

House for permit holders

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Housing process

If you have received a residence permit, the COA will conduct a meeting with you about housing (housing conversation). You will hear in which municipality you will be living within two weeks. Then that municipality will offer you a suitable home. During this period, you must be available to the COA so that the COA can tell you immediately when a home has been found for you. You can also search for a property yourself. If you have found a home yourself, report this directly to the COA and the municipality.

Your contact at the COA can give you more information about it.

What is a suitable home?

A home can be a house for a complete family, a flat or a small apartment with two rooms. You may have to share the kitchen, the shower, the living room and / or the toilet with other residents. The municipality must offer you a suitable home. There is a number of rules that apply. COA will discuss these rules with you.

Rules for allocation of a house and place of residence

After you received a residence permit, a conversation with the COA will take place. During this conversation, the COA will explain about the housing process. You can not choose the place where you will live. There are certain rules for that. The COA takes your background and your wishes into account when possible. After the COA made known what municipality you would move to, you can no longer express your wishes. You will have to accept the house offered by the municipality.

You can live in a specific municipality or region if:

- You have a child under the age of 18 who already lives in that municipality with the other parent. You must show a proof of their registration in the municipality to the COA.
- You are admitted to a training course in a certain municipality. You must show a proof of enrollment or a student card to the COA.
- You have paid work in a municipality for at least 8 hours per week. You must show a signed contract to the COA and a copy of your last pay slip.
- You receive medical treatment in a certain municipality; you cannot receive this treatment anywhere else. You must go to the specialist at least 4 times a year for this treatment. In this case the COA will request a Sociaal Medisch Advies by means of which a doctor will confirm this fact.



If one of these points applies to you, the COA aims to find an accommodation within 50 kilometres of the municipality in question.

The situation that you should always bring up in your conversation with the COA

You have difficulty walking. Then you need a home in which you do not have to climb the stairs. In this case the COA will request a Sociaal Medisch Advies by means of which a doctor will confirm this fact.

You would like to share a house with other people. You can form a group with 2 or 3 others who have a permit. If you make this known to the COA, they will start looking for a house for you as a group.

You have found work or you are taking a training course. Then you can get a house in or in the vicinity of the municipality where you are taking your course. If you have already been assigned to a municipality, you can only change a municipality if the assigned municipality has not found a home for you yet.

If something changes in your situation, make this known to the COA as soon as possible.

Family reunification and accommodation

If you have been granted a residence permit and your family does not live in the Netherlands yet, you can apply to the IND for a family reunification. There are certain rules for that. Vluchtelingenwerk can assist you with this application.

If your family members can come to the Netherlands with a derived asylum permit, it will depend on the situation where they will live:

- If you already live in the municipality, your family will join you.
- If you already live in the municipality but your home is too small, your family members will live in a COA reception centre until your municipality has found a suitable home for you and your family.
- If your family members arrive while you are still living in a COA reception centre, your family will come to stay with you in your azc. The municipality will look for a suitable home for you and your family.

Accept the house from the municipality

If the municipality offers you a suitable house, you must accept this house. The municipality will tell you where and when you can sign your lease contract. After the start of the lease contract you will have 14 days to leave the azc (together with your family).

Rejecting the house offered by the municipality

If you want to reject the house that the municipality offers you, discuss with the COA why you think the house is not suitable. In this case, there are 2 options:

- **The house has been rejected with good reason**



The COA is also of the opinion that the house is not suitable. Too little account was taken of your situation and the rules that apply. The municipality will offer you another house.

- The house has been rejected without good reason

The COA is of the opinion that the house is suitable for you. The COA will advise you to accept the house and then to start looking for another house. If you do not accept the house anyway, the following will happen:

- The COA will stop providing for you and start a legal proceedings;

If the judge agrees with the COA the following will happen:

- You must leave the azc immediately. If you do not, the COA can have the police evict you out of the azc. The costs of this action, approximately 2000 euros, will be at your expense.
- You have to look for another house yourself.

If you have an asylum residence permit, you cannot appeal against this decision. If you have a regular residence permit, you can submit to the court an appeal against this decision . Your entitlement to shelter and reception facilities will only become effective again if you receive a provisional order from the court or if the court grants your appeal.

Looking for a house yourself

If you have a residence permit, you can look for a house yourself.

You can look for a house through websites and newspapers of the housing associations in the municipality where you want to live. The costs you will incur (e.g. registration costs or travel costs) will be at your expense.

If you have found a house for yourself, you must inform the COA and the municipality immediately. The COA will request a copy of the lease contract. If you report too late that you have found yourself a home, you will have to pay back the overpaid benefits to the COA.

If the municipality offers you a suitable house, you must accept this house and leave the azc. After you move into that house, you can look further for another house if you wish.