

PRESS STATEMENT

Thursday, 15th December 2011

Tenants Will Not be Liable for Household Charge – Threshold

– Housing charity outlines how landlords, rather than tenants, are liable for new charge –

Landlords will bear full responsibility for payment of the new household charge and under no circumstances will tenants be liable. That's according to Threshold, the national housing charity.

Speaking today (15.12.11), Aideen Hayden, Chairperson of Threshold, said she was shocked to see the Irish Property Owners' Association (IPOA) urging landlords to levy the household charge on their tenants.

"I'm horrified that a national representative body would make such a misleading and irresponsible call," she said. "When the Department of the Environment introduced this charge in the recent Budget, it stated very clearly that owners – not occupiers – would be liable.

"The Minister for the Environment has clearly outlined that responsibility for payment lies with the home-owner. Therefore, it is opportunistic, unfair – and legally wrong – for any landlord to now try to pass this charge on to his or her tenants."

Ms. Hayden said she was also surprised the IPOA was advising landlords to pass on the non-principal private residence (NPPR) charge to tenants. "Again, this advice is completely misleading and would actually lead to landlords breaking the law," she said. "The Local Government (Charges) Act 2009 quite clearly sets out that it is the owner – not the occupier – of a property who is liable for the NPPR.

"Because there is now such misleading information in the public domain, Threshold is concerned that tenants will start being pressurised by their landlords into paying these charges. Our advice to tenants is: under no circumstances should they pay either the new property charge or the NPPR.

"If their refusal to pay leads to a dispute with their landlord, they should refer the matter to the Private Residential Tenancies Board. And Threshold is always here to help. If any tenants need advice or support around this issue, they should contact us immediately."

Threshold runs a number of advice centres for tenants throughout the country. These can be contacted on the following numbers:

- Eastern Region: 01-678 6096
- Western Region: 091-563 080
- Southern Region: 021-427 8848

Further information on tenants' rights is also available on the organisation's website, www.threshold.ie.

ENDS

Contact: Martina Quinn / Noomi Egan, DHR Communications, Tel: 01-4200580 / 087-6522033 / 087-7449915

About Threshold

Threshold was founded in 1978 and is a not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to secure a right to housing, particularly for households experiencing the problems of poverty and exclusion. Its main concentration of work is within the rented sector. The organisation operates a national office, based in Dublin, and three regional offices. It provides advice and representation to almost 20,000 people each year. Further information is available at www.threshold.ie.