

More support for victims of domestic abuse at risk of homelessness



PUBLISHED JUL 5, 2021
BY [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

From today (5 July 2021) victims who are homeless due to domestic abuse will be prioritised for accommodation from their council.

Under the government's landmark Domestic Abuse Act councils will have to find accommodation for people made homeless through domestic abuse, helping to ensure victims do not remain with their abuser for fear of not having a roof over their head.

Previously, victims had to be assessed as being 'vulnerable' as a result of domestic abuse to be identified as having a priority need.

Under the new legislation, domestic abuse will be a standalone reason to qualify as needing this support.

This is one of the first of many measures to support victims and their children included in the Domestic Abuse Act to come into effect.

Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing, Eddie Hughes MP said:

Domestic abuse is a heinous crime and it is a tragedy that some victims remain with their abusers for fear of not having a roof over their head.

Today's change will mean all councils must find accommodation for victims who are homeless as a result of domestic abuse - ensuring they have a safe space to rebuild their lives.

This is part of the government's wide-ranging programme of support for domestic abuse victims under the landmark Domestic Abuse Act.

Councils have been allocated £1.5 million this year to meet the changes – on top of £310 million that has been delivered through the Homelessness Prevention Grant so that councils can support those at risk of homelessness, including victims of domestic abuse.

Under the Domestic Abuse Act, councils will also have a new duty to help victims and their children access life-saving support in safe accommodation – backed by £125 million funding for 2021/22. Councils were provided with the funding in April so that they can start to fulfil those functions ahead of this duty coming into force later this year.

The government has taken action to help the most vulnerable in society during the pandemic, with an unprecedented £76 million pledged in May 2020 which ensured vital services including refuges, helplines and counselling remained accessible.

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2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

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