

Periodic Electrical Testing Policy

Originator:	Policy and Strategy Team
Executive Management Team Approval Date:	August 2023
Review date:	August 2026

1	Introduction
1.1	OVH treats the health and safety of tenants, staff, contractors, and other users of its buildings of paramount importance.
1.2	<p>In fulfilling these health and safety obligations, OVH is committed to mitigating the risks posed by the use of electrical systems within buildings it owns and controls. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical shock • Electrical burn • Fires of electrical origin • Electric arcing • Explosion initiated or caused by electricity • Electrical fire
1.3	<p>This Policy sets out OVH’s responsibilities to comply with the relevant legislation and regulatory guidance on the installation, inspection, repairs, testing and certification of electrical systems in buildings it owns and controls including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 • Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 • Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • Institution of Engineering and Technology (IEE) Wiring Regulations 18th Edition, BS 7671(2018) • Consumer Rights Act 2015 • Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 • Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 • The Fire Safety Act 2021 • Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
1.4	Application of the Policy also enables OVH to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing adopted by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time • Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes <p>1.5 Access and Communication</p> <p>1.5.1 OVH is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to everyone. OVH will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for OVH or use its services.</p> <p>1.6 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights</p> <p>1.6.1 OVH is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity / Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Religion and / or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity.</p> <p>1.6.2 OVH also recognises that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.</p> <p>1.6.3 OVH will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. OVH will endeavour to ensure its employees and others with whom it works, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).</p> <p>1.7 This Policy must be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVH Electric Gates Policy • OVH Health and Safety Policy • OVH Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Works Policy • OVH Access to Properties Policy • OVH Fire Safety Policy <p>1.8 OVH staff can access procedure maps in relation to all aspects of Assets Management (in relation to this Policy) via the internal document management system.</p>
2	Statement of Intent
2.1	OVH will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements in meeting its responsibilities to ensure electrical safety in buildings it owns or manages.
2.2	To meet the above requirements OVH will operate a well-resourced and comprehensive electrical safety management system including checking and certification of all electrical systems and equipment that OVH is responsible for.

2.3 OVH will ensure the contractors it employs to carry out checks on its electrical systems are 'Authorised Competent Persons' who have the appropriate and up to date qualifications i.e. Technical Qualification in Electrical Engineering, City & Guilds 236 parts 1 and 2 or NVQ3 equivalent, City & Guilds 2381 or 2382 18th edition 'wiring regulations', City & Guilds 2391 or equivalent for testing and inspection and 2.3 PAT 2377, where required.

2.4 OVH will keep accurate records of all periodic checks undertaken on:

No	Type of installation	Frequency of inspection and testing
1	Portable Appliance Testing in its offices and other work locations	12- 48 months
2	Portable Appliance Testing in communal areas and furnished tenancies of domestic properties	12 months
3	Fixed wiring systems in domestic properties	5 years or as advised by the electrician
4	Fixed wiring systems in communal areas of purpose-built blocks of flats	5 years or as advised by the electrician
5	Fixed wiring systems within shops and other commercial properties	5 years or as advised by the electrician
6	Fixed wiring systems within industrial properties (e.g. warehouse)	3 years or as advised by the electrician
7	New electrical installations in domestic properties	5 years or as advised by the electrician
8	Void Properties as they become vacant prior to occupation	As required

2.5 OVH is not legally obliged to provide as a matter of course Domestic Electrical Installation Condition Reports to tenants (undertaken on all domestic properties when they are undergoing void works in between lettings) but will, however, provide copies on request.

2.6 OVH will adopt a 'fair but firm' approach to gaining access to domestic properties where periodical electrical testing is required (following Electrical Safety Council Guidelines for once every 5 years for tenanted properties). This will include:

- Writing to tenants in advance of the required access date and providing an initial appointment (which can be altered on request)
- Partnership work with external agencies and advocacy groups where tenants are known to be vulnerable for any reason
- Where possible combining appointments with other safety checks e.g. annual landlords gas safety checks, where applicable

3.1 Landlord Responsibilities

3.1.1 OVH will use Sovini Property Services (SPS) to discharge their duties for promoting electrical safety in domestic properties as set out in the clauses below:

3.1.2 OVH will carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) on all void properties by a qualified electrician, ensuring all electrical systems and any supplied equipment is safe for use before making the property available for re-letting. Information from these reports and other aggregated property condition information will also be used to inform future investment works including scheduled re-wiring of properties.

3.1.3 Copies of the Electrical Inspection Condition Reports will be retained by OVH as proof of the fitness for purpose of electrical systems at the time of letting.

3.1.4 OVH will also carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report when there is a transfer of tenancy from one party to another but there is no vacant void period (this will not apply when there is a transfer from a single to a joint or joint to a single tenancy).

3.1.5 As a minimum specification, OVH will ensure that domestic properties, at the time of letting:

- Have an electrical system that is safe for continued use
- Keep supplied appliances to a minimum
- Ensure that where supplied appliances are provided, safety warnings are attached including CE marked and / or approved
- Ensure that where appliances are provided, flexes are in good order and properly attached to appliances and plugs
- Ensure that earth tags are in place
- Ensure that where appliances are provided, plugs are of an approved type, CE marked and have a sleeved live and neutral pins
- Ensure that plugs provided and sockets conform to BS1363 or BS1363/A for heavy duty uses
- Ensure that all fuses in appliances provided are of the correct type and rating
- Make sure that tenants have access to the main consumer unit, fuses and isolator switch
- Keep a record of all fuse ratings

3.1.6 Following guidance from the Electrical Safety Council, OVH will endeavour to carry out a periodic check of fixed wiring systems within domestic properties every 5 years. OVH will rely on the goodwill and co-operation of tenants to gain access when requested to carry out these checks.

3.1.7 Where access is denied, OVH may consider the use of legal powers within the tenancy agreement to secure access, if operatives working on behalf of OVH consider there to be a significant risk to the occupants or the property by not carrying out the electrical check. Each case will be assessed on its merits and any final decision to instigate legal action to gain access will be made by the Neighbourhood Services Manager or Independent Living Manager.

3.1.8	If a property is suspected to be abandoned, OVH will deal with it in line with its suspected Abandoned Property Procedure.
3.1.9	Where OVH carry out works to electrical systems in domestic properties that will be classed as 'new installations', 'additional' or an 'alteration' e.g. where a complete rewire is required or a new fuse box is installed, it will ensure Electrical Installation Certificates (EIC's) or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWC's) are issued and retained.
3.1.10	Where OVH has installed new electrical systems (i.e. a complete rewire) in domestic properties, it will carry out periodic electrical testing after 5 years or the due date as recommended by the installer.
3.1.11	OVH will conduct a scheduled fixed wire test of all electrical systems in communal parts of domestic accommodation it owns and manages once every 5 years. Any systems designed to ensure fire safety within buildings will be subject to more frequent testing in line with regular routine system testing in accordance with British Standards requirements.
3.1.12	Where OVH supplies electrical equipment, either for use in communal areas or as part of furnished tenancies, Portable Appliance Testing will also be conducted every twelve months and OVH will ensure appropriate labelling is clearly displayed.
3.1.13	In order to comply with the British Standards BSEN 62305, OVH will inspect, test and certify all lightning conductors installed on buildings it owns or controls, every twelve months.
3.2	Tenant's Responsibilities
3.2.1	OVH tenants have a responsibility to use electrical devices / appliances and the electrical systems supplied to properties responsibly to protect the health and safety of themselves and others.
3.2.2	OVH encourage tenants to maintain good electrical safety around the home by regularly checking the visual condition of devices and appliances for signs of wear and tear that could potentially be dangerous e.g. scorching, loose wires or cable grips (more detailed information is available via the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk). Where any doubt exists over the safety of equipment, tenants are advised to switch the appliance / device off, disconnect from the mains and seek the advice of a qualified electrician.
3.2.3	Where tenants discover a problem with OVH owned or supplied electrical systems or equipment they should inform OVH by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 0300 365 1111 immediately.
3.3	<p>As part of its service standard developed and reviewed in consultation with customers on an annual basis, OVH operate the following response times for dealing with responsive repairs to electrical systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVH will endeavour to respond to emergency repairs within 24 hours and within 2 hours if there is risk to health and safety in order to make it safe if not repairable • OVH will respond to non-emergency repairs within 28 calendar days from the date of the notification subject to availability of specialist parts

3.4	OVH tenants have a responsibility not to tamper with any electrical systems supplied as part of their tenancy and should follow OVH's 'Request to Alter' procedures for any changes required to the system (this will involve contacting the Customer Service Centre and requesting an alteration, which will normally be the subject of an inspection before a decision is taken to grant or refuse permission).
3.5	OVH's Responsibilities as an Employer
3.5.1	OVH will ensure the safety of its employees from electrical dangers in office locations, by ensuring that Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is carried out on all portable electrical equipment, every 12 -48 months depending on the type, use and environment in which it used.
3.5.2	Portable Appliance testing of equipment used by staff when Agile Working and therefore not primarily located in an office environment will also receive a full test every 12-48 months dependant on its type, use and condition.
3.5.3	OVH will also, as part of general health and safety training for all staff provide information on the safe use of electrical equipment in and around office locations including the safe storage of cabling, avoidance of trip hazards and dangers posed by liquid spills around electrical equipment and systems.
3.5.4	The frequency of re-inspection for non-residential assets will be planned by the Asset Management Team in accordance with the relevant guidelines. However, on recommendation of the 'appointed' electrical testing contractor this may be revised after taking into consideration a number of factors such as, use, operations and condition of the installation.
4	Implementation
4.1	All staff have a responsibility to be aware of the OVH Periodical Electrical Testing Policy to be able to direct any customer queries that may arise. Staff also need to be aware of the Policy to fulfil their health and safety duties, <i>"to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do"</i> .
4.2	The Asset Management Team in liaison with the 'appointed' electrical testing contractor will be responsible for determining the schedule of testing for fixed wiring in office, other work location and plant / machinery.
5	Performance
5.1	Performance and delivery of the EICR testing programme is reviewed daily by the Compliance Team and regular formal meetings held with SPS to review progress.
6	Consultation
6.1	All staff have been consulted in the development of this Policy. In-depth consultation has taken place with staff that have line management responsibility for the service.

6.2	Tenant Policy Review Group were also consulted in the development of this Policy.	
7	Review	
7.1	The Policy will be reviewed every Three Years by the Executive Management Team (on or as near as possible from the date of approval) or sooner if required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation affecting electrical safety or as a result of system audits.	
8	Equality Impact Assessment	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	No
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	An Equality Impact Assessment Relevance Test was conducted by the Policy and Strategy Manager and the Quality and Inclusion Officer in July 2023
8.3	Results of EIA	Although, the EIA shows potential risks to the business and individuals, there were no adverse impacts for any group with protected characteristics. Any differential impacts identified are adequately mitigated by existing procedures and operational practice (e.g. additional support for tenants with known mental health issues, when arranging the Periodic Electric Testing checks).
9	Scheme of Delegation	
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the policy and any amendments to it	Executive Management Team
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Operations Director of Assets and Compliance
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Operations Director of Assets and Compliance

Date of revision:	Reason for revision:	Consultation record:	Record of amendments:
21 st September 2021	In line with the Review Schedule	See section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of the following references; - Access to Properties Policy and Fire Safety Policy
20 th September 2022	In line with changes in business practice	See section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes at 2.4. -Inclusion of void properties as they become vacant as one of the areas OVH will keep records for periodic checks undertaken
1 st August 2023	In Line with Review Schedule	See Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no significant changes in this review • The EIA Relevance Test has been updated • In line with Board approved process the review period for this Policy will now be every Three years rather than annually