



Nova-Star Care Referral and Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

Nova-Star Care is committed to providing high-quality supported living services for individuals referred by local authorities. This policy outlines the processes and standards governing referrals, assessments, and placements into Nova-Star Care properties. Our aim is to ensure that each placement is appropriate, safe, and supportive of the individual's needs and aspirations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish clear procedures for assessing referrals.
- Ensure fair and transparent decision-making.
- Promote consistency across all referral and assessment activities.
- Safeguard both service users and existing tenants through thorough risk management.
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements relevant to supported living.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all referrals received from local authorities for supported accommodation within Nova-Star Care's housing portfolio. It covers all stages of the referral, assessment, and allocation process, from initial contact to final placement.

4. Referral Process

All referrals to Nova-Star Care must be made by the referring local authority using the approved referral form. Referrals should include relevant information such as the applicant's housing history, risk factors, support needs, and any statutory assessments already undertaken.

Upon receipt, referrals are logged, acknowledged, and reviewed by the Nova-Star Care assessment team within five working days.

5. Assessment Process

Assessments are carried out by qualified staff in collaboration with referring agencies. The assessment process will:

- Verify eligibility for supported accommodation.
- Identify the applicant's individual needs, strengths, and risks.
- Determine the most suitable property and support environment.
- Ensure compatibility with existing tenants where shared accommodation is proposed.

All assessments are documented, and decisions are made within ten working days of receiving a completed referral.

6. Risk Assessment

Nova-Star Care conducts a comprehensive risk assessment for all applicants before any placement decision is made. This includes evaluating health, safety, safeguarding, and behavioural risks, as well as any potential impact on other residents or the community.

Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated in line with any changes to the tenant's circumstances.

7. Decision-Making and Allocation

Decisions on allocations are based on the findings of the assessment and risk evaluation. Placements are made only where the individual's needs can be met safely and effectively within Nova-Star Care's accommodation portfolio.

All applicants are notified of the outcome in writing, and reasons for declined referrals are provided to the referring authority.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Nova-Star Care treats all referral and assessment information in strict confidence. Data will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Information will be shared only with relevant professionals involved in the applicant's care and support, and only with the applicant's consent or as permitted by law.

9. Appeals and Complaints

Applicants or referring agencies who disagree with a placement decision may submit an appeal in writing within ten working days. All appeals will be reviewed by a senior manager not involved in the original decision. Complaints about the process will be handled under Nova-Star Care's Complaints Policy.

10. Legal Framework

Legislation	Application to Nova-Star Care
Care Act 2014	Sets out the duty to assess needs and provide appropriate care and accommodation options.
Housing Act 1996	Provides the framework for allocations and housing-related support for vulnerable individuals.
Equality Act 2010	Requires fair and non-discriminatory treatment throughout the referral and assessment process.
Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR	Ensures that personal information collected during assessments is processed lawfully and securely.
Human Rights Act 1998	Protects individuals' rights to privacy, respect, and dignity throughout the assessment process.
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974	Requires that assessments consider safety and environmental conditions before placement.

11. Monitoring and Review

Nova-Star Care will monitor referrals, assessments, and allocations to ensure fairness, consistency, and compliance with this policy. Quarterly reviews will be undertaken by management to identify trends, service pressures, and improvement opportunities.

12. Impact and Equality Assessment

This policy has been assessed under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that it promotes equality of opportunity and does not disadvantage any protected group. Nova-Star Care is committed to ensuring that the referral and assessment process is inclusive, accessible, and culturally sensitive.

Policy Information

Author	Version	Date Approved	Review Date
Head of Policy	1	Dec 2024	Dec 2026