

Applying for Temporary Exemption from Licensing

Guidance for Reading Borough Council's Additional Licensing Scheme

Exemptions from licensing fall into two types:-

- Type 1 – Schedule 14 of the Housing Act 2004 and subordinate regulations exempt the property from being an HMO for the purposes of HMO licensing. This applies mainly to properties owned by social landlords or public bodies. Further details are on the Council's website at [on the FAQ page for the scheme](#).
- Type 2 – Reading Borough Council has granted **temporary exemption** from HMO licensing. Landlords can apply for such an exemption when they are taking steps to ensure the property is no longer required to be licensed.

Who can apply for a Temporary Exemption Notice?

Applications for a temporary exemption can only be submitted by the property owner or the person in control of the property.

Do I need to provide evidence?

Yes, if you apply for temporary exemption, the Council will expect to see evidence supporting your application. Applications for temporary exemption that are not supported by evidence will be refused.

Examples of reasons for seeking temporary exemption and supporting evidence the Council expects to see are shown in the table below.

Reason	Examples of acceptable evidence
The property is in the process of being sold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A memorandum of sale ● Copies of exchanged contracts showing the sale will be complete within the next three months.
Repossession of property and no intention to re-let the property as an HMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A valid notice under section 8 or section 21 that expires within the next three months. ● A possession order granted by the Courts giving possession within the next three months ● A court bailiff's warrant that will be executed within the next three months. ● Written notice from the existing occupiers that they are moving out of the property within the next three months.
Applying for grant of probate (though see notes on the death of a licence holder below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An application for the grant of probate.

If a Licence Holder dies, the Housing Act 2004 grants an automatic three-month period from the date of the Licence Holder's death that is treated as though the Council has granted temporary exemption. This can be extended by a further three months by notice from the Council, but the deceased's personal representatives must apply for this within the initial three-month period. In such cases, the Council will expect to see the following evidence before allowing a further three-month extension:-

- A copy of the death certificate.
- Evidence supporting one of the reasons given in the table above.

How long does Temporary Exemption last?

The Council grants temporary exemption by serving a temporary exemption notice. Temporary exemption, where granted, remains in force for a period of three months beginning with the date on which the notice is served.

An application can be made for a further three months of temporary exemption. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If granted, it will run for a period of three months from the end of the initial three-month exemption period. No further exemption can be granted beyond this.

What happens if my request for Temporary Exemption is refused?

If the Council refuses to grant temporary exemption, they will serve on you a notice informing you of:

- their decision
- the reasons for it and the date on which it was made
- the right to appeal against the decision
- the period within which an appeal may be made.

If you decide not to appeal and the property is still subject to licensing, you will need to make an application for a licence.

What happens after the Temporary Exemption Notice expires?

If the property is no longer subject to licensing when the temporary exemption period expires, no further action is required. If the property still requires a licence at the end of the exemption period, you must either:

- Apply for an extension of temporary exemption (this can only be applied for once).

- Apply for the grant of a licence for the property.

Do I need to pay a fee for a Temporary Exemption Notice?

No, you do not need to pay a fee when applying for temporary exemption.

How do I apply for a Temporary Exemption Notice?

The application for a temporary exemption from licensing must be made via the Home Safe online portal.

You will need to register as an Applicant and add the property details in your online portal before you can apply. Further information is provided for your guidance below:

1. Register as an Applicant and complete identity verification using Yoti, a government-approved ID verification platform. This involves entering your email address and uploading documents to confirm your name and address. You can begin this process via the scheme webpage or by using the link below:

<https://portal.home-safe.org.uk/register>

The screenshot shows the Home Safe portal website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for LOCAL AUTHORITIES, LANDLORDS, NEWS, CONTACT, and a phone number 0330 6600 282. Below this is the Home Safe logo and a menu with options: LICENCE SCHEMES (highlighted), LANDLORD DISCOUNTS, TRAINING, and LOGIN. The main content area features the Reading Borough Council logo and the text 'Working better with you In Partnership with Home Safe'. The headline reads 'Apply for a Licence Under Reading Borough Council's Additional Licensing Scheme'. Below this is a paragraph explaining that Additional Licensing came into force in Reading on 1 March 2026, and that landlords operating houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) within the administrative area of Reading that are not covered by Mandatory HMO Licensing are required to obtain an Additional Licence. It is an offence to operate, manage, or control a property that requires an Additional Licence without a valid licence in place or without a duly made application being submitted. For the avoidance of doubt, this also applies to agents. Agents with clients operating in Reading must register with Home Safe to be added to applications. At the bottom of the page, there are two buttons: 'REGISTER AS AN APPLICANT' and 'REGISTER AS AN AGENT'.

2. Once you have successfully registered as an Applicant, add the property details to your online portal. You will need to provide information such as the property address, date of purchase, year of construction, property type, usage, letting type, number of bedrooms, and furnishing status.
3. When you have added property details, the property will display on your dashboard. Click the button '**Apply for an exemption**'.
4. You will need to confirm that your details, the property details, and the licence type are correct.
5. Confirm your relationship to the property and upload the corresponding evidence. Provide a detailed and valid reason for applying for a Temporary Exemption Notice.
6. Confirm if the property was let, or if there was an intention to let the property, on or before the scheme designation date, and the current occupancy status.

If the property is currently let, you will need to confirm how the property is let, the tenancy start date and occupancy details.

7. Read and agree to the Declaration.
8. Submit your application.

Please note: If you have more than one property that requires exemption, you will need to complete a separate application for each property.