

Who is eligible?

The Sonas service is available to women who have been made homeless as a result of domestic violence and who have ended a relationship with an abusive partner. We work with a wide variety of women, including those with mental health, alcohol and drug-related problems.

We accept applications mainly through a referral agency, however we also give advice to individuals over the phone. A referral agent could be your doctor, your social worker, your community welfare officer or the staff at your crisis refuge centre.

What to do if you've been made homeless because of domestic violence?

- Talk to your doctor, social worker, community welfare officer or staff at a refuge about Sonas
- Call us on 01 8349027 for more information.

How to make a referral for Sonas supported housing

If you have a patient or client who you feel could benefit from Sonas, please fill in the relevant application forms which you can download from www.sonashousing.ie. Alternatively call 01 8349027 to make an enquiry. Please bear in mind the following:

- Applicants ideally should be working with the referral agency for a minimum of one month.
 - For a woman who is a joint tenant or a joint homeowner she must show that the violent relationship has finished; that she is unable to have her partner removed from her home; and that she is unable to remain in her own home due to ongoing domestic violence.

- Applicants ideally should be working with the referral agency for a minimum of one month.
- Both the applicant and the referral agency must complete application forms.
- If the referral is suitable, Sonas will invite both the applicant and the referral agency to an interview.
- An offer may then be made.

Case study

Vera (not her real name) had a supported transitional tenancy with Sonas for almost two years

"I was referred to Sonas through the Rathmines Refuge and I found it great. The keyworkers were invaluable; I never felt I was alone. When I came here first I was very lonely and could have found it very difficult but my keyworker really helped me feel secure. She really helped me in so many different ways, particularly in helping me get out and about and socialising again through a walking club. It was a really great support."

**Sonas Housing Association
Unit 8 Liberty Corner, Foley Street, Dublin 1
Tel: 01 8349027 Fax: 01 8349028
Email: info@sonashousing.ie
Web: www.sonashousing.ie**



Produced with funding from Cosc

Sonas Housing Association

a path to a new future

Sonas Housing Association provides housing with support for women and children who are homeless because of domestic violence.



SONAS

Domestic violence in Ireland

Domestic violence is the threat of physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse in close adult relationships.

Domestic violence and women

One in five Irish women have experienced some form of domestic violence from a current or former partner.

One in seven women in Ireland have experienced some form of severe abusive behaviour from a partner.

1,952 women and almost 3,000 children were accommodated in refuges in Ireland in 2006.

In 2007 there were 11,374 applications for protective orders under the Domestic Violence Act (1996).

Almost one in four of perpetrators of sexual violence against women in Ireland were intimate partners or ex-partners.

146 women have been murdered in the Republic of Ireland between 1996 and 2008.

Of these, 92 women were murdered in their own homes.

Of the 107 resolved cases, 50% of women were murdered by a partner or ex-partner.

Statistics from Women's Aid and Cosc

Domestic violence and children

In 2007, there were 1,889 specific incidents of child abuse disclosed to the Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline.

In an additional 3,491 calls it was disclosed that children were living in homes where there was domestic violence against their mother.

64% of Irish women who experienced domestic violence reported that their children had witnessed the violence.

Statistics from Women's Aid and Cosc

Domestic violence and homelessness

Domestic violence is a pathway to homelessness. While ideally women and their children should remain in their own homes if they have been victims of domestic violence, this is not always possible. A report on domestic violence in Ireland, (Kearns, Coen and Canavan, 2008) found that 55% of victims of domestic violence vacated the family

home. Another study found that 88% of women in a domestic violence situation do not leave because they have nowhere to go. (Women's Aid, 1995)

While crisis refuge accommodation can provide a safe environment for women leaving violent relationships, it's not a long-term solution. This is where Sonas comes in.

The work of Sonas

Sonas provides housing with support to women and children who are homeless because of domestic violence. We provide women-centred programmes to suit the needs of women in our service. Our programmes include:

- **A two-year supported housing service**
- **Permanent housing with long-term support**
- **Other specialist domestic violence housing support services**
- **Children's service**

The ultimate aim of Sonas is to ensure that women using our service are enabled to regain control of their lives and their independence. We also have a children's support service that helps children come to terms with the effects of witnessing domestic violence.

We have dedicated women support workers and children support workers who work closely with the women and children during their time at Sonas. They work on issues as diverse as safety planning to supplying information on local adult education classes and sports and social clubs.

Sonas housing

Sonas currently has seven housing complexes in Ballymun, Clondalkin, Fortunestown, Killester, Ranelagh, Rinsend and Stepside. Sonas has also developed a women's refuge in Balnchardstown (the Anu Centre).