

# Housing ministry says job loss alone won't cancel applications

Losing a job or financial trouble does not by itself cancel a housing application

● **Proposal to extend reinstatement:** MPs will debate a plan to increase the period for reinstating cancelled applications from two years to four

● **Support for families:** Lawmakers say the extension would help households recover from temporary setbacks, reduce paperwork, and ease social and psychological pressure

**Mohammed Darwish**  
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The Housing Ministry has told MPs that losing a job or facing financial difficulties does not automatically



Hanan Fardan, MP

cancel a housing application, over a proposal to double the period for reinstating cancelled applications. The item was rolled over from the last parliamentary

session after time ran short.

In a written reply, the ministry said applications are only cancelled when an applicant fails to meet one of the conditions required to receive housing, at which point a formal cancellation decision is issued. Under Article 69 of Ministerial Decision No. 909 of 2015, applicants whose files are cancelled on these grounds can request reinstatement within two years of the cancellation date, except where the lost condition is Bahraini nationality.

## Divorce

The ministry also noted that changes in personal status, such as divorce, do not automatically result in cancellation. Files may be retained and moved to a category that better reflects the family's situation under existing classifications.

MP Hanan Fardan, who submitted the proposal, is urging

the government to extend the two-year limit to four years, saying temporary setbacks such as job loss or economic instability can make it difficult for families to restore eligibility within the current timeframe. She added that the extension would allow households more time to recover, reduce the need to submit new applications, and ease the social and psychological pressure on applicants.

## Longer reinstatement periods

An explanatory note argued that longer reinstatement periods would support family stability and lower the demand for new housing files, citing international practices that allow extended reinstatement windows. The Services and Environment Committee recommended approval, with all attending members backing the move on public-interest grounds.

## Dates output at 14,000 tonnes as MPs debate observatory deal



**Wael Al Mubarak, Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture**

**Mohammed Darwish**  
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Bahrain's dates output reached around 14,000 tonnes in 2024, official figures showed, as MPs move to ratify an agreement that would establish an International Dates Observatory in Manama to track global markets.

MPs are due to take up the draft law, attached to Royal Decree No. 64 of 2025, after the Public Utilities and Environment Committee recommended approval in principle.

The agreement, signed in Manama on September 22, 2024, at about 14,000 tonnes.

2025, would designate Bahrain as the permanent seat of the observatory, which will operate under the International Dates Council. The body is tasked with collecting, analysing and publishing global market data to support member states in policy and investment decision-making.

Under the deal, Bahrain would provide the facilities required for the observatory to carry out its work.

In a submission to the committee, the agriculture ministry said hosting the observatory would not impose any financial burden on Bahrain, with the International Dates Council covering all establishment and operating costs, including administrative, technical and logistical expenses.

The ministry said its remit is limited to dates production and does not extend to processing industries or derivative products. It put national output in 2024 at about 14,000 tonnes.

# Online shift halves processing times for some welfare services

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Processing times for some welfare services have been cut by up to 50% following a shift to online applications and tighter data checks, the Ministry of Social Development told MPs, as it seeks to keep social support sustainable amid rising demand.

In a written reply to MP Muneer Seroor, the ministry said it has streamlined internal procedures and expanded electronic links with other government bodies. A growing number of applications are now handled through the national eGovernment portal, allowing beneficiaries to apply online and speeding up case completion.

The ministry said social as-

sistance is provided in line with existing laws and regulations, with eligible beneficiaries receiving monthly payments. Eligibility is reviewed through monthly electronic data matching with relevant entities to prevent duplication and safeguard public funds.

Under Social Insurance Law No. 18 of 2006, beneficiaries or their legal representatives must notify the ministry within 15 days of any change in social, economic or health status, or permanent address, that could affect entitlement. The ministry also conducts periodic reviews and submits reports to the minister, who decides whether assistance should continue, be adjusted or discontinued, with

changes taking effect from the following month.

The Social Assistance Directorate monitors cases electronically, reviewing income, marital status and household size to ensure beneficiaries continue to meet eligibility



The ministry said it regularly reviews its services to improve efficiency and service quality.

# A'ali disability complex to reopen in early 2026

**Mohammed Darwish**  
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Ten specialist buildings at the A'ali Comprehensive Disability Complex are set to reopen from early 2026, the Ministry of Social Development has told MPs, after plans were de-

layed when the site was used as a Covid-19 quarantine facility.

In a written reply to MP Mohammed Janahi, the ministry said the complex will operate through

partner-  
ships with  
gov-

ernment bodies, civil organisations and private providers, bringing a range of rehabilitation services together on one site. The ministry said the compound was taken over by the Ministry of Health during the pandemic. Following its return, the Ministry of Works assessed the buildings, identified repair needs and oversaw restoration works, which are now nearing completion.

Repairs included structural work, electrical systems, fire safety upgrades, lifts, lighting, air-conditioning, plumbing, re-

Mohammed Janahi, MP

painting and flooring replacement.

The ministry said it reviewed national disability care needs last year and developed an operating plan aligned with demand, modern rehabilitation approaches and Bahrain's international obligations.

The 29,106-square-metre site will house an assessment and diagnosis centre, psychological support services and intensive physiotherapy, with capacity for about 1,300 beneficiaries a year. A post-rehabilitation club aimed at helping people with intellectual disabilities enter

the labour market will serve up to 150 beneficiaries a month.

## Care home

Plans also include a residential care home for people with severe intellectual disabilities without family support, accommodating up to 50 residents a year, alongside a recreation club offering leisure activities for up to 150 participants a month.

For children, services will include a day-care centre for those with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, a rehabilitation centre for children with cerebral palsy, and a ded-

icated autism centre providing specialist support using modern technology. Combined monthly capacity across these services exceeds 300 children.

Additional facilities will include administrative offices, a specialised health club and a multi-use building to support awareness programmes and provide shared space for disability-focused organisations.

The ministry said reopening will be phased from early 2026, depending on partnership arrangements and staffing needs, and that it will continue coordinating with parliament.