



## CARE LEAVERS

If you are a care leaver you could be entitled to housing assistance from Social Services. They should continue to assist you until you turn 21, or until you are 24 if you are in full time education.

You are considered a care leaver if you fit into one of the following categories:

### **Eligible Child**

- Aged 16 or 17
- Looked after by Children's Social Services for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14
- Currently looked after by Children's Social Services

An eligible child is entitled to:

- A Needs Assessment
- A Personal Advisor
- A Pathway Plan
- Care and support until they leave care

### **Relevant Child**

- Aged 16 or 17
- Looked after by Children's Social Services for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14
- No longer looked after

A relevant child is entitled to:

- A Needs Assessment
- A Personal Advisor
- A Pathway Plan
- Accommodation
- Financial support for education, training and employment needs

### **Former Relevant Child**

- Aged between 18 and 21 or between 18 and 25 if in full-time education
- Previously an eligible child and/or a relevant child



A former relevant child is entitled to:

- A Personal Advisor
- A Pathway Plan
- Assistance with employment, training and education
- Suitable accommodation
- Help with living costs

### **Qualifying Care Leaver**

- Aged between 16 and 21 or between 16 and 25 if in full-time education
- Looked after by Children's Social Services on, or after, their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and is no longer looked after
- Spent less than 13 weeks in care since age of 14
- Do not fulfil criteria for eligible or relevant child

A qualifying care leaver is entitled to:

- Help with living expenses
- Accommodation
- Advice and assistance from Children's Social Services

**If you are under the age of 18 and are in care or have been in care, the duty to assist you with your housing issues is with Children's Social Services.**

Hertfordshire Children's Social Services can be contacted on 0300 123 4043 (24 hours)

The Council may be able to provide you with advice if you are homeless or about to become homeless if you are unable to resolve your housing issues. We can provide advice and support to help you find alternative accommodation. However, we will not have a duty to provide you with emergency accommodation or house you temporarily unless you are considered to be eligible, homeless and have a priority need.

## **The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

Since April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act has changed the homelessness duties for all Local Authorities in England.

The new legislation means that all applicants who are eligible and about to become homeless will be entitled to receive advice and assistance in order to prevent them from becoming homeless.

The Act changes the way we address and resolve the issues around homelessness by introducing two new duties in addition to the main housing duty. These two duties are:

1) Duty to Prevent Homelessness

Hertsmere Borough Council will provide advice and assistance to people who are about to become homeless within 56 days. If you are eligible for assistance and at risk of losing your home, we will try to prevent your homelessness by working with you to, either, help you remain in your current accommodation or help you find somewhere to else suitable for you and your household.



2) Duty to Relieve Homelessness

If you are already homeless, and considered eligible, Hertsmere Borough Council will provide advice and assistance to help you find suitable accommodation. If you are considered to be a 'vulnerable person', the Council can offer you emergency accommodation while we work with you to find alternative accommodation that is suitable for you and your household.

## Support for Young People

### **HYH (Herts Young Homeless)**

Herts Young Homeless is a floating support service that helps young people aged between 18 to 24 years with independent living. They can assist with housing, education, training, debt advice, health issues and employment by allocating you a floating support worker.

Their contact details are: 03333 202 384  
[www.hyh.org.uk](http://www.hyh.org.uk)

### **NYAS (The National Youth Advocacy Service)**

The National Youth Advocacy Service is a rights based charity supporting young people who are in care. They provide confidential advice and information, legal representation and advocacy.

Their contact details are: 0808 808 1001  
[help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)  
[www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

### **Just For Kids Law**

Just For Kids Law provide a specialised service that consist of lawyers who work with young people to help them during difficult times such as issues at school, immigration, criminal justice and mental health issues and homelessness.

Their contact details are: 020 3174 2279

[info@justforkidslaw.org](mailto:info@justforkidslaw.org)  
[www.justforkidslaw.org](http://www.justforkidslaw.org)

### **Rees Foundation**

Rees Foundation provides support and assistance to care leavers by enabling them to access a network of people with care experience so that they can support one another. Visit their website to contact them and for more information.

[www.reessfoundation.org](http://www.reessfoundation.org)

