar days (access and customer availability dependent)

We have dedicated trained Decorators and In-House Surveyors who are deemed to be have the expertise and experience to be “Competent Investigator” capable of investigating the significant hazard of D&M under HHSRS physiological requirements.

It’s the customers responsibility to ensure all reports of damp and mould issues are reported to Octavia Abri in a timely manner so we can act upon any cases promptly.

We have a proactive approach to ensure we capture cases where there may be barriers to customers reporting the problem themselves. We ensure through our “See Something, Say Something” culture that any Octavia Abri colleague or contractor who enters a customer’s home is trained and empowered to recognise and report on the

presence of damp, mould and disrepair.

We'll provide clear information and advice on reasonable adjustments customers can make to prevent damp and mould, outlining responsibilities and explaining how these steps will improve the situation.

In every case of reported damp and mould we will ensure that the home has a suitable ventilation system. Through a combination of our inhouse team and our specialist contractors we'll assess existing systems and carry out improvements.

In all cases we will ensure that we understand the root cause of the problem and engage with our inhouse and external specialists to start remedial works within 12 weeks.

We'll send the customers an action plan within 3 working days of the mould treatment and initial investigation being completed, giving a breakdown of remedial works, if required, and dates for works to be started. In more complex cases, we'll provide the customer with one point of contact.

Through our aftercare process we will make sure our mould treatment and root cause solutions are working effectively. Follow up calls are made to customers 3 months after the damp and mould treatment and any additional concerns are communicated back to the Healthy Homes team.

We carry out regular stock condition surveys, allowing us to continuously assess and monitor our homes. Considering factors such as the age and property type, energy performance certificate (EPC) rating and history of repairs of a property, as well as the presence of any HHSRS hazard, we determine which properties are more likely to require investment.

We'll actively encourage and remind all colleagues to never 'walk past a problem' and always report cases of damp and mould. We'll ensure all colleagues, external contractors and stakeholders are trained on awareness of damp and mould, how to spot it, our reporting processes and the importance of addressing underlying causes and treating our residents with empathy.

We take all complaints very seriously and if a customer makes a complaint in relation to damp and mould, all teams involved will work closely together to get the issue resolved promptly.

We'll consider each case on its own merits, and the individual circumstances of customers. In rare cases, if a customer needs to temporarily move out, for example if there are health issues or where more intrusive works or investigations are required, we'll make appropriate arrangements in the form of a decant.

3. Legal & Regulatory Framework

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (s.9a, 10, 10a and 11)
- The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (known as Awaab's Law)
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

- Housing Act 2004
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005
- Housing Ombudsman – Spotlight on Mould October 2021
- Regulatory standards –The Safety and Quality Standard
- Decent Homes Standard
- Awaab’s Law: Guidance for Social Landlords 2025
- DLUHC Guidance: Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home (September 2023)

4. Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Hazards Related Policies

This policy links to:

- Complaints
- Repairs and Maintenance

5. Related Procedures

This policy links to:

- Damp and mould procedure
- Customer Relations procedure
- Putting Things Right guidance
- Void standard
- Decant procedure (emergency or major works)
- Home loss and temporary transfer procedure