



Know your housing homelessness advice

“Allerdale – a great place to live, work and visit”

Are you homeless?

You don't have to be sleeping on the streets or not have a roof over your head to be considered homeless. Most people who are homeless are not on the streets. There are many situations where the council must accept you are homeless, and may have a duty to help you with housing.

Examples of being homeless or being threatened with homelessness:

You don't have 'a roof over your head' i.e. you are street homeless

- You're at risk of violence or abuse where you are living. This can be from a partner, ex-partner or family member, or someone in your area. The council will ask you to provide details of the incidents. Evidence is helpful but we will not turn you away if you have not reported the incident(s) to police.
- You're at risk of losing your home
- You can't afford to stay where you are
- Your accommodation is very temporary
- You are staying with friends or 'sofa surfing'
- You've been locked out or illegally evicted
- Your accommodation is in very poor condition
- You can't live together with your partner or close family
- You have nowhere to put your houseboat or caravan

If one or more of these apply, you may be eligible for help from the council.

Who the council can help

1. You must normally live in the UK long-term and not be subject to immigration control.
2. You must be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

If you meet these criteria, you can make a homeless application. This means that you are telling the council you are homeless or at risk of homelessness and need their help.

The council will make an appointment for you to be interviewed by a housing officer. This should be the same day if you have nowhere to stay that night. You can bring a support worker or friend with you in to the interview.

At the interview

You need to take the right documents to your interview. The process will be quicker if you bring your ID and notice of eviction or a letter from the person you have been staying with. For more information on the homelessness interview, you can look at the Shelter website in the 'How to apply as homeless' section.

If the council says it can help you...

If the council accepts that it has a duty to continue housing you when you become homeless, you'll probably have to stay in temporary accommodation until they find you somewhere more long-term or 'settled'.

If the council says it cannot help you...

You can challenge the council's decision.

If you think the council's decision is wrong, contact an independent local advice centre like Citizens Advice Bureau as soon as you can.

Other support if you are not eligible

If you are not eligible for housing assistance from the council, you may still be able to access:

- Help from social services when homeless: if you have children or additional needs you may be able to get support from Children's or Adult Social Care.
- Short-term supported housing.
- Support in finding private rented accommodation.

You can get further advice from:

- Shelter 0808 800 4444 england.shelter.org.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau 01900 604735 citizensadviceallerdale.org.uk
- Cumbria Law Centre 01228 515129 www.cumbrialawcentre.org.uk
- National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
- Adult Social Care 0303 303 3249
www.cumbria.gov.uk/healthsocialcare

Allerdale Borough Council's Housing Options Service

Our Housing Options service can help you with either finding or keeping a safe and suitable home for you and your family. We have a team of housing advisors who will work with you to explore all of your options.

Phone (24 hours): 0303 123 1702

Email: homelessness@allerdale.gov.uk

Website: www.allerdale.gov.uk



Allerdale Borough Council
Allerdale House
Workington
Cumbria CA14 3YJ

Tel: 0303 123 1702
Email: housing.services@allerdale.gov.uk
www.allerdale.gov.uk

Document reference
Version V0.1
April 2018

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