



Expert support for your business



**Referencing Service Guidelines
Service Level Agreement**

Working with HomeLet

This booklet contains the following two sections:

1. Referencing Service Guidelines (RSG)

The RSG includes information on how the tenant application process works, and also outlines the best ways of making sure we can process referencing applications as quickly as possible.

2. Referencing Service Level Agreement (RSLA)

The RSLA outlines the targets and timelines we work to so we can continually deliver you an exceptional service. It also describes how we need to work together to make sure all references are carried out in the most efficient way.



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Referencing Service Guidelines

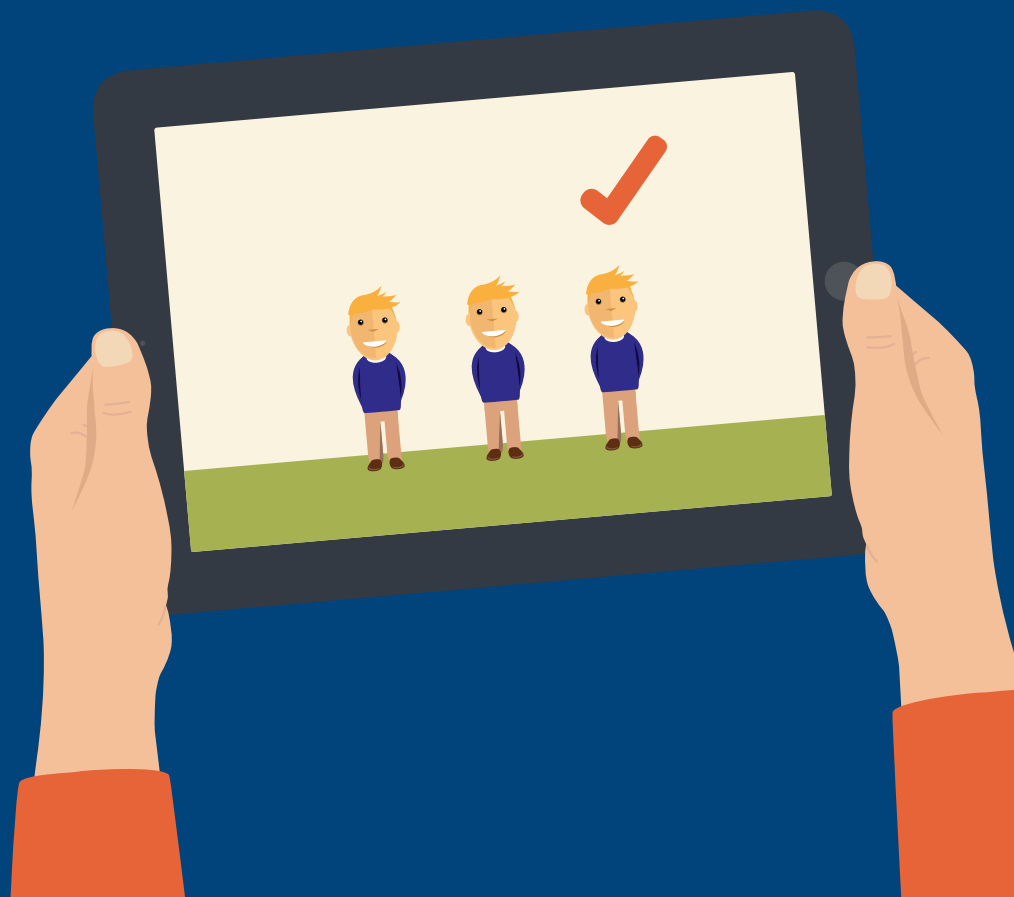
Let's get started

Meet your Account Manager

Now that you're a HomeLet customer you'll have your own dedicated Account Manager who'll support you every step of the way. If you have any questions about our products or services, or would like to make any suggestions on how to improve things, please get in touch – your Account Manager will be more than happy to help.

Your customer scheme number

Your unique customer scheme number can be found in the 'Welcome to HomeLet' letter and email you'll have received after joining us. Please quote the number in all correspondence with us and stamp it on all your leaflets. You'll also need this number when logging into Connect (see page 2).



Take control with Connect

Connect is an online system specifically designed for our letting agent customers. It allows you to manage your referencing activities at the click of a button, and is very quick and easy to use.

All you need to get started with Connect is your username and password, which you should have received via email. Once you're logged in, you can:

Enter new referencing applications

Simplify the referencing application process by emailing a link to your tenant for them to complete their own details.

How to send the tenant link:

- Confirm the tenant's signed the declaration and that you're happy for us to start the reference
- Enter basic information about the tenant
- Send the link to the tenant for them to enter more information
- Review the application online once the tenant's details have been entered
- Upload all declarations via the email assessor function on Connect for every application particularly larger employers
- Keep a paper copy of the declaration on file

...and we'll take care of everything from there.

View case notes

Review the entire case log to get real-time updates on the progress we've made on your applications.

View referencing reports

An email notification will be sent when your referencing reports are ready to download. You can also view your three most recent reports.

Process rent protection renewals

Complete all rent protection quickly and easily.

View invoices

Keep track of your finances at the click of a button, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Order HomeLet literature

Make sure you have the most up-to-date literature in your office at all times by ordering it for free via eBrochures.

Suggest ideas on MyConnect

Use MyConnect – an online forum dedicated to HomeLet customers – to suggest and vote for ideas you believe will enhance your HomeLet service.

Personalise your own space

Make Connect your own by branding it with your company logo.

View your business reports

Keep up to date with all your HomeLet products by viewing a summary of your reports and invoices.

Download documents

View, download and print documents such as referencing application forms, referencing information and details of other HomeLet products and services.

Referencing applications

Everything you need to know about making an application

Tenancy application score

As part of the referencing process, each individual receives a tenancy application score (TAS). All applicants start with the same score, and points are added or deducted according to the information found on the person's credit file and electoral role.

This score can't be changed by our employees, and has been devised specifically for the lettings industry. You can reassure your applicants that previous credit scores for other purposes don't affect the score.

	Acceptable	Acceptable with guarantor	Decline
TAS	710+ (rent protection products)	545 - 709 (rent protection products)	Less than 545
	618+ (non rent protection products)	545 - 617 (non rent protection products)	

No score

Where a score hasn't been issued, this means that we've been unable to check for any credit history.

Proof of residency

This isn't always required but sometimes we'll need you to obtain proof of residency for applicants or guarantors, and we'll tell you this on the final report.

If we do ask for proof of residency please keep this information safe as you'll need it in the event of a rent protection claim. If we've specifically asked you to obtain proof of residency, and you don't have the information, the claim may be declined.

It's best practice to gain proof of residency for every applicant, even if HomeLet don't require it.

Acceptable forms of proof

- Driving licence showing current address
- Utility bill (no older than three months and not a mobile phone bill)
- Council Tax bill (we'll only accept bills dated until the end of June that year)
- Home service provider bill, such as broadband or digital TV (no older than three months)

- Current TV licence
- Homeowner's current home insurance policy schedule
- Current mortgage statement (correspondence address and address the mortgage applies to must be the same)
- Tenancy agreement signed and dated within the last six months (the applicant being referenced must be a named tenant on the tenancy agreement)
- Letter from the tenants employer, on company headed paper, signed and dated
- Recent documentation confirming the applicant will be/is receiving local housing allowance or housing benefit
- Bank/credit card statements (for the last three months)

This list isn't exhaustive and our underwriting team will review any documents not on this list.

The following documents definitely can't be accepted:

- Other financial statements
- HM Revenue & Customs documents
- NHS medical card
- Letters from accountants or solicitors
- Mobile phone bills

How we make a decision

We review each application very carefully, taking a number of factors into consideration, which we'll go into over the next few pages. Once we've made a decision, we'll produce your referencing report.

Please don't show this report to the applicant.

It's important to note that the possibility of an 'acceptable' decision is also affected by CCJs. If CCJs are identified, but the score's still within the 'acceptable' range, an application may still be granted, but a guarantor may be required.

Where relevant, pass a copy of the final referencing report to the landlord for a decision on whether to proceed.

Tenant application tracker

Applicants can track their reference and view their application online by using the tenant application tracker. It's available for those tenants who've been referenced through our Enhance, Optimum, Extra and Advantage products (excluding guarantors).

Keeping you up-to-date

We'll notify you by email every morning that your referencing progress report is available to view on Connect. This report shows how your referencing applications are progressing, and what stage they're at. We do this once a day so you're not sent too many emails.

Fast turnaround times

We understand how important it is to do things as swiftly as possible – which is why we aim to complete the majority of Enhance, Optimum, Extra and Advantage reports within 24 hours.

Of course, this turnaround's subject to all referees responding immediately. If, for whatever reason, responses are delayed, we'll let you know in your daily progress report, which can be viewed on Connect. You can also keep track of your references by viewing our case notes at any time. If you'd prefer more updates, we can arrange this – just let us know.

What's in the daily report?

We'll give you details of:

- Applications completed within the last 24 hours
- Incomplete applications that need more information
- All applications, including actions carried out the previous day

Below is a list of average response times based, on common job types that you can expect to take longer than normal:

Company	Average turnaround (working days)
Leading broadcasting company	5
Airports	5
Leading insurance provider	5
Local authorities	5-7
Department of Work & Pensions	5-7
Leading telephone company	7
Emergency services	7
Leading pharmaceutical company	7
Leading IT company	7
Airforce, Army and Navy	7
Leading energy supplier	7
NHS	7
Leading supermarket	7
Leading bank	7-14

Response times

These response times are based on the proviso you've supplied us with all the information asked for on the application. Wherever possible, it's best to include more than one contact number and an email address – these extra contact details could really speed up your references.

We find that, in over 60% of cases, the pension provider or accountant will require the tenant's signed permission before releasing any sensitive personal information, such as their salary – **so it's important to make sure you always have a signed declaration on file** - we'll ask to see this approximately one in five cases.

If we contact you for the declaration, and you don't hold a copy of it, the application will be placed on hold until we receive it.

The reason we need a signature – even if you're making the application electronically – is that we have to meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Top tips on getting it right first time

We want to provide the best possible service to our customers, and we want you to be able to provide an equally good service to your customers. That's why we've put together a few top tips to help ensure your applications can be processed as smoothly as possible:

- ✓ Use the 'tenant link' (see page 2)
- ✓ Make sure you have all of the following employer and landlord information before logging an application on Connect:
 - names
 - email addresses
 - phone numbers (landline only for employers please)
- ✓ Include the full postcode of the applicant's current property. If you can't locate the applicant's current or previous address on our database, please look the address up on www.royalmail.com (link on Connect) so we can update our records
- ✓ Give the tenant a copy of the tenant notification letter which can be downloaded from Connect (by clicking the 'Referencing' tab and selecting 'Useful information and documents'). This acts as a reminder for the applicant to authorise their employer and landlord to reply to our enquiries
- ✓ Send us the signed declaration with the application form as part of your process

Haven't got all the information?

Please see the Referencing Service Level Agreement section at the back of this booklet that gives details on what to do if you don't have all the information needed to process an application.

Applicants who've been declared bankrupt or have county court judgements

County court judgements (CCJ), court decrees (CCD), bankruptcies and individual voluntary arrangements (IVA) will affect the outcome of an application. If the applicant fails to declare any adverse credit history, they'll be declined.

We may ask for proof that a CCJ or IVA has been cleared and will accept a certificate of satisfaction or letter from a creditor, or the court which issued the CCJ. This must include the CCJ amount, date or number to prove the debt's been paid back.

The table below shows the outcome of an application depending on the applicant's adverse credit history:

Scenario	Outcome of application (subject to other information being satisfactory)
One declared CCJ/CCD under £300	Subject to final TAS and all other references, applicant may be acceptable, or acceptable with a suitable guarantor
One declared CCJ/CCD over £300 or more than one CCJ/CCD of any amount	Subject to final TAS and all other references, applicant may be acceptable with a suitable guarantor. Applicant will always be classed as not acceptable if the CCJ's over £5,000
Non-declared CCJ/CCD	The applicant will be declined. There may be scope to appeal this decision where the CCJ/CCD has been satisfied and the applicant can produce a certificate of satisfaction
Declared bankrupt or declared IVA	The applicant will be acceptable with a guarantor, subject to all other references and TAS being satisfactory
Non-declared bankrupt/IVA	The applicant will be declined
No score	Where a 'no score' has been issued, we've been unable to check for adverse credit history

Please note: as cases differ depending on the individual it's impossible to know for sure the outcome of a TAS, prior to an application being submitted.

It's only natural that your applicant might have some questions about their credit information. If so, they'll need to contact our credit supplier to obtain their Statutory Credit Report - this can be done online at callcredit.co.uk.

Income-to-rent ratio

Our final report provides an income-to-rent ratio on the applicant's ability to cover the rent. This must equal:

- 2.5 x the annual rent (or the individual's proportion of the annual rent), or
- 3 x the annual rent if being assessed as a guarantor

The table below shows the different income-to-rent ratios for standard referencing applications:

Income-to-rent ratio	Outcome of application (subject to other information being satisfactory)
0 - 2.49	Acceptable with a guarantor
2.5 or above	Acceptable individual applicant
3 or above	Acceptable guarantor

The table below shows the different income-to-rent ratios for applicants being assessed on independent means:

Income-to-rent ratio	Outcome of application (subject to other information being satisfactory)
0 - 1.49	Not acceptable
1.5 - 2.99	Acceptable with a guarantor
3 or above	Acceptable

Employment

To accept applicants without a guarantor, they must be employed. If they're unemployed, they must be able to prove they're going to start a job within 31 days.

If the applicant isn't due to start a job until at least 32 days after the tenancy start date, it's likely they'll need a guarantor. However, if they're going to start work in a professional position (see table below), they can start within 62 days after the tenancy starts without needing a guarantor.

What do we need?

To verify employment, we'll attempt to take current and/or future employer references. If the applicant knows they're leaving their job within the next six months, they should provide future employment details.

Below is a list of jobs we class as professional. It's not exhaustive and other professions may be considered. Anyone earning over £80,000 every year will be classed as a professional due to their high salary.

Professional jobs	
Accountant (including trainee accountants)	Optician
Actuary	Paramedic
Architect	Pastor
Armed Services	Pharmacist (including pre registration pharmacists)
Barrister	Physiotherapist
Business Analyst	Pilot
Chief Executive	Podiatrist
Chiropractor	Police
Chartered Engineer (has completed the necessary training and examinations)	Psychiatrist
Dentist	Radiographer
Doctor	Research Fellow
Environmental Consultant	RGN Nurse
Environmental Health Officer	Scientist
Financial Analyst	Solicitor
Fireman	Speech & Language Therapist
High Court Judge	Statistician
Hydrologist	Surgeon
Journalist	Surveyor
Lawyer	Teacher/University Lecturer
Medical Writer/ Associate Medical Writer	Vet
Microbiologist	Zoologist

Guarantors

An acceptable guarantor should have:

- An acceptable TAS - refer to table below
- A good credit history with no more than one small declared CCJ/CCD (up to £300)
- An annual income of at least 3 x the annual rent

If a rent protection isn't required, a guarantor can be an overseas resident but must be employed (all other financial statuses are not acceptable).

Please be aware there may be a charge to add a guarantor to an application. If you have any questions about this, contact your Account Manager.

The table below shows the acceptable TAS score for guarantors:

	Acceptable	Decline
TAS	710+ (rent protection products) 618+ (non rent protection products)	617 or Less

Deed of Guarantee

It'll be a condition of the rent protection cover, if a guarantor was required for the referencing, that there's a legally binding and enforceable guarantee in place – it's all about protecting landlords, your business and ours.

The best way to do this is by entering into a Deed of Guarantee. The guarantor must sign the document and have it properly witnessed.

A Deed of Guarantee is available to download on Connect.

Types of applicant and income

In this section we'll take a look at the different applicants you'll meet, and everything you need to consider when making an application. It's best practice to name all parties on the tenancy agreement and to assess each person individually. If your landlord would like rent protection and legal expenses cover for the property, all tenants will need to be referenced. Permitted occupiers won't be covered.

The following should help you determine how many application forms will be needed:

Types of applicant

Couples

Married couple, one or both working

Two applications

Two applications are always required. Both applicants must be referenced, and need to supply their own application form. Please also note:

- If rent protection's going to cover both applicants, the other applicant must also be referenced on our Insight service and be named on the tenancy agreement (as long as they don't have an adverse credit history)
- Applicants who've lived in the UK for less than six months can't be referenced through our Insight service

Married couple, both working

Two applications

If you send us two separate applications, we'll assess both parties on the rent specified for each applicant. Two fees will apply.

Non-married couples

One or two applications

Two applications are always required. Both applicants must be referenced, and need to supply their own application form.

We can reference one of the applicants as not responsible for the rent - but they'd need to be a named tenant, as long as they don't have an adverse credit history.

Single people sharing

Single tenants sharing a property must all be named as tenants on the tenancy agreement and assessed individually. If you have single tenants applying to rent a property, please make sure to:

- Specify the total rent for the property and each applicant's share
- Confirm it's a shared property
- State how many sharers are in the property
- Make sure individual shares add up to the total rent

† Rent protection can't be provided where the rent is paid in advance

Students

Students need a guarantor to support them, unless they have Government funding for living expenses which is at least 2.5 x higher than the annual rent.

Other things to consider:

- Each student and guarantor must be assessed individually on their share of the rent
- If the student can't provide a guarantor, they must pay the rent for the full term of the tenancy in advance[†], or provide proof of Government funding for living expenses, as mentioned above
- If the student receives non taxable income, we can add 25% onto the figure of their bursary/scholarship/stipend income

For all students, please use the student and guarantor application form.

Types of income

Individuals on housing benefit or local housing allowance

Those on benefits must have a guarantor. Although it's not necessary to provide proof of the benefit in the event of a claim, it's best practice for you to know the local authority's criteria and benefit amounts. Please use the unemployed/housing benefit application form for these applicants.

Self-employed

All self-employed applicants need to have been self-employed for at least one year and be able to provide proof of a year's submitted tax returns. If they've been self-employed for less than a year, they'll either need a guarantor or have to pay the full tenancy rental amount in advance[†]. Please note, where the full rental amount's paid in advance rent protection isn't available.

Other things to consider:

- If the applicant's on the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) scheme, their application will be treated in the same way as someone who's employed. Please tick 'employed' on the form
- Applicants must state how long their accountant's acted for them and also supply the accountant's:
 - name
 - company name
 - address
 - phone number
 - email address
- Applicants should let their accountant know they've given permission for us to contact them
- If the applicant doesn't use an accountant, we can accept one year's authenticated self-assessment tax return forms
- Directors of limited companies are classified as employed, stating otherwise may cause delays in the application process

Volunteers

Those who volunteer, and are therefore unpaid, should be assessed in the same way as unemployed or housing benefit applicants. So, they'll need a guarantor or have to pay the full tenancy rental amount in advance.

Individuals employed by a relative

Some of your applicants may be employed by a relative. In these cases, applicants must provide independent evidence of a salary from a source within the company – not from a family member. If possible, please ask them to provide full contact details of the company accountant or an independent person who can provide the information.

If they can't do this then we need to see their last three months' payslips, plus a reference from a family member to confirm employment details.

International applicants

International applicants are referenced in the same way as UK-based individuals. However, you can't reference an international applicant through Xpress or Insight unless they've lived in the UK for at least six months.

Need help with Right to Rent checks? Speak to your Account Manager about HomeLet Verify - available now!

Please note that, if the applicant's assessed on an Advantage reference they must supply a copy of their passport/EU ID card and a UK bank account number with sort code.

Pensioners and the retired

Pensioners and those who are retired should provide a copy of their:

- Annual pension statement
- Monthly pension slip
- Bank statement for the last three months that verify their income
- Most recent P60, or

These can be submitted with the application. If you can obtain the pension statement, it could speed up your reference as we won't need to contact the pension administrator.

Alternatively, they should provide us with full details of their:

- Pension administrator
- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address

If we're required to obtain a pension statement from the administrator it could delay an application by up to 28 days. Pension administrators are also not obliged to release this information to us.

A pension income must be 2.5 x the annual rent to be acceptable. If your applicant doesn't have a private/company pension, we'll consider the following statements, as proof of income, that show:

- Long-term savings. Applicants will need to show they've had the savings for at least six months and they amount to 3 x the total rent for the tenancy
- State pension or benefits

Companies

If you're dealing with a public limited company (PLC), private limited company (Ltd), or limited liability partnership (LLP) company, remember we can only reference them when the property's for residential purposes. Don't forget to use the company application form on Connect.

Other things to consider:

- If an employee's paying part of the rent, they also need to be referenced. If two references are required, they'll need to pay two fees
- If rent protection's required you'll need to send us a copy of the tenancy agreement for review
- If the employer isn't a PLC, Ltd or LLP company, we'll need to reference the individual and receive written confirmation from the employer that they'll be paying the rent
- Companies that are less than three years old, or with no filed accounts, will need to provide a director's guarantee. You'll also need to complete an individual guarantor application and put a guarantor's agreement in place
- Where a company has been referenced, rent protection can only be provided if the occupant is an employee or director of the referenced company

If you've any queries relating to any of the above, please email companyqueries@homelet.co.uk - enquiries to this address have a turn around time of 4 hours.

Living on independent means

Applicants living on independent means will need to complete an individual form.

We can consider the following as proof of income:

- Their most recent statements showing at least 3x the sum of the total rent for the tenancy term. We'll take the lowest figure from those supplied. Statements must be -
 - Dated in the last 30 days
 - Applicants/guarantors name visible
 - Non editable format
 - Outstanding balance accepted (50% considered if a joint account)
- Investment income – considered on a case-by-case basis
- A solicitor's letter showing sufficient equity from a house sale

Did you know...

If you accept tenancy agreements that have been signed electronically, you'll also need to ask your tenants for additional photo ID.

This photo ID needs to include a copy of all tenants' signatures – such as a passport or photocard driving licence. You need to keep copies of these on file as you may need them if you make a claim.

There are other types of income, and in some circumstances, we can take these into consideration. Here are a few examples:

Income	Considerations
Disability Living Allowance	Can be considered when supplied with a copy of the statement or other form of notification from the Benefits Agency confirming the applicant's entitlement
Employment and Support Allowance (long term incapacity benefit)	Can be considered when supplied with a copy of the statement or other form of notification from the Benefits Agency confirming the applicant's entitlement. The benefit received must cover the term of the tenancy to be considered
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit	Can be considered when supplied with a copy of the Tax Credits Award from HM Revenue & Customs. For Child Tax Credit, we don't accept the childcare element - We'll always need to see the most recent award letter in case there's been a change in circumstances
Bursaries	Can be considered if the bursary's a living allowance. The applicant should provide written confirmation from the bursary provider. If the bursary's for tuition fees, it can't be considered. If the applicant's an international student, we can accept a letter from the relevant Government office confirming their income
Maintenance	Can be considered if the maintenance's been fixed as a result of a court order and the applicant can provide the relevant official documentation. If the maintenance's been decided amicably between the two parties, we'll require six months' worth of bank statements showing a regular amount being paid
Dividends	Can be considered if a reference from an accountant can be supplied, or the applicant can show proof of receipt of dividends

This list isn't exhaustive and other benefits/income may be considered. If the benefit/payment can be legally withdrawn at any time then, unfortunately, we won't be able to take it into account.

Renewing your HomeLet rent protection

A rent protection can only be renewed in certain circumstances, so it's important to check the tenant, rent and property before doing so. The table below shows the different scenarios of when a HomeLet rent protection can and can't be renewed:

Scenario	Can the Rent Protection be renewed?
Same tenant, same property, same rent	Yes, this can be renewed
Same tenant, same property, rent increase	Yes, provided the rent hasn't increased by more than 10% of the original assessment figure 'referenced amount'
Different tenant, same property, same rent	This can't be renewed for combined rent protection products (including Xpress, Extra and Advantage) but can be renewed when the rent's protected by a Rent Recovery Plus policy (this is subject to an acceptable HomeLet reference for new tenants. Please note the level of referencing carried out may affect the policy premium)
Same tenant, same property, same rent, different landlord	Yes, provided there's the correct agreement in place between the new landlord and the agent, with the agent being the policyholder. Both the old tenancy agreement and the new tenancy agreement would need to be produced at the claim stage
Same tenant, same property, same rent, different letting agent	Yes, this can be renewed but only if you provide written confirmation from the agent saying the rent protection policy can be transferred. However, this is dependant on your HomeLet status and type of product
Same tenant paying a part share of rent, now wants to pay all of the rent	No, the existing tenant must be re-assessed on the new figure unless the increase in rent is less than 10%
The tenant's stayed in the same property but has changed room/flat numbers	Yes, provided the postcode, landlord and rent are the same
There's been a break in tenancy	No, the tenant must be re-assessed
The individuals sharing the property have changed but one or more remain the same	Yes, a Rent Recovery Plus is in place. For combined rent protection, tenants will need to be assessed on the new tenancy agreement and re-referenced if their rental share's changed. Both the old and new tenancy agreements would need to be produced at the claim stage
The landlord asks us to renew directly with them	Yes, where the landlord can renew with us directly if they're the policy holder but, where the agent's the policy holder, the landlord's unable to renew.
The combined rent protection renewal date's passed	You can apply for Rent Recovery Plus, or re-reference the tenant and take out a new policy with a new tenancy agreement
The tenant hasn't paid the rent that's due before or on the renewal date	No – you need to make sure that, at the renewal date, the tenant's fully up to date with their rental payments so that there are no current arrears and that you disclose any cleared arrears at renewal. You must also make us aware of any arrears or tenancy disputes that have occurred during the policy term.

HomeLet rent protection

Even the best tenants fall on hard times. In fact, most rent defaults are due to an inability to pay when circumstances change, rather than a refusal. Reasons can include unavoidable things like the loss of a job, relationship breakdown, or long term sickness. While you may be sympathetic, your landlord still needs the money as part of the tenancy agreement.

How can we help?

Here at HomeLet we offer a variety of rent protection products that could help secure the rental payments for your landlord, should the tenant be unable or unwilling to pay.

Combined - reference and rent protection

Our combined rent protection products include a Tenant Reference, plus cover for legal costs and rental payments. If you provide a guarantee to your landlord as part of the service you offer them, our combined products will provide you with a Rent Protection insurance policy in your name.

Offer it as a Contract of Guarantee

If you've purchased a combined product, you can create a contract with the landlord that extends your services to include rental payments and tenant eviction in the event of non-payment of the rent by the tenant, this not only enhances your offering, it also gives you control over how best to deal with any tenancy default.

Simply buy a HomeLet rent protection insurance policy in your name to offset the liabilities arising from the contract of guarantee you've included in your service to the landlord.

The rent protection insurance schedule we issue to you on acceptance of the tenant will automatically include a contract of guarantee document for you to provide to the landlord, outlining the terms and conditions of this guarantee.

Important Information

Where an agent provides a managed service, any contractual guarantee must be either free of charge, or included within the management fees. Where an agent provides a 'tenant find' or 'rent collect' service, no fee should be paid for the contractual guarantee. There rules also apply when the contract is due for renewal

Rent Recovery Plus

The following needs to be considered before purchasing Rent Recovery Plus:

- Rent Recovery Plus can only be purchased if the property's being let on a written Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement. Any other type of agreement may be considered, but will need to be referred to HomeLet
- We're able to accept Company Lets as long as the property is occupied by a Director, Partner or employee of the company. However, these agreements still need to be referred to HomeLet before a policy's taken out
- If the only reference completed is an Insight reference, this is acceptable as long as the TAS is 710 or above, and the tenant(s) is in full time employment and meets affordability criteria for their share of the rent, in accordance with HomeLet conditions.

You can find out more about all HomeLet rent protection products by either logging into Connect or speaking to your Account Manager.

Any questions?

Below are a few questions we often get asked.

If there's something else you'd like to know, please email us at referencing.enquiries@homelet.co.uk

Final reports

Q Can I show the final report to the landlord?

A Yes, but please don't show it to the applicant.

Q Can I show the report to the tenant?

A Sorry, no – see the previous answer. However, if the applicant has detrimental credit information, they can request further information by visiting callcredit.co.uk.

Payment/invoicing

Q Why have I been charged for a reference I cancelled?

A We like to work quickly and efficiently, which means we may have already carried out much of the work by the time you cancel the reference. If you cancel an application when we've completed a tenancy application score, we'll just charge you for the work we've done.

If the application's an Optimum, Advantage or Extra reference, we'll downgrade it and charge for an Enhance reference. If the application's an Xpress, we'll downgrade it and charge for an Insight reference. If you cancel the application after we've already approached referees by email, letter or a phone call, you'll be charged the current rate for an Enhance product.

Q Why have I been debited various amounts at different times of the month?

A If the payment was taken on, or around, the 1st of the month, this is your Premier or PremierPlus agency subscription fee. The money coming out on or around the 22nd is your referencing invoice and/or rent protection renewals for all services during the previous month.

Special case employment types

Q How do you handle teachers applying during school holidays?

A As you can imagine, it's difficult to get a reference from a school outside of term time. Therefore, please ask the applicant to supply the name, address and number of their local education authority or a copy of their contract that includes details of their starting date and salary; plus their last three months' payslips.

Q Are all graduate applicants automatically treated as professionals?

A No, because they may not yet have a job or the necessary qualifications. There's a full list of what we consider to be a professional role on page 6.

Q How do you handle police officers or those in the military?

A If the applicant supplies employment details we'll do our best to get a reference. This usually takes around seven to ten days. However, if you can confirm you've seen their warrant card or military ID card and the officer's rank, we'll accept those as proof, and use pay scales to verify their salary. Please note that you can't keep a photocopy of the warrant card.

Rent Protection

Q The tenant's already moved into the property, can I still get Rent Protection?

A Unless there's a change in the Tenancy Agreement (such as a new tenant moving in or an existing tenant leaving), you won't be able to purchase a combined rent protection product. However, you can buy our Rent Recovery Plus product which has a 60 day no-claims period.

Affordability calculator

Monthly rent	Tenant income	Guarantor income
140	4200	5040
160	4800	5760
180	5400	6480
200	6000	7200
220	6600	7920
240	7200	8640
260	7800	9360
280	8400	10080
300	9000	10800
320	9600	11520
340	10200	12240
360	10800	12960
380	11400	13680
400	12000	14400
420	12600	15120
440	13200	15840
460	13800	16560
480	14400	17280
500	15000	18000
520	15600	18720
540	16200	19440
560	16800	20160
580	17400	20880
600	18000	21600
620	18600	22320
640	19200	23040
660	19800	23760
680	20400	24480
700	21000	25200
720	21600	25920
740	22200	26640
760	22800	27360
780	23400	28080
800	24000	28800
820	24600	29520
840	25200	30240
860	25800	30960
880	26400	31680
900	27000	32400
920	27600	33120
940	28200	33840
960	28800	34560
980	29400	35280
1000	30000	36000
1020	30600	36720

Monthly rent	Tenant income	Guarantor income
1040	31200	37440
1060	31800	38160
1080	32400	38880
1100	33000	39600
1120	33600	40320
1140	34200	41040
1160	34800	41760
1180	35400	42480
1200	36000	43200
1220	36600	43920
1240	37200	44640
1260	37800	45360
1280	38400	46080
1300	39000	46800
1320	39600	47520
1340	40200	48240
1360	40800	48960
1380	41400	49680
1400	42000	50400
1420	42600	51120
1440	43200	51840
1460	43800	52560
1480	44400	53280
1500	45000	54000
1520	45600	54720
1540	46200	55440
1560	46800	56160
1580	47400	56880
1600	48000	57600
1620	48600	58320
1640	49200	59040
1660	49800	59760
1680	50400	60480
1700	51000	61200
1720	51600	61920
1740	52200	62640
1760	52800	63360
1780	53400	64080
1800	54000	64800
1820	54600	65520
1840	55200	66240
1860	55800	66960
1880	56400	67680
1900	57000	68400
2000	60000	72000

Referencing Service Level Agreement

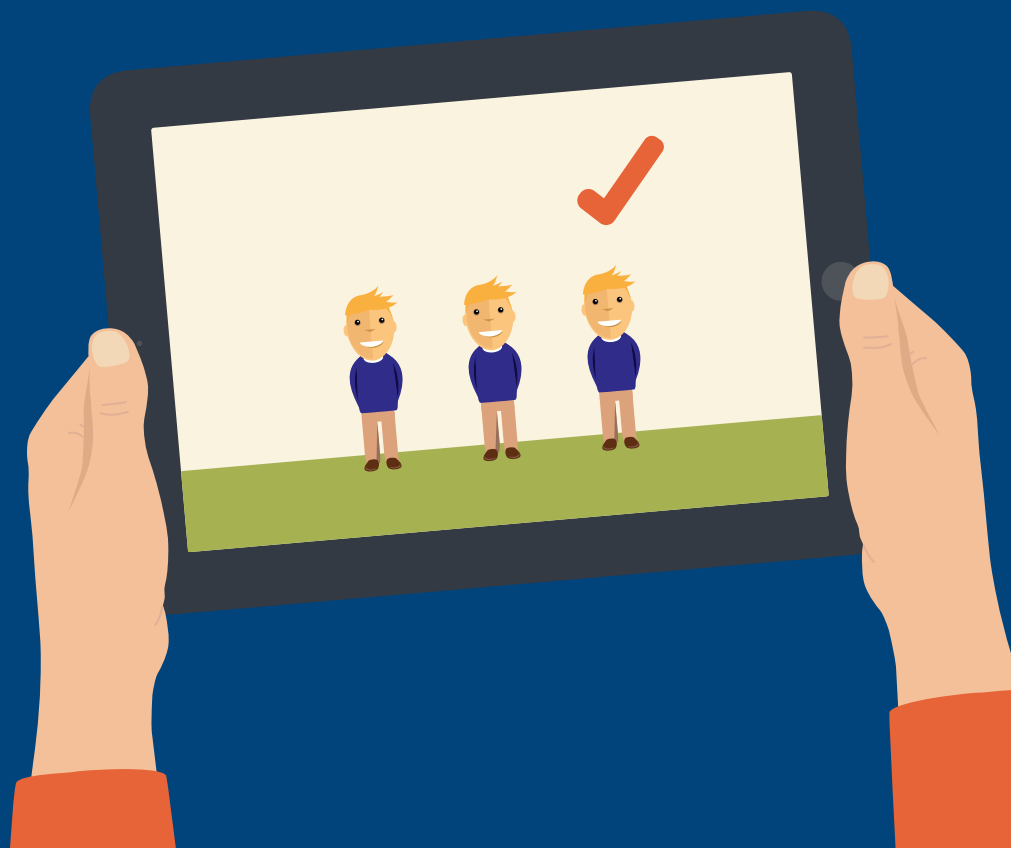
Working together to deliver an excellent service

To make sure you enjoy an excellent experience with us, we'll:

- Let you know what we need and how long we'll take to do something
- Tailor our advice based around the referencing needs of you and your clients
- Contact you straight away if something happens that may affect how we deliver our products or services
- Be proactive in problem solving
- Monitor our performance against HomeLet standards through audits and quality reviews

As well as keeping in touch with us, what we need from you and your clients is for you to::

- Complete application forms containing clear and accurate information
- Give as much information as possible in applications, especially regarding referees
- Authorise employment and landlord referees



Our referencing products

Insight

We'll ensure that your tenant's suitable for a tenancy by checking a range of credit information.

What's included in an **Insight** reference?

- ✓ Bank detail check
- ✓ HomeLet Default Database check
- ✓ Financial sanctions check
- ✓ Adverse credit history check
- ✓ Bankruptcy checks
- ✓ CCJs and court decrees check
- ✓ Undisclosed address and name check

Enhance

We'll get a reference from the tenant's current landlord or letting agent, and their employer[†].

What's included in an **Enhance** reference?

- ✓ Bank detail check
- ✓ HomeLet Default Database check
- ✓ Financial sanctions check
- ✓ Adverse credit history check
- ✓ Bankruptcy checks
- ✓ CCJs and court decrees check
- ✓ Undisclosed address and name check
- ✓ Full employment reference, including income information
- ✓ Future employment reference if required
- ✓ Current landlord or letting agent reference

Optimum

As well as a full Enhance reference, we'll guarantee to remove the tenant from your property if they fail to pay the rent.

What's included in an **Optimum** reference?

- ✓ Bank detail check
- ✓ HomeLet Default Database check
- ✓ Financial sanctions check
- ✓ Adverse credit history check
- ✓ Bankruptcy checks
- ✓ CCJs and court decrees check
- ✓ Undisclosed address and name check
- ✓ Full employment reference, including income information
- ✓ Future employment reference if required
- ✓ Current landlord or letting agent reference

✓ **Our unique guarantee:**
We'll guarantee to remove the tenant from the property if they fail to pay the rent!

What's special about our checks?

- We check that the banking details provided by your applicant are for a genuine bank account
- We conduct a check against HomeLet's own Default Database — this may indicate whether an applicant has not been able to pay their rent in the past
- We conduct a financial sanctions check, to make sure your applicant isn't registered on the Government's Asset Freezing lists — because this could mean they're unable to pay their rent in the future

[†] In some cases where employee references are not available, we may accept payslips from the 3 months prior to completing your reference application.

Referencing application process

The list below outlines the referencing application process. It highlights what you can expect from us, along with a description of your responsibilities, to make sure we're able to meet our commitments to you. The rest of this booklet explains what we both need to do to make sure each and every application's processed as quickly as possible...

1 Product selection

To get things started, we'll offer you the following products:

Insight

A robust reference that confirms an applicant's credit history, undisclosed names, and bank account. We also carry out a financial sanctions check and refer to our own Default Database to check for any previous rental arrears

Enhance

An Insight check with additional checks on an applicant, including references from their employers; plus their landlord or letting agent

Optimum

An Enhance check with the unique added guarantee; if the tenant defaults on their rental payments within the first 12 months of the tenancy, we'll evict them – for free

Rent Recovery Plus (RRP)

Protection for rental income and cover for the whole property, no matter how many tenants live there

Rent Recovery Plus Nil Excess

An RRP cover with zero excess

It's really important you choose the product most suited to your customer.

2 Obtaining a tenancy application score (TAS)

This will usually be obtained immediately. Occasionally it's necessary for us to manually intervene and cross match partially matching data. If we do this we'll aim to process the application in two hours.

Sometimes gaining a TAS isn't possible as we can't find the address provided on the application. If this happens, we'll ask the applicant to contact Royal Mail and register the address. We can't register addresses on an applicant's behalf, and it can take up to 72 hours for the details to be added by Royal Mail. Alternatively, we can accept a utility bill confirming the address, or a screen shot of the address from the Land Registry website.

Once the address has been registered, the application process can then continue.

3 Missing information

If there's any missing mandatory information in the application form you send us, we'll email it back, asking for the remaining details. This won't be logged on to our system. Once you've obtained the information, you'll be required to resubmit the form – which can be done via Connect.

What we need from you...

Enter complete applications on Connect to obtain an instant TAS where possible (see 'Obtaining a Tenancy Application Score').

Complete applications with clear and accurate information. The assessment process can't proceed without this. If an application's sent back, complete it in full and re-send it to us. The email to tenant link is the quickest and most efficient way of doing this.

4 Information and queries regarding applications

If you have any application queries, please send them through Connect – we'll then aim to get back to you within two hours.

In urgent situations our referencing team will answer your questions over the phone. Call 0330 333 7234 to speak to one of our friendly and experienced advisors.

Did you know...

Applicants can track their reference through our tenant application tracker – make sure you tell them about it, we've got a handy eFlyer that will help you to do so.

Ask applicants to submit their email addresses so we can send them login details to access the relevant area on our website.

5 Reference requests

Once we've confirmed the applicant's income, we'll make sure they're in a position to make rental payments, by securing current landlord references (where possible) for a full tenancy history. We'll do this as soon as we receive the completed form.

Please make sure you:

- Encourage applicants to provide as much contact information as possible for their referees, including:
 - contact names
 - telephone and fax numbers
 - email addresses
- Provide applicants with the referee notification letter and ask them to pass a signed copy of it to their employer

6 Obtaining references

What we'll do:

- Automatically send reference requests, by email, to referees when applications are logged on to our system. We'll then chase references over the phone in an attempt to gain a reference. An email, text message or letter will also be sent to the applicant or referee
- Aim to complete all applications as soon as possible to a good standard
- Continue to contact referees and the applicant until we get a response
- Send you an email notification to let you know a temporary final report's available to view on Connect if:
 - we haven't been provided with the information we need to get references from you or the applicants
 - the employer has a turnaround time longer than 48 hours, once they've confirmed receipt of the reference request
- Always update Connect after every call or contact

What you need to do:

- Understand our criteria on providing and obtaining an appropriate employment or residential status. This is outlined at the beginning of this guide and on Connect
- Ensure you use Connect for instant updates on the progress of any application and submit any additional information that may assist us
- Ensure the applicant informs their referees we'll be contacting them

7 References received

Once we've received a reference, we'll let you know what we've been sent and what's outstanding or we'll produce a final report within four hours.

Important...

Don't share information provided by the referee with applicants

8 Information and queries about accounts

Your invoice will be available to view and download on Connect in the second week of each month – so you can see details of your account at all times.

Checklist:

- ✓ Make sure your account's kept up-to-date by ensuring we receive your payment when agreed. The easiest way to pay is to set up a regular Direct Debit

9 Company applications

Once you've added your company applications on Connect, we'll email you a notification to let you know the final referencing report's available to view on Connect (where appropriate) within four hours of receiving them. If any information's missing, we'll email it back to you as we can't process applications without all the relevant details.

Checklist:

- ✓ Check the company's a UK - based PLC, Ltd or LLP company before sending us a company application form
- ✓ Make sure the declaration's:
 - signed by a director or company secretary as listed on Companies House, or
 - supported by a letter from the HR Director or listed company secretary stating the signatory has authorisation to sign the declaration on the company's behalf

10 Final referencing report

Important:

When you receive your final referencing report, make sure you check the applicant's address and rental amount are correct.

Any amendments to details on an application need to be made before the applicant moves into the prospective address.

What we'll do...

- Provide detailed final referencing reports outlining our decision on applications and outcomes of our assessments
- Aim to return 80% of all final referencing reports within 24 hours of receiving completed applications (across combined products)
- Produce final referencing reports for 85% of all applications within 72 hours (across combined products)
- Notify you by email when your final referencing report's available. This email will contain a link for you to follow, in order for you to view the document on Connect.

If you're already logged into Connect, the link will take you straight to the report. If you're not logged in, you'll be asked to do so, using your normal login details

- Email a tenant's insurance quote to tenants following the issue of acceptable final reports, if they've given permission to do so

11 Payment by account

We'll send you an email to your dedicated email address, every month, to let you know your invoice is ready - you'll then be able to view it and download it through Connect.

What you need to do...

Settle your account by the 22nd of each month. If your account remains overdue for more than 14 days, we'll place it on stop. New and existing applications won't be processed until your accounts brought up to date.



Data Protection Act and compliance

We aim to keep our referencing service fully compliant with all Data Protection legislation. We regularly monitor all relevant legislative requirements to ensure our services remain compliant.

Please note that only the agent submitting the application, and/or the landlord for whom they're acting, are permitted to see the results of the assessments carried out.

The applicant must not be shown the reports provided to you by HomeLet.

No application can be processed without the written consent of the prospective tenant/ guarantor - which we'll obtain from the declaration on the application form or via the 'email to tenant' link on Connect.

Complaints

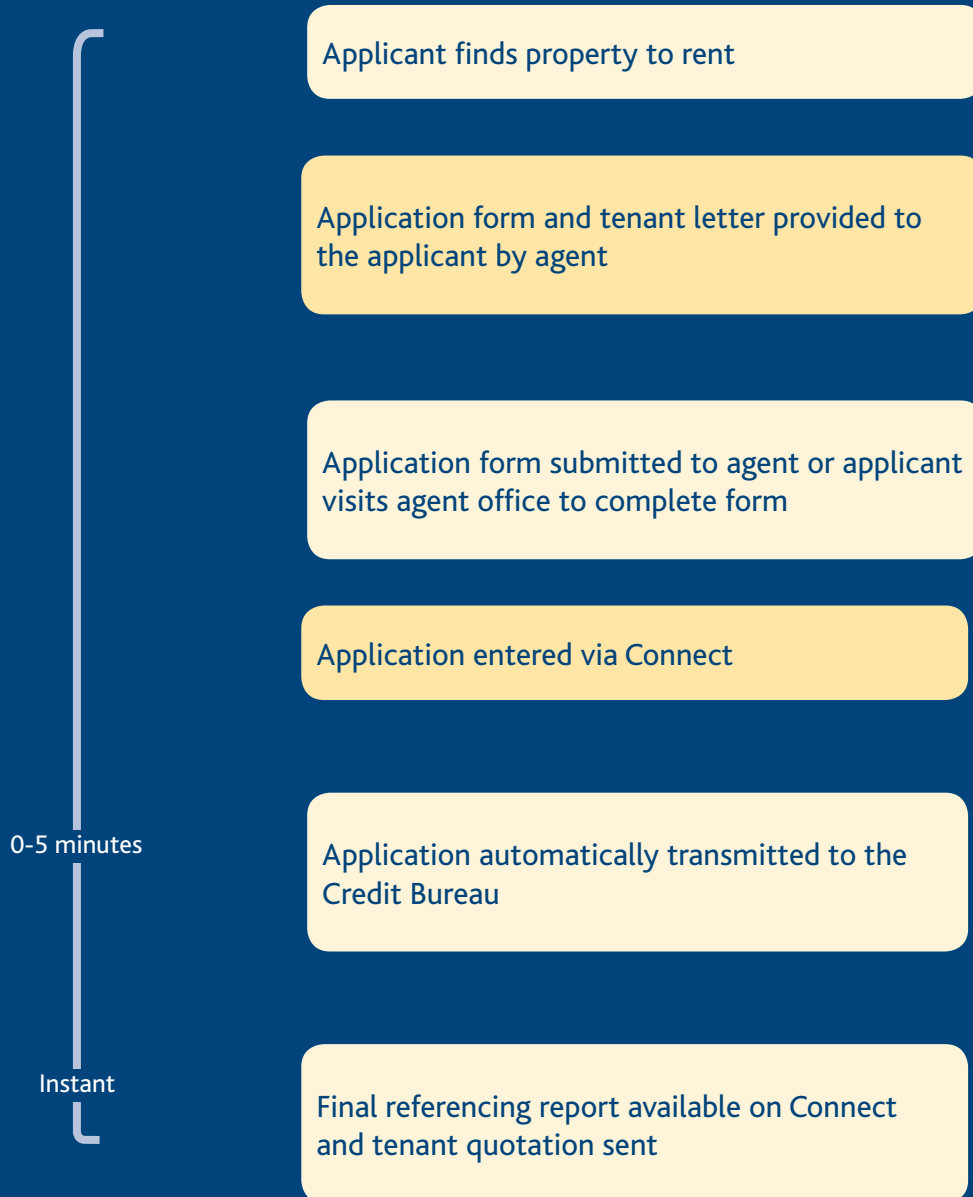
We're committed to providing a high quality service to all of our customers – however, there may be occasions where difficulties arise and you feel you haven't received the service that you'd expect from us.

If you have any reason to feel unhappy with our service, we'd like to know so we can put things right. Please talk to your Account Manager or contact our referencing contact centre on 0330 333 7234 and one of our customer service team will resolve your problem.

If they're unable to resolve the issue, they can escalate it to our complaints team.

If you'd like to speak to our complaints team directly, please email complaints@homelet.co.uk or write to us at Complaints Team, HomeLet, Hestia House, Edgewest Road, Lincoln, LN6 7EL.

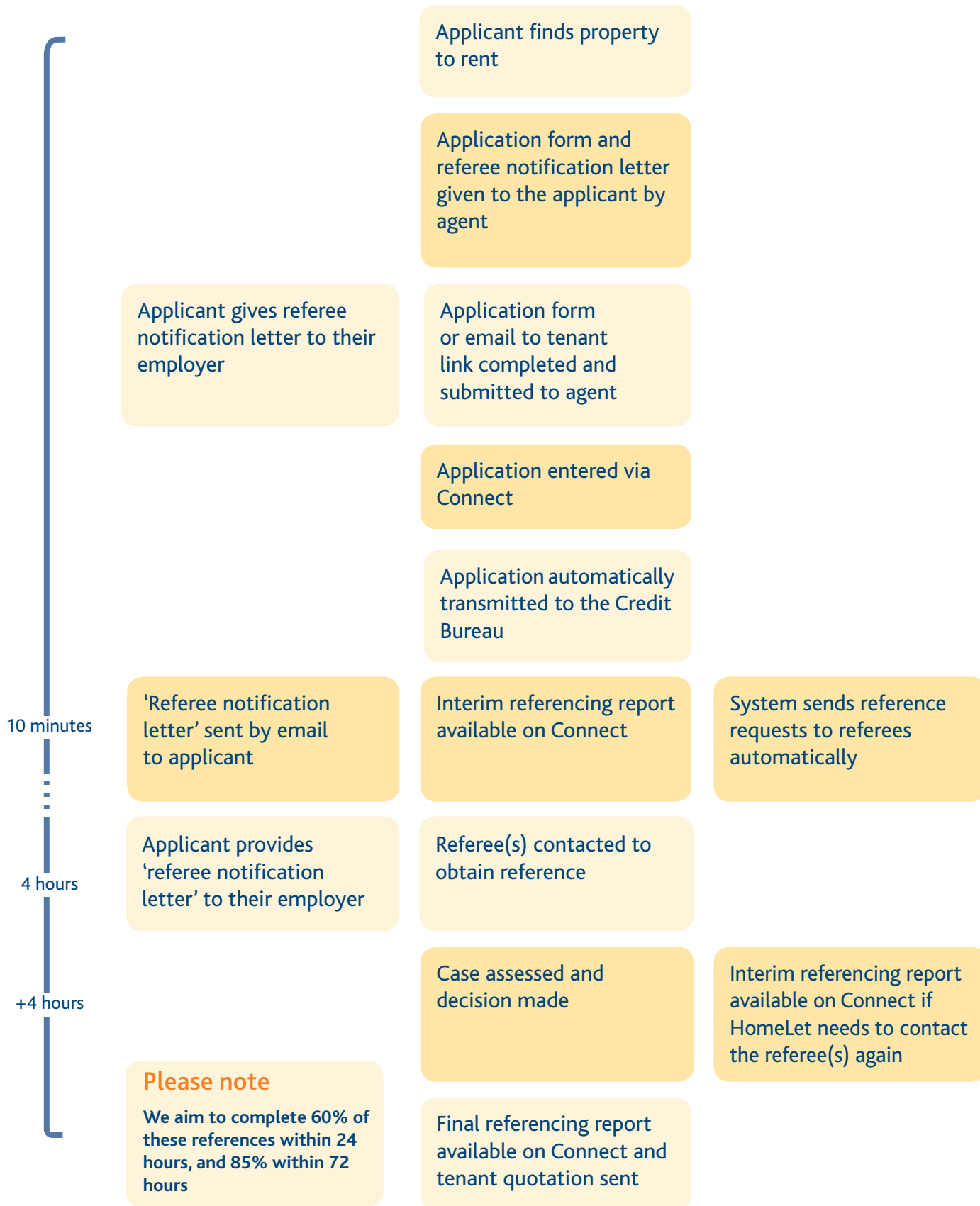
Insight referencing process



Please note

This reference may take longer if we're unable to obtain a TAS

Enhance and Optimum referencing process



Call us:

0330 333 7234

To make an online enquiry or for more information visit:

homelet.co.uk/letting-agents

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