

# News Release

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## Large fine for housing fraud

Ellie Taylor of 20 Mannock Road, Dartford was ordered to pay a substantial fine after pleading guilty to fraud after lying when making an application for housing to the London Borough of Bexley.

The Council prosecuted Ms Taylor and her case was heard at Bexley Magistrates' Court on 8 July. She was fined £700 and ordered to pay a victim's surcharge of £70 and costs of £400, making a total of £1,170. The fine was reduced from £1,000 in recognition of her early guilty plea and taking account of her income.

Ms Taylor applied to the Council for housing on 23 November 2018, stating that she was a single parent. She said that she and her children had been asked to leave her father's house, where she claimed to be living at the time, and that she was homeless.

Enquiries by the Council established that Ms Taylor had taken her boyfriend's name and was living with him at an address in Dartford. While Ms Taylor said the house was her boyfriend's, it was established that the tenancy was in her name. Although the couple and their children lived at the address, Ms Taylor was claiming single person's Council Tax discount on the property.

When interviewed by the Council, Ms Taylor admitted lying in her housing application and apologised.

A spokesman for the Council said: "Committing fraud to obtain services that are both costly and in short supply is a serious offence and we will always prosecute those responsible".

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