



# PERIODIC ELECTRICAL TESTING POLICY

Originator:	Policy and Strategy Team
Approval date:	October 2020
Review date:	October 2021

1	Introduction
1.1	Pine Court Housing Association (PCHA) treats the health and safety of tenants, staff, contractors and other users of its buildings of paramount importance.
1.2	In fulfilling these health and safety obligations, PCHA is committed to mitigating the risks posed by the use of electrical systems within buildings it owns and controls. The risks include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrical shock</li> <li>• Electrical burn</li> <li>• Fires of electrical origin</li> <li>• Electric arcing</li> <li>• Explosion initiated or caused by electricity</li> <li>• Electrical fire</li> </ul>
1.3	This Policy sets out PCHA’s responsibilities to comply with the relevant legislation and regulatory guidance on the installation, inspection, repairs, testing and certification of electrical systems in buildings it owns and controls including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985</li> <li>• The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989</li> <li>• The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999</li> <li>• The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Wiring Regulations 17<sup>th</sup> Edition, BS 7671</li> <li>• Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005</li> <li>• The Consumer Protection Act 1987 and 2015</li> <li>• Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018</li> </ul>
1.4	Application of the Policy also enables PCHA to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing adopted by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time</li> <li>• Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes</li> </ul>
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Access and Communication</b>
<b>1.5.1</b>	PCHA is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to everyone. PCHA will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for PCHA or use its services.
<b>1.6</b>	<b>Equality, Diversity and Human Rights</b>
<b>1.6.1</b>	PCHA is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity / Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Religion and/or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity.
<b>1.6.2</b>	PCHA also recognises that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.
<b>1.6.3</b>	PCHA will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. PCHA will ensure its employees and others with whom it works, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).
<b>1.7</b>	This Policy must be read in conjunction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCHA Electric Gates Policy</li> <li>• PCHA Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• PCHA Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Works Policy</li> <li>• PCHA Access to Properties Policy</li> <li>• PCHA Fire Safety Policy</li> </ul>
<b>1.8</b>	PCHA staff can access procedure maps in relation to all aspects of Assets Management (in relation to this Policy) via the internal document management system.
<b>2</b>	<b>Statement of intent</b>
<b>2.1</b>	PCHA will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements in meeting its responsibilities to ensure electrical safety in buildings it owns or manages.
<b>2.2</b>	To meet the above requirements PCHA will operate a well-resourced and comprehensive electrical safety management system including checking and certification of all electrical systems and equipment that PCHA is responsible for.
<b>2.3</b>	PCHA will ensure the contractors it employs to carry out checks on its electrical systems are 'Authorised Competent Persons' who have the appropriate and up to date qualifications i.e.

Technical Qualification in Electrical Engineering, City & Guilds 236 parts 1 and 2 or NVQ3 equivalent, City & Guilds 2381 or 2382 17th edition 'wiring regulations', City & Guilds 2391 or equivalent for testing and inspection and 2.3 PAT 2377, where required.

2.4 PCHA will keep accurate records of all periodic checks undertaken on:

No	Type of installation	Frequency of inspection and testing
1	Portable Appliance Testing in its offices and other work locations	12 – 48 months
2	Portable Appliance Testing in communal areas and furnished tenancies of domestic properties	12 months
4	Fixed wiring systems in domestic properties	After 5 years and at change of occupancy
5	Fixed wiring systems in communal areas of purpose-built blocks of flats	5 years
6	Fixed wiring systems within shops and other commercial properties	5 years
7	Fixed wiring systems within industrial properties (e.g. warehouse)	3 years
8	New electrical installations in domestic properties	5 years

2.5 PCHA is not legally obliged to provide as a matter of course Domestic Electrical Installation Condition Reports to tenants (undertaken on all domestic properties when they are undergoing void works in between lettings) but will, however, provide copies on request.

2.6 PCHA will adopt a 'fair but firm' approach to gaining access to domestic properties where periodical electrical testing is required (following Electrical Safety Council Guidelines for once every 5 years for tenanted properties). This will include:

- Writing to tenants in advance of the required access date and providing an initial appointment (which can be altered on request)
- Partnership work with external agencies and advocacy groups where tenants are known to be vulnerable for any reason
- Where possible combining appointments with other safety checks e.g. annual landlords gas safety checks, where applicable
- Taking tenancy action, including where required legal action to secure access

### 3 Policy

#### 3.1 Landlord Responsibilities

3.1.1 PCHA will use Sovini Property Services (SPS) to discharge their duties for promoting electrical safety in domestic properties as set out in the clauses below:

3.1.2 PCHA will carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) on all void properties by a qualified electrician, ensuring all electrical systems and any supplied equipment is safe for use before making the property available for re-letting. Information from these reports and other aggregated property condition information will also be used to inform future investment works including scheduled re-wiring of properties.

3.1.3	Copies of the Electrical Inspection Condition Reports will be retained by PCHA as proof of the fitness for purpose of electrical systems at the time of letting.
3.1.4	PCHA will also carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report when there is a transfer of tenancy from one party to another but there is no vacant void period (this will not apply when there is a transfer from a single to a joint or joint to a single tenancy).
3.1.5	<p>As a minimum specification, PCHA will ensure that domestic properties, at the time of letting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an electrical system that is safe for continued use</li> <li>• Keep supplied appliances to a minimum</li> <li>• Ensure that where supplied appliances are provided, safety warnings are attached including CE marked and/or approved</li> <li>• Ensure that where appliances are provided, flexes are in good order and properly attached to appliances and plugs</li> <li>• Ensure that earth tags are in place</li> <li>• Ensure that where appliances are provided, plugs are of an approved type, CE marked and have a sleeved live, and neutral pins</li> <li>• Ensure that plugs provided, and sockets conform to BS1363 or BS1363/A for heavy duty uses</li> <li>• Ensure that all fuses in appliances provided are of the correct type and rating</li> <li>• Make sure that tenants have access to the main consumer unit, fuses and isolator switch</li> <li>• Keep a record of all fuse ratings</li> </ul>
3.1.6	Following guidance from the Electrical Safety Council, PCHA will endeavour to carry out a periodic check of fixed wiring systems within domestic properties every 5 years. PCHA will rely on the goodwill and co-operation of tenants to gain access when requested to carry out these checks.
3.1.7	Where access is denied, PCHA may consider the use of legal powers within the tenancy agreement to force access, if operatives working on behalf of PCHA consider there to be a significant risk to the occupants or the property by not carrying out the electrical check. Each case will be assessed on its merits and any final decision to instigate legal action to gain access will be made by the Neighbourhood Services Manager or Independent Living Manager.
3.1.8	If a property is suspected to be abandoned, PCHA will deal with it in line with its suspected Abandoned Procedure.
3.1.9	Where PCHA carry out works to electrical systems in domestic properties that will be classed as 'new installations', 'additional' or an 'alteration' e.g. where a complete rewire is required or a new fuse box is installed, it will ensure Electrical Installation Certificates (EIC's) or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWC's) are issued and retained.
3.1.10	Where PCHA has installed new electrical systems (i.e. a complete rewire) in domestic properties, it will carry out periodic electrical testing after 5 years or due date as recommended by the installer.
3.1.11	PCHA will conduct a scheduled fixed wire test of all electrical systems in communal parts of domestic accommodation it owns and manages once every 5 years. Any systems designed to

ensure fire safety within buildings will be subject to more frequent testing in line with regular routine system testing in accordance with British Standards requirements.

**3.1.12** Where PCHA supplies electrical equipment, either for use in communal areas or as part of furnished tenancies, Portable Appliance Testing will also be conducted every twelve months and PCHA will ensure appropriate labelling is clearly displayed.

**3.1.13** In order to comply with the British Standards BSEN 62305, PCHA will inspect, test and certify all lightning conductors installed on buildings it owns or controls, every twelve months.

## **3.2 Tenant's Responsibilities**

**3.2.1** PCHA tenants have a responsibility to use electrical devices/ appliances and the electrical systems supplied to properties responsibly to protect the health and safety of themselves and others.

**3.2.2** PCHA encourage tenants to maintain good electrical safety around the home by regularly checking the visual condition of devices and appliances for signs of wear and tear that could potentially be dangerous e.g. scorching, loose wires or cable grips (more detailed information is available via the Health and Safety Executive website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)). Where any doubt exists over the safety of equipment, tenants are advised to switch the appliance / device off, disconnect from the mains and seek the advice of a qualified electrician.

**3.3** As part of its service standard developed and reviewed in consultation with customers on annual basis, OVH operate the following response times for dealing with responsive repairs to electric gates:

- OVH will endeavour to respond to emergency repairs within 24 hours and within 2 hours if there is risk to health and safety in order to make it safe if not repairable (It should be noted, however, that due to the mechanical nature of the systems in operation, it may not always be possible to remedy a fault immediately e.g. where manufactured parts are required. In these circumstances OVH will endeavour to resolve issues as expediently as is possible, keeping users of the system informed of expected timescales to restore to full working order.)
- OVH will respond to non- emergency repairs within 10 working days of the date of the notification subject to availability of specialist parts

**3.4** PCHA tenants have a responsibility not to tamper with any electrical systems supplied as part of their tenancy and should follow PCHA's 'Request to Alter' procedures for any changes required to the system (this will involve contacting the Customer Service Centre and requesting an alteration, which will normally be the subject of an inspection before a decision is taken to grant or refuse permission).

## **3.5 PCHA's Responsibilities as an Employer**

**3.5.1** PCHA will ensure the safety of its employees from electrical dangers in office locations, by ensuring that Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is carried out on all portable electrical equipment, every 12 -48 months depending on the type, use and environment in which it used.

3.5.2	Portable Appliance testing of equipment used by staff when Agile Working and therefore not primarily located in an office environment will also receive a full test every 12-48 months dependant on its type, use and condition.	
3.5.3	PCHA will also as part of general health and safety training for all staff provide information on the safe use of electrical equipment in and around office locations including the safe storage of cabling, avoidance of trip hazards and dangers posed by liquid spills around electrical equipment and systems.	
3.3.4	Inspection of fixed wiring within office locations and that associated with the operation of warehouses and other work locations (including operation of fixed plant and machinery) will be determined according to a risk assessment approach. This will be 'suitable and sufficient' for the activities undertaken at each location. The risk assessment will be conducted by the Asset Management Team.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	
4.1	All staff have a responsibility to be aware of the PCHA Periodical Electrical Testing Policy to be able to direct any customer queries that may arise. Staff also need to be aware of the policy to fulfil their health and safety duties, <i>"to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do"</i> .	
4.2	The Asset Management Team will be responsible for carrying out the risk assessment and determining the schedule of testing for fixed wiring in office, other work location and plant / machinery.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Performance</b>	
5.1	There are no additional performance requirements as a result of this Policy.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	
6.1	All staff have been consulted in the development of this Policy. In depth consultation has taken place with staff that have line management responsibility for the service.	
6.2	Tenant Policy Review Group were also consulted in the development of this Policy.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Review</b>	
7.1	The Policy will be reviewed annually by the PCHA Operations Director (on or as near as possible from the date of approval) or sooner if required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation affecting electrical safety or as a result of system audits.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	Yes
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	An Equality Impact Assessment Relevance Test was conducted by the Policy and Strategy Manager and Policy Writer on 28/08/2014. The

		result of this assessment is still relevant for this Policy review.		
8.3	Results of EIA	Although, the EIA shows potential risks to the business and individuals, there were no adverse impacts for any group with protected characteristics. Any differential impacts identified are adequately mitigated by existing procedures and operational practice (e.g. additional support for tenants with known mental health issues, when arranging the Periodic Electric Testing. checks).		
<b>9</b>	<b>Scheme of delegation</b>			
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the Policy and any amendments to it	Operations Director-PCHA		
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating Policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Operations Director-PCHA		
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Operations Director-PCHA		
<b>10</b>	<b>Amendment log</b>			
Date of revision:		Reason for revision:	Consultation record:	Record of amendments:
9 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2019		In line with the Review schedule	See section 6	Change at 3.2.3 – An inclusion that due to the mechanical nature of the systems in operation, PCHA may not be always possible to complete emergency repairs at stated time scales.
1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020		In line with the Review schedule	See section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 Act</li> <li>• Change of frequency for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Portable Appliance Testing – from 12 months to 12- 48 months</li> <li>○ Testing new electrical</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

			installations in domestic properties – 10 years and 5 years thereafter to 5 Years
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