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'No fault' eviction left care worker homeless on

Mbalu Kamara and her four children were evicted with a 'no fault' eviction.



Mbalu Kamara had been trying to get help from her local council's homelessness support team at the London Borough of Redbridge (Credit: Supplied)



By **Vicky Spratt**

Housing Correspondent

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Mother of four Mbalu Kamara has been evicted from her home by bailiffs just days before Christmas after her landlord used a **"no fault" eviction**, a type of eviction the Government has pledged to scrap but still exists.

"I'm not good," she told **i** last Thursday evening while standing in the street after being **evicted** from her home in Bow, east London.

"I'm standing outside Whitechapel Tube station with my children [two girls aged six and eight and two boys aged 11 and 20], we are not allowed back in the property."



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On where she was planning on sleeping that night, she replied: “We will have to stay at my brother’s house in Hackney. He has a family of five and there are no spare beds.”

Mbalu is a care worker and works in a care home in Haggerston, east London. She is on a zero-hours contract, as is common in the care industry, so she needs to stay close by to pick up work as and when it becomes available. However, there are no private rental properties in the area that she can afford.

Her eviction was a “no fault” eviction, carried out via [Section 21 of the 1988 Housing Act](#) – a piece of legislation that allows landlords to evict their tenants with just two months’ notice without having to give them a reason.

“My letting agent said our landlord wanted to sell our home,” Mbalu, who is also a domestic violence survivor, said. “I also think he evicted me because I asked for repairs – I had to pay £95 to get the toilet unblocked and if I called him, he would shout abuse at me.”

The lettings agency involved, Barry Stewart & Sons Ltd, did not respond to **i**s repeated requests for comment.

Mbalu has been trying to get help from her local council’s homelessness support team at the London Borough of Redbridge – who housed her in her home in Bow – since she first received an eviction notice in May this year.

“Every time I went to the council and showed them the letter saying I was being evicted, they told me they couldn’t help me until I was physically evicted by bailiffs,” she said. “They didn’t seem to care, I told them about my children and my work, and they wouldn’t find [my family] a new home until were we on the street.”

Mbalu has clinical depression and has experienced suicidal thoughts in the past. She said the “the only thing” that keeps her “feeling well” is being able to work and study – she is currently studying for a degree in health and social care at London Metropolitan University.

Over the weekend, Redbridge offered Mbalu and her family emergency temporary accommodation in Wembley, west London.

Analysis

In 2019, the Conservatives promised to ban “no fault” Section 21 evictions like the one used to force Mbalu and her children from their home.

This sort of eviction is a leading cause of homelessness.

In Scotland, Section 21 was banned in 2017. Wales followed in December 2022.

However, in England, private renters are still waiting for the security and stability that a ban on this sort of eviction would bring.

Over the last year, Conservative infighting has delayed and, at times, almost entirely derailed the Government’s promise to ban Section 21.

While that was going on in Westminster, the number of people being made homeless across the country went up.

Ministry of Justice (MOJ) figures show that the use of section 21 eviction notices has jumped by 38 per cent in England over the last year.

MOJ figures also show the number of no-fault evictions which made it to court was 8,399 between July and September alone. The threat of court proceedings is often enough for tenants to leave their homes, so the true number of people made homeless by Section 21 is usually higher than the statistics suggest. Bailiffs executed 2,307 section 21 eviction warrants in that same period – the highest number since before the pandemic.

Local authorities are currently between a rock and a hard place. Acute social housing shortages have led to more low-income households – like Mbalu’s – being housed in the private rented sector.

However, private landlords can evict their tenants at short notice meaning that this sort of housing is neither stable nor secure.

Section 21 evictions are a reason for rising homelessness which has caused more and more homeless people being placed in temporary accommodation which costs an arm and a leg and has pushed some councils – including Hastings – to the brink of bankruptcy.



However, as **i** has **previously reported**, “out of area” placements are disruptive as they mean moving children away from schools and people – particularly parents – away from their support networks.

The drive from Wembley to Bow is around one and a half hours. The journey can also be made via two trains and takes around the same amount of time.

“I don’t know how I will get the kids to their schools in Bow from Wembley and get myself to work,” Mbalu said. “So far I have had to cancel all of my shifts in the care home.”



Mbalu Kamara's children – Hawa, 6, Aliyah 11, Ishmael, 8 (Credit: Supplied)

Depending on how many shifts she gets, Mbalu earns between £95 and £250 a week. The upheaval of her eviction will mean she loses out on vital income.

Studies have shown that **evictions push people into poverty** and confirm that forcibly throwing someone out of their home causes “**psychological distress**”. Mothers who have been evicted are **more likely to suffer from depression**.

Mbalu would like to move back to east London, so her children can stay in their schools, she can continue attending university, going to work and be near her brother.



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A Redbridge Council spokesperson told **i** that their housing officers and specialist support teams were in touch with Mbalu offering advice.

“Changes in circumstances have led to a private landlord requiring his property back, and we understand that the eviction has gone ahead,” the spokesperson said.

“We have offered Ms Kamara a safe and suitable property to accommodate her and her family, and she has accepted the offer. We will continue to provide her with ongoing support as she settles into her new property.

“We fully appreciate that this is a challenging time for her and her family, and we remain committed to helping Ms Kamara resolve her longer-term housing situation.” **i**

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