



What is a registered charity?

Basic info

A registered charity means one that is registered with the appropriate charity regulator:

- In England and Wales the Charity Commission
- In Scotland the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

If a charity is registered with either of these regulators it satisfies the exempt accommodation landlord requirements.

Incorporation model

Registered charities will tend to be one of the following:

- A company limited by guarantee (registered with both Companies House and the charity regulator)
- Since March 2013 a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registered with the charity regulator only)
 - This is a new corporate status intended to reduce the bureaucratic burden on charities. The CIO has its own legal personality and its members and trustees have limited liability, but the CIO is regulated only by the charity regulator and not by Companies House.
- An unincorporated charity run by trustees (registered with the charity regulator only)

There is a fourth form of incorporation: a registered society (see “Tell me more about registered societies” below). Many registered societies are regarded as charities for general purposes (eg taxation). But the charity regulator does not register charitable societies and so it is not entirely clear whether a charitable society is a registered charity for Housing Benefit purposes. In most cases this will not matter because a charitable society is likely to satisfy one of the other exempt accommodation landlord requirements such as “housing association” or “voluntary organisation”.