

Mortgage Possession Claims Surge by 22% as Home Repossessions Rise

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Mortgage possession claims across England and Wales have surged by 22 per cent in the second quarter of 2025 compared with the same period last year, reflecting growing financial strain on homeowners. Official figures from the Ministry of Justice show that between April and June, courts recorded 6,537 possession claims, a marked increase on the 5,370 lodged during the same three months in 2024.

The rise has been felt across every stage of the repossession process. Court-issued possession orders climbed by 31 per cent to 4,429, while warrants authorising repossession were up 28 per cent, reaching 3,787. Most strikingly, repossessions enforced by county court bailiffs increased by 32 per cent to 1,146.

These figures indicate that households are struggling to keep pace with mortgage repayments amid persistent cost-of-living pressures and borrowing costs that remain high. Economists warn that the upward movement is a sign of mounting vulnerability among homeowners, with thousands unable to reach agreements with lenders before cases reach court.

While the overall number of repossessions is still below the peaks witnessed during the 2008 financial crash, the trend suggests an acceleration. During that period, quarterly possession claims exceeded 26,000. By contrast, today's figures remain considerably lower, but the steady rise in claims since pandemic-era protections were lifted highlights a growing strain that cannot be ignored.

The timeline of court proceedings offers little comfort. The median time taken from an initial claim to repossession has shortened slightly, falling from 45.9 weeks in the second quarter of 2024 to just under 43 weeks this year. Although other measures, such as the average period from claim to order and from claim to warrant, remained stable, the quicker turnaround to repossession may mean homeowners have less time to find solutions or alternative housing.

Debt advisers have expressed concern that vulnerable households could be pushed into crisis. They point out that while courts often encourage

negotiation and repayment plans, families with limited disposable income and rising living costs may struggle to keep up. With higher interest rates continuing to bite, many borrowers are seeing their monthly payments rise just as food, energy, and transport costs remain stubbornly elevated.

In contrast to the increase in mortgage-related cases, landlord possession data showed a decline during the same period, suggesting that pressures are currently weighing more heavily on those with mortgages rather than renters. This divergence may reflect differences in how lenders and landlords are responding to financial difficulties, with mortgage holders facing stricter conditions when arrears build up.

Policy experts argue that without intervention, the rise in mortgage possession claims could fuel broader social challenges, including homelessness and housing instability. Some have called for temporary relief measures, such as extended repayment holidays or targeted financial support, while others suggest greater access to debt advice services to prevent cases from escalating to court.

The government has so far emphasised existing support channels, urging households in difficulty to engage early with their lenders. However, with possession claims rising sharply, campaigners warn that current provisions may not be enough to stem the growing tide of repossessions.

As matters stand, the Ministry of Justice figures underline a sobering reality: while repossession levels are not yet at historic highs, the pressure on households is intensifying. For many homeowners, the risk of losing their homes is becoming an increasingly imminent threat.