

Housing advice for people being asked to leave accommodation provided by family or friends

This advice is for people who are being asked to leave accommodation that they have been sharing with family or friends.

Specific advice for 16/17 year olds

If you are aged 16 or 17 years and are being asked to leave the home of family or friends and have nowhere to stay, you should contact Children's Services at the earliest opportunity: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/>

Help from the housing team

Being asked to leave by friends and family is one of the biggest causes of homelessness in England and a much better outcome can be achieved if a move is made in a planned way. We recognise that living a multi-generational home or staying temporarily with friends can be extremely difficult but it is always better to plan a move. The only exception to this is if the arrangement is unsafe due to a risk of violence.

If you are being asked to leave your current accommodation, we would advise you to seek early assistance. Staff will work with you, and your friend/family, by providing practical ideas to help you all try and work out a solution, so you don't have to leave home immediately. Generally, for people leaving home, it is a major decision and requires careful thought and planning.

If you apply to us for housing assistance because you are homeless in these circumstances, we may not necessarily be legally obliged to provide you with any accommodation.

However, we will have a duty to assess the circumstances of your homelessness, identify what your housing and support needs are, and to work with you to try to prevent your homelessness or support you to find you somewhere to live. We will provide you with a 'personal housing plan' which will tell you what we can do to help you and what you can do to help yourself.

For the housing team to be legally obliged to provide you with accommodation, we would need to be satisfied that you are eligible, homeless, in priority need and that you have not made yourself intentionally homeless.

It is important to be aware that even if we can assist you, it is likely that we would place you into accommodation in the private sector.

Leaving home as a young person

When to leave home is a major decision which should not be taken lightly. Although leaving home will grant you more freedom, it also means you will have responsibilities that you have probably not had to deal with before. The best way to leave home is

after careful thought and planning. Leaving your parental home at a very young age, especially if you have nowhere to go, should be the very last option that you consider. You could easily end up homeless.

Some 18 to 21 year olds claiming Universal Credit are not entitled to help with housing costs. The Gov.uk website provides more information about which 18-21 year olds can get help with their housing costs. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-costs-for-18-to-21-year-olds#universal-credit-housing-costs>

Explore your options first

When you are ready to leave, you will need to decide the type of housing that will suit you best. A major factor in making this decision will probably be your financial situation. The cost of running a home is rising all the time. Many people decide to share with others at first as this will mean you can share the rent and bills. Seek advice before you decide and do not rush into anything.

If you are having problems at home

There is help and support available. Try to find someone you trust to talk to, such as friends, extended family or a teacher at your school or college. If the situation becomes works, see if there is a place you can go to for a night or two to let everyone cool down. We may be able to provide mediation in your home with your family to talk about the problems. Remember, no matter how bad things may seem, if you leave home without preparation, you may find yourself in an even worse situation.

Feeling unsafe at home?

If you have absolutely no choice and feel that you have to leave home immediately, for example because someone is being violent or abusive towards you, you must seek help right away.

There are a number of agencies who can assist you. Some of these are listed below:

- Childline: 0800 1111 free 24 hour support line for children and young people
- Women's Aid: 0808 2000 free 24 hour helpline for victims of domestic violence
- Shelterline: 0808 800 4444 free 24 hour helpline giving information on housing

Further help

Please contact the Housing Options Team on 01284 763233 or visit www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/housing

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