

## Who is legally homeless?

A person does not need to be sleeping rough to be legally homeless.

The housing act 1996 defines a person as homeless if they either:

- Have no accommodation available to occupy
- Are at risk of violence or domestic abuse
- Have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy it
- Have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it
- Have no legal right to occupy their accommodation
- Live in a mobile home or houseboat but have no place to put it or live in it

## Local authority duties where someone might be threatened with homelessness

When a local authority has reason to believe that a person might be threatened with homelessness, it must accept a homeless application and make inquiries into what duties it might owe them.

If the authority is satisfied that the person is threatened with homelessness and eligible based on their immigration status, it must:

- assess the person's housing needs
- agree a personalised housing plan
- take reasonable steps to help prevent them from becoming homeless

The duty to take reasonable steps is known as the **prevention** duty. This duty applies regardless of anything the person might have done that led to the threat of homelessness. The key focus is on preventing homelessness prior to the point of crisis. The authority **can** take steps to prevent homelessness even where the threatened homelessness is more than 56 days away. [Get instant advice and contact us | Help with homelessness | Hull](#)

## Local authority duties where someone might be homeless

A local authority must accept a homeless application if it has reason to believe a person might be homeless or threatened with homelessness.

If the local authority has reason to believe that the person is homeless, eligible and has a priority need they must provide interim accommodation.

Once the authority is satisfied that the person is homeless and eligible based on their immigration status, it must:

- assess the person's housing needs
- agree a personalised housing plan
- take reasonable steps to help them secure accommodation

The duty to help secure accommodation is known as the relief duty.

## Working with people with multiple unmet needs

Treat people with respect and dignity, recognising and supporting their decisions and choices. In particular:

- Show understanding of person's and their families circumstances, and be non-judgemental
- Respect the validity of the person's lived experience or trauma
- Value their first-hand knowledge of their own needs to inform care planning
- Use professional curiosity

[Recommendation in the NICE guideline on people's experience in adult social care services](#) (see also the [NICE guideline on advocacy services for adults with health and social care needs](#)).

[Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Overview of the homelessness legislation - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Homeless rights checker](#) for a quick answer on whether someone is likely to be eligible based on their immigration status.

## Resources

For anyone facing homelessness there are several services out there. The Housing Options Team will initially assess if the individual has support needs, if so they will attempt to find a suitable placement within the hostel network. If there are no support needs they may be signposted towards Temporary Accommodation. Hull City Council have also commissioned a Rough Sleeper Outreach team provide support to people sleeping rough. We also have the Changing Futures team who provide a multi-disciplined support network for individuals experiencing multiple unmet needs.

Please Visit:

[Changing futures – Changing futures](#)

[Changing futures hub – Changing futures](#)

[Help with homelessness | Hull](#)

[Homelessness advice and support available | Targeted Youth Support \(TYS\) | Hull](#)

[Emmaus Hull & East Riding - Homelessness Charity](#) (East Riding)

[Street Outreach Service - Hull](#) (Hull)