

Do you have you a priority need for a homelessness application?

Why is having a priority need important?

If you have a full homelessness interview and it is deemed that you may have a priority need along with the possibility of being eligible for assistance and being homeless, then you must be given emergency accommodation. You will need to be deemed as having a Priority need along with satisfying 4 other tests before the housing authority ultimately decides if you are legally homeless and therefore have a duty to find you a home. You can find out more in our other leaflet '**Homeless or threatened with being homeless in Salford**'. Showing that you have a priority need can be difficult, so you should contact the Salford Help through Crisis Team for further help.

Do I have a priority need?

There are a number of grounds on which you may be deemed as having a priority need. You should always try and provide evidence to show that you fall into any of the categories. You need to fall into one of the following groups to have a priority need:

- you are pregnant, or someone you live with or might be expected to live with is pregnant
- you have dependent children who normally live with you or who might be expected to live with you
- you are homeless, or threatened with homelessness, because of an emergency, for example, a fire or flood
- you are aged 16 or 17 and aren't owed certain duties by social services under the Children Act 1989
- you are aged under 21 and not a student in full-time education, but at any time when aged between 16 and 18 you were looked after, accommodated or fostered under the Children Act 1989

If you are deemed vulnerable because:

- you have been looked after, accommodated or fostered under the Children Act 1989 and are aged 21 or over
- of your service in the armed forces
- you have been in custody or prison
- you became homeless because of violence, or a threat of violence.
- you, or someone you live with or might be expected to live with, are vulnerable because of old age, mental illness or disability, physical disability, or some other special reason



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Am I vulnerable because of a physical or learning disability, or a mental health problem?

To work out if you are vulnerable because of a physical or learning disability, or a mental health problem, then the authority should take advice from medical professionals, social services and any providers of care and support. They need to consider all your health conditions and how they may make you vulnerable. They also need to look at the relationship between your health conditions and your housing difficulties and other things, such as, drug or alcohol misuse, challenging or offending behaviour, your age and any personality disorder.

If you have mental health problems, the housing authority is expected to work closely with social services and mental health agencies. The High Court has also held that as well as consulting medical advisers and mental health services, they should get a further assessment and report from a psychiatrist. If you've just been discharged from a psychiatric hospital or a local authority hostel for people with mental health problems, then you're likely to be considered vulnerable.

Medical evidence

If you have any medical evidence, you can give it to the housing authority to consider, but the authority is legally required to make its own inquiries and decision about vulnerability. You may be asked to fill in a medical questionnaire or send it to your GP for them to complete. The questionnaire may then be looked at by a medical adviser employed by the housing authority.

Vulnerable for some other special reason

The housing authority may consider you as vulnerable for some other special reason and therefore consider if you have a priority need. There is no list of who would fall under this category but there is a Code of Guidance which suggests those who might be considered vulnerable for a special reason. It may include:

- people who are chronically sick, including people with Aids and HIV-related illnesses
- young people who fall outside the other priority need categories
- people fleeing harassment where it falls short of actual or threatened violence
- former asylum seekers.

If I am vulnerable does it mean I have a priority need?

Falling into one of the vulnerability categories doesn't automatically mean that you have a priority need. The test is whether the vulnerability is as a result of the certain circumstances or personal characteristic. The test of vulnerability is about whether you, as a homeless person, would be more likely to suffer injury or harm when homeless when compared to an ordinary person who becomes homeless. If you are



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not deemed as vulnerable or having a priority need then you should contact us as you have 21 days from getting the decision to request a review.

For further information:

phone: 0161 212 4407

email: htcadmin@salford.cabnet.org.uk

twitter: https://twitter.com/crisis_help

online: www.salfordhelpthroughcrisis.org.uk



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