

Making a Homelessness Application

What if I am homeless today?

**Will the Council have to house me if
I am found to be homeless?**

**What happens if I am
accepted as homeless?**

**What if I disagree with the
Council's decision?**



Housing Advice Leaflet 4



South Norfolk Council has a duty to investigate applications by people if it appears that they are, or may become, homeless.

The law on homelessness is complex, but this guide will explain the duties the Council has towards you if you are homeless, or likely to become homeless within 28 days.

What if I am homeless today?

Some applicants will qualify for emergency accommodation. The Council will only arrange this if we have reason to believe that you may:

1. be homeless and
2. be eligible for assistance and
3. have a priority need (see page 4)

You can find out more in the leaflet “Temporary Accommodation”.

Will the Council have to house me if I am found to be homeless?

The Council does not have to find housing for everyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness. The duty owed by the Council depends on the following set of legal tests. These are whether the applicant:

- Is actually homeless
- Is eligible for assistance
- Falls within one of the priority need categories (see page 4)
- Did not make themselves intentionally homeless
- Has a local connection with the Council where the application is made

Am I Homeless?

You can be considered as homeless if:

- You have nowhere to live in the United Kingdom or anywhere else in the world
- You have a home but cannot return to it because you, or a member of your family would be at risk of violence
- You have a home but have been locked out and cannot get in
- You have a home but it is unreasonable for you to continue to live there
- Your home is a moveable structure, for example a boat, a mobile home or a caravan and you have nowhere to put it legally.

Am I eligible for assistance?

If you are a person from abroad or a person subject to immigration control (within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1999) you might not be entitled to any help with housing. The law is complicated and you should ask for advice.

Am I in priority need?

You might be in priority need if:

- You have dependent children or you or someone else in your household is pregnant
- You are homeless as a result of a disaster such as a fire or flood
- You are 16 or 17 years old (except people for whom Social Services have responsibility)
- You are aged 18-20 and used to be in care (except students in full time education whose accommodation is not available outside term time)
- The Council considers you are vulnerable as a result of:
 - old age, mental illness or handicap, physical disability
 - having a care background, having spent time in the armed forces or having served a prison sentence
 - fleeing violence or threats of violence
 - another special reason

(Important note: The Council will decide whether you are vulnerable by looking at your individual circumstances).

If you are not in priority need then the Council will not have a duty to house you but we will still offer you advice and assistance.

Am I intentionally homeless?

The Council can decide that you are intentionally homeless if:

- you lost your last home because of something you did or failed to do, or
- you chose to leave a home you could have stayed in.

If you are intentionally homeless the Council will only provide you with temporary accommodation for a limited period and give you advice and assistance to help you find your own accommodation. In cases of intentional homelessness involving families with children, the Council has a duty to offer the family a chance to be referred to Social Services.

Do I have a local connection with the area?

You might have a local connection with the area if you:

- Live or have lived in the area for some time
- Have a job in the area (but not casual work)

- Have close relatives (e.g. parent, adult children, brother or sister) who have lived in the area for some time
- Have a special reason for needing to live in the area

If you do not have a local connection with South Norfolk and you do have a connection with another area, we can ask the Council there to help you.

What if I disagree with the Council's decision?

You will get a letter giving you the Council's decision and the reasons for it. You have the right to ask for the decision to be reviewed. A leaflet explaining this procedure will be included with the decision letter. A copy of this leaflet is also available on request.

What happens if I am accepted as homeless?

If the Council decides you are homeless, eligible, in priority need and not intentionally homeless, the Council has a duty to find you a place to live.

If you have a local connection with South Norfolk you will be given priority on the Housing Register. There is a very long wait and it will be several months at least before you are offered a property.

Contact details

You can contact the Housing Advice Team on 01508 533614, or visit the Council Office at Swan Lane, Long Stratton, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) between:

- 8:45am and 5:00pm Monday to Wednesday
- 9:30am to 5:00pm Thursday
- 8:45am to 4:15pm Friday

Email: housingadvice@s-norfolk.gov.uk

You can also get independent housing advice from these organisations:

Diss CAB

Address: Shelfanger Road, Diss IP22 4EH

Telephone: 01379 651333

Website: www.disscitizensadvice.info

Wymondham CAB

Address: 14 The Bridewell, Norwich Road, Wymondham, NR18 0NS

Telephone: 01953 603977

Website: www.wymondhamcab.org.uk

Bungay CAB

Address: 8 Chaucer Street, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 1DT

Telephone: 01986 895827

Shelter

Address: 7 Upper Goat Lane, Norwich NR2 1EW

Telephone: 01603 667740

Website: www.shelter.org.uk

Solicitors

You can also contact a solicitor who will tell you if you are entitled to free legal advice. You can get further information about local solicitors from the above agencies, look in the Yellow Pages or go to www.clsdirect.org.uk.

Connexions

Advice for young people aged up to 19.

Telephone: 0808 0013219

Website: www.cnxsnfk.co.uk

Mancroft Advice Project

Advice for young people aged up to 25.

Address: The Risebrow Centre, Chantry Road, Norwich NR2 1RF

Telephone: 01603 766994

Website: www.map11-25.org



Strategic Housing
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane, Long Stratton NR15 2XE
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www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

This leaflet is available in large print or braille