

STATES OF JERSEY



SOCIAL RENTS PLAN TO REDUCE RENTAL STRESS FOR TENANTS (P.29/2025): AMENDMENT (P.29/2025 AMD.) – CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Presented to the States on 6th May 2025
by the Minister for Housing**

STATES GREFFE

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRIA)

PART 1: SCREENING

Name and title of Duty Bearer:	
Type of Duty Bearer: (Minister, Elected Member or States Assembly Body)	Elected Member
Assessment completed by (if not completed by duty bearer):	
Date:	

1) Name and brief description of the proposed decision

The subject of your CRIA may be a proposed law, policy or proposition and in accordance with the Law is referred to in this template as the '**decision**'

- What is the problem or issue the decision is trying to address?
- Do children experience this problem differently from adults?

The Minister for Housing has lodged an Amendment to Deputy Kovacs's Proposition 'Social rents plan to reduce rental stress for tenants' (P.29/2025). The Deputy's Proposition seeks to address the affordability of rents for Islanders who live in social rented housing, proposing that social housing rents should be set at a rate that does not put tenants in "rental stress," where a household does not pay more than 30% of their gross household income on rent. It requests the Minister for Housing, in consultation with the Minister for Treasury and Resources, to bring forward a revised social housing rents policy on the basis of this principal for the States Assembly's endorsement by January 2027.

The Minister for Housing's Amendment to Deputy Kovacs's Proposition proposes that a review should be undertaken to review the social housing rents system and associated income support policies. It does not challenge the principle of the Deputy's Proposition, but it recognises that such an endeavour – to bring forward a revised social housing rents policy – would be a significant piece of work, which it would not be possible to develop and implement within existing time and resources. The Minister is, therefore, proposing a review of the social housing rents system and associated income support policies to ensure their effectiveness, and to assess whether a market-based approach to setting social housing rents remains an appropriate model for Jersey.

The 2021 Jersey Census shows that 13% of households in Jersey live in social rented housing. These households will include a large number of families with children. Whilst paying the rent on a property is a parental responsibility, children may experience the financial pressure of renting a home differently as part of that household.

2) Which groups of children and young people are likely to be affected?

Groups of children could include early years, primary or secondary education; young adults; children with additional learning needs; disabled children; children living in poverty; children from particular ethnic backgrounds; migrants; refugees; care experienced children and LGBTQ+ children

All children and young people living in social rented housing in Jersey.

<p>3) What is the likely impact of the proposed decision on children and on their rights?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any potential positive OR negative impacts and include indirect impacts on children and their rights as described in the UNCRC • Will different groups of children be affected differently by this decision?
<p>The Amendment, in proposing a review the social housing rents system and associated income support policies, will enable the Minister for Housing to consider whether tenants in Jersey are experiencing financial pressures due to their rental costs and, if so, bring forward improvements to the working of the policy. Therefore, the Amendment has the potential to positively impact on tenants living in social housing and, by extension, their children by improving the affordability of housing and enhancing stability, security of tenure and their standard of living.</p> <p>In particular, the review of the social housing rents system and income support policies proposed by the Amendment has the potential to positively impact the best interests of the child (Art. 3) and the right to an adequate standard of living (Art. 27) by improving the affordability of housing for families with children living in social rented housing.</p> <p>There are also potential positive indirect impacts on children and their rights through the wider financial security and stability afforded by social housing rents that do not cause rental stress, including supporting children's right to education (Art. 28) and right to leisure and play (Art. 31).</p>
<p>4) Is a full Children's Rights Impact Assessment required?</p> <p>If you have identified impacts on children and their rights, a full CRIA should be completed. If no impacts are identified then a Full CRIA is not required, but <u>please explain your rationale and how you reached this conclusion</u></p>
<p>Yes; children and young people living in social rented housing will be affected by this Amendment.</p>

If screening determines that a full CRIA is needed, complete Part 2

Part 2: FULL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<p>5) What will be the impacts (positive or negative) of the proposed decision on children's rights?</p> <p>For each of the UNCRC articles described below, click to identify any that may be relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>			
Category	UNCRC Article	Impact? YES NO	
Guiding Principles	Non-discrimination (Art 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Best interests of the Child (Art 3) to be a top priority	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Right to Life survival and development (Art 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Respect for the child's views (Art 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civil Rights & Freedoms	Right to birth registration, name and nationality (Art 7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to an identity (Art 8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Freedom of expression (Art 13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Art 14) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Freedom of association (Art 15) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to Privacy (Art 16) including family and home life	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Access to information from the media (Art 17) Right to access reliable information from a variety of sources, in a format that children can understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Protection against torture or other cruel, degrading or inhumane treatment or punishment (Art 37(a))	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Environment and Alternative Care	Respect for the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents (or where applicable, extended family or community) to guide their child as they grow up (Art 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Responsibilities of both parents in the upbringing and development of their child (Art 18)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (Art 9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Family reunification (Art 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Abduction and non-return of children abroad (Art 11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet the child's physical and social needs and support their development (Art 27)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Special protection for children unable to live with their family (Art 20)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Best interests of the child in the context of Adoption (Art 21)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Review of treatment whilst in care (Art 25) If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Protection from violence, abuse or neglect (Art 19)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recovery from trauma and reintegration (Art 39) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic Health and Welfare	Rights of disabled children (Art 23)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to health and health services (Art 24)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to social security (Art 26)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Right to adequate standard of living (Art 27)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education, Leisure and Cultural Activities	Right to education (Art 28)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Goals of education (Art 29) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Leisure, play and culture (Art 31) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in cultural and artistic activities	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Protection Measures	Special protection for refugee children (Art 22)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Children and armed conflict (Art 38 and Optional Protocol #1) Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Children and juvenile justice (Art 40) Right to be treated with dignity and respect, right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of age.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inhumane treatment and detention (Art 37 (b)-(d)) Children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recovery from trauma and reintegration (Art 39) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Child labour and right to be protected from economic exploitation (Art 32)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Drug abuse (Art 33)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sexual exploitation (Art 34)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Abduction, sale and trafficking of children (Art 35)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Protection from other forms of exploitation including for political activities, by the media or for medical research (Art 36)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group (Art 30)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6) Information and research What evidence has been used to inform your assessment?		
Evidence collected (include links to relevant publications)	What did the evidence tell you?	What are the data gaps, if any?
Life on the Rock (2021), Children Commissioner for Jersey.	<p>For over a quarter of children surveyed in the report, housing was highlighted as one of the top issues that would make Jersey a better place. Rented housing was a key issue within this, including the affordability of housing.</p> <p>The report highlights that <i>“while Jersey offers many of its children a seemingly idyllic backdrop in which to grow and develop and learn, many children do not enjoy this to the same extent as others since much of what is available comes at a cost. These costs may relate to conflicts between housing, transport, leisure, school, or even medical assistance, and in this regard, not all costs fell equally.”</i></p> <p>The report draws attention to the following comments from</p>	<p>Whilst the report highlights the importance of housing as an issue for children, there is only a small amount of qualitative information relating to the experience of children living in rented accommodation, and little specific information on the impact of rental costs.</p>

	secondary school age children: “ <i>Houses and flats are very expensive in Jersey</i> ’. They spoke of the knock-on effect high housing costs may cause families who struggle to pay high rent such as ‘homelessness or children being made to social services when it’s not their (the parents) fault.’”	
Children’s Commissioner, Housing rights and children in Jersey Microsoft Word - Housing Rights and Children in Jersey (2021)	The policy position statement from the Children’s Commissioner identifies that “ <i>access to safe, affordable housing an issue for children in Jersey; over a quarter of children in Jersey recently listed housing as one of the top five issues that would make Jersey better.</i> ”	
Jersey Homelessness Strategy (2020)	<p>The strategy highlights the issue of housing affordability and the need for a sustainable long-term social housing model.</p> <p>The strategy further raises concern about the trauma and serious disruption experienced by children and their families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.</p>	The Homelessness Strategy highlights concerns about the issue of homelessness and insecure housing situations amongst families with children. It does not, however, provide direct data or evidence of the impact upon them. Improving data and the evidence-base on homelessness in Jersey is identified as one of the strategy’s priority areas.

7) Engagement with children What groups of children and young people (or those who speak on their behalf, such as social workers, teachers or youth workers) have been directly or indirectly involved in developing the decision?		
Groups consulted	How they were involved	What were the findings?
Owing to the limited time available to prepare the Amendment, it has not been possible to		

undertake engagement with children and young people. Nevertheless, the Minister for Housing is planning to engage with the School Council Network in June 2025, which will provide the opportunity to discuss housing in the context of ‘big picture outcome 3 – decent standard of living.’ This engagement will help to inform the Minister’s proposed review about the impact of the social housing rents system (and housing costs generally) on children and young people.		
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8) Assessing Impact on children’s rights Based on the information collected and analysed above, what likely impact will the proposed decision have on the specific children’s rights identified in question 5)?		
Relevant UNCRC Articles (rights) identified in Q5	Describe the positive or negative impacts on these rights	Which group(s) of children are likely to be affected?
Article 3 – Best interests of the child) Article 27 – Right to adequate standard of living	The review of the social housing rents system and income support policies proposed by the Amendment has the potential to positively impact these rights by improving the affordability of housing for families with children living in social rented housing.	All children and young people living in social rented housing.
Article 16 – Right to privacy Article 23 – Rights of disabled children Article 24 – Right to health and health services	The review of the social housing rents system and income support policies proposed by the Amendment has the potential to positively impact these rights indirectly by reducing	All children and young people living in social rented housing.

Article 28 – Right to education Article 31 – Right to leisure, play and culture	financial pressure on households with children and thus reducing the impact of housing instability and disruption on other aspects of family life.	
<p>9) Weighing positive and negative impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a negative impact is identified for any area of rights <u>or</u> any group of children and young people, what options are there to modify the proposed decision to mitigate the impact? • Could any positive impacts be enhanced? <p>The Amendment, if adopted, and the subsequent review of the social housing rents system and associated income support policies, has the potential to have an overall positive impact on children and young people by addressing rental stress amongst families with children. The positive impacts of the proposed review will depend on the extent to which it finds that rental stress is an issue for social housing tenants, and the policy changes that might be proposed as a result. The review should, therefore, be mindful of the impact of social housing rents on groups including families with children, and how policies could be strengthened to mitigate any of these impacts or unintended consequences.</p>		
<p>10) Conclusions</p> <p>In summary, what are your key findings on the impact of the proposed decision on the rights of Jersey children?</p> <p>The Amendment, in proposing a review the social housing rents system and associated income support policies, will enable the Minister for Housing will consider whether tenants in Jersey are experiencing financial pressures due to their rental costs and, if so, bring forward improvements to the working of the policy. Therefore, the Amendment has the potential to positively impact on tenants living in social housing and, by extension, their children by improving the affordability of housing and enhancing stability, security of tenure and their standard of living.</p>		