
What to do if you think you're homeless

By admin

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If you think you're homeless or are likely to become homeless in the near future you should approach your Local Authority Housing Advice and Homelessness department. If you want advice and/or support to assist you to do this you could contact an agency such as C.A.S.S.. (Click on the link on the left-hand-side for the contact information of agencies, which might be able to assist).

- **Local Authority Housing Advice and Homelessness departments:**
- Tel; Carlisle; (01228) 817499; out-of-hours or emergencies; (01228) 511061
- Tel; Workington; (01900) 702660; out-of-hours or emergency; (01900) 871080
- Tel; Whitehaven; (01946) 598431 or 598432; out-of-hours or emergency; (01946) 815500
- Tel; Penrith; (01768) 861400/ 817817

In some circumstances Local Authority departments can provide temporary accommodation however, not everyone who is homeless/ threatened with homelessness is entitled to this provision. Homelessness Officers have standard criteria against which to assess somebody's application. Based on these criteria a decision is made as to eligibility and subsequently, the amount of temporary accommodation a person is owed.

For Example:

- If you are:

eligible for assistance

homeless/ threatened with homelessness

deemed to have a priority need and

deemed to be unintentionally homeless

the Local Authority will owe you a full duty which means that they must provide temporary accommodation until you are permanently re-housed.

- If you are:

eligible for assistance

homeless/ threatened with homelessness

deemed to have a priority need but

deemed to be intentionally homeless

the Local Authority only has a duty to provide temporary accommodation for twenty-eight days.

A Local Authority may provide temporary accommodation before a decision has been made if they feel that you are likely to have a priority need, however, this temporary accommodation may change or end once a full decision has been made.

You don't have to be literally sleeping on the streets to be classed as homeless. You might also be legally homeless if you are:

- staying with friends or family temporarily
- staying in a bed and breakfast/ hotel/ hostel
- living in overcrowded conditions
- you are at risk of violence in your home

If your Local Authority Housing Advice and Homelessness department doesn't owe you a duty but you're still unhappy with your housing circumstances, agencies which provide housing-related advice and support might be able to assist you in improving your current situation or securing alternative accommodation.