

What happens next?

If we decide that you are not eligible for housing assistance, but you are homeless and have a priority need, we will offer you interim temporary accommodation for a limited period only. However you will not be considered for social housing at that time, although you may be considered at a future date.

If we decide that you are eligible, but not homeless, you can still apply for housing under the Housing Selection Scheme for consideration for Housing Executive and Housing Association accommodation. Staff at our District Office will give you an application form and an explanatory booklet. If we decide that you are eligible, and homeless but not in priority need, you will be given information to help you find your own accommodation. You may also apply for housing under the Housing Selection Scheme.

If we decide that you are eligible, and homeless and that you may be in priority need, you may be placed, if you wish, in temporary accommodation until we have completed our enquiries.

If we decide that you are eligible, and homeless and in priority need but intentionally homeless, you may be placed, if you wish, in temporary accommodation for a reasonable period to allow you to find your own accommodation.

If we decide that you are eligible and in priority need and homeless through no fault of your own, you will be provided with a permanent home. If a permanent home is not immediately available, temporary accommodation can be provided.

You will be advised of the Housing Executive's decision in writing.

Review Procedure

If you disagree with the decision the Housing Executive makes you can request a review. You should provide your reasons in writing to the Area Manager within 28 days of receiving your homeless decision letter. The address is on your homeless decision letter. If necessary your District Office will give you the address or forward your letter for you. If you disagree with the review decision you may appeal to the County Court on a point of law.

Important information

If your circumstances change between the time you apply and when a decision is made, you must let the Housing Executive know immediately.

If, in support of your application, you deliberately make false statements or knowingly withhold information which you know to be relevant, you are committing an offence under the Housing (NI) Order 1988 and you are liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to £1,000.

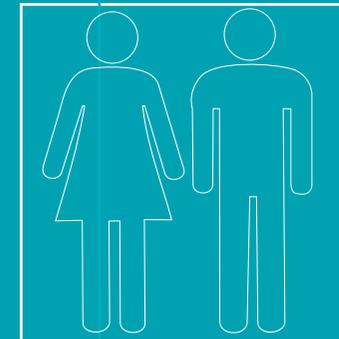
This leaflet is available in alternative formats. Contact:
Housing & Regeneration
Northern Ireland Housing Executive,
The Housing Centre, 2 Adelaide Street,
Belfast, BT2 8PB
Tel: 03448 920900
Email: info@nihe.gov.uk

**Housing
Executive**

November 2010
www.nihe.gov.uk



Homelessness Explained



Your rights explained

If you have no home or are in danger of losing your home you should seek help at your local Housing Executive District Office. This leaflet explains how the Housing Executive will assess your application and your rights and obligations.

The level of help the Housing Executive can give you depends upon your particular circumstances. Some people need permanent accommodation; others have to be found temporary accommodation; while some require advice and assistance on finding somewhere to live.

Information we will need

We will have to make enquiries to establish what our responsibilities are in your particular case. You will be asked questions about yourself and your family and about your personal circumstances.

It is very important that you tell us all the facts so that everything relevant can be taken into account. Please make sure you bring any documents that might be of help. For example confirmation of pregnancy, a rent book, a mortgage statement, or perhaps, where financial circumstances are relevant, details of income and debts. It may also be necessary to contact your doctor, social worker or health visitor.

What we will do

To help us to decide what we can do for you, we will need first to establish your eligibility for homeless assistance in Northern Ireland. Having made those enquiries we then need to establish 3 things:

1. Are you homeless or about to become homeless?
2. Are you in priority need?
3. Are you intentionally homeless?

Are you eligible?

Firstly we will assess if you are eligible for homeless assistance in Northern Ireland. The criteria we will consider to establish your eligibility for housing assistance is by investigating, if you and or any members of your household have been involved in any anti social behaviour. We may also need to establish your eligibility for housing assistance under immigration/asylum rules.

Are you homeless?

You are homeless if you have nowhere to live in the United Kingdom or elsewhere because:

- You are afraid to go home because someone living there has been violent to you, and has made a threat of violence which they are likely to carry out.
- You do not have permission to live where you are staying, for example if you are living with friends or relatives and they have told you to leave.
- You have nowhere you can live together with all the people who normally live with you or wish to live with you.
- You have a home but you cannot gain access to it, for example because you have been illegally evicted.
- Your landlord has taken you to court and the date by which the court has said you have to leave has passed.
- Your home is a caravan or a boat and you have nowhere that you can legally park it or moor it.

Are you about to become homeless?

You are entitled to help if you are likely to become homeless within the next 28 days because for example:

- You have been taken to court by your landlord and the court has said you must leave.
- You have been living with friends or relatives who have told you to leave.
- Someone else's actions made you lose your home and you did not know about it or agree with what they did.

Are you in priority need?

You are in priority need if:

- You have one or more dependent children, that is, children who are aged under 16 or under 19, and in full time education or Government training Scheme.
- You or your partner or any member of your household is pregnant.
- You or someone in your family is what the law calls 'Vulnerable' because of old age, mental illness, handicap, physical disability or other special reason.
- You have been made homeless as a result of a disaster such as fire or flood.
- You are at risk of violence at home.
- You are a young person at risk of sexual or financial exploitation.

Are you intentionally homeless?

The Housing Executive may consider you to be intentionally homeless if you have become homeless as a result of something that you have done or failed to do or if you have entered into an arrangement which was deliberately contrived to render you homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The Housing Executive will not say that you are intentionally homeless if it is convinced that:

- It was not reasonable for you to remain in your last home;
- You left home because of domestic violence or fear of violence;
- Personal or money problems that you could not avoid meant you lost your home because of rent or mortgage arrears: this may be because you lost your job, had a wage cut and did not claim all the benefits you were entitled to;
- Your home went with your job, which you lost through no fault of your own, or which you gave up for a very good reason;
- You lost your home because you did not know your rights: for example you did not know that your landlord needed a court order before you had to leave.