

Service Families Accommodation

Under the Homelessness Act 2002 (England) the guidance to Local Authorities has been amended. It now includes reference to Service Leavers as, possibly, coming under the Priority Need category for Local Authority housing under Homelessness Legislation.

The basis of the new guidance says:

The critical test of vulnerability for applicants is whether, when homeless, the applicant would be less able to fend for himself than an ordinary homeless person so that he would be likely to suffer injury or detriment, in circumstances where a less vulnerable person would be able to cope without harmful effects.

The majority of those who have served in the armed forces should be able to find and maintain their own accommodation and each applicant will need to be considered individually to assess whether they are vulnerable as a result of having served in the armed forces...

In considering whether former members of the armed forces are vulnerable as a result of their time spent in the forces, a housing authority may wish to take into account the following factors:

- i. the length of time the applicant spent in the armed forces;
- ii. the type of service the applicant was engaged in (those on active service may find it more difficult to cope with civilian life);
- iii. whether the applicant spent time in a military hospital (this could be an indicator of a serious health problem or of post-traumatic stress);
- iv. the length of time since the applicant left the armed forces, and whether he or she had been able to obtain and/or maintain accommodation during that time;
- v. whether the applicant has any existing support networks, particularly by way of family or friends.

Included in the Guidance to Local Authorities is a copy of the Certificate of Cessation of Entitlement to Occupy a Service Families Quarter and of Impending Homelessness. If you are looking for accommodation through a Local Authority or a Housing Association you will need to send them a copy of this form, completed and signed by your local DHE office. A copy of the form is attached for your convenience.

NB: This form is your proof of impending homelessness and can be completed anytime in your last six (6) months of service.