



Housing Support for former armed forces

You may be entitled to extra help if you become homeless and are leaving the armed services, or you are a former member.

Key advice

- Consider applying for social housing in East Suffolk through the Gateway to Homechoice scheme. You can complete an online housing application at www.gatewaytohomechoice.org.uk
- If you are currently homeless or at risk of homelessness, then you can email housing.needs@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or alternatively contact the Housing Needs Team on 0333 016 2000.

Your rights if you have served in the forces

You may qualify for help if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness and are vulnerable because of your time spent in the armed forces. In addition, you will have to prove that you are eligible for housing assistance.

Subject to you satisfying the above criteria we will be able to explore assisting you with both temporary and longer-term accommodation if it is accepted that you are homeless and in priority need with regard to needing accommodation. We will explain what this means to you.

General rules for people in priority need

It can be easier to get help if you qualify under the general rules for people in priority need, for example if you have dependent children or are pregnant.

We will also look to see if you are vulnerable in some way. This may involve showing how a disability, mental health problem, addiction or other medical or welfare issues affects your ability to secure accommodation.

Extra homelessness rules for the armed forces

You should also be treated as being vulnerable and therefore in priority need for accommodation if you can show that you are vulnerable as a result of being a former member of the armed forces.

To help support your application, you may need to provide medical evidence from the MOD, including a Medical History Release Form (if you were given one).

You may need to seek independent advice or help from a specialist agency to make representations on your behalf if we decide that you do not meet the criteria set out above, and therefore we do not owe a duty to you to provide you with accommodation.

Re-housing options

To be accepted as homeless in the local council area where you were based, you must be able to show that you have a local connection with the local council where your base was situated.

You may be able to show a local connection with that area if you:

- currently work in the area
- have lived in the area for six out of the last 12 months or three out of the last five years
- Have family in the area.

Further information in regard to local connection can be found on Shelters website: [Shelter Legal England - Local connection in homelessness applications - Shelter England](#)

If you have left the forces and are not yet working for another employer in the area, you won't be able to show a local connection through working in the area. However, you may still be able to show that you have a local connection as the time you spent living or working in the area may still count, please contact us for further advice.

Ex-forces and single, homeless and on the streets

Some single homeless people don't qualify for help from the council. There is a range of services in Suffolk available for people who find themselves homeless, for example:

- The Royal British Legion might be able to help with a rent deposit contact www.support.britishlegion.org.uk
- SSAFA provide housing advice to people currently serving in the forces and ex-services personnel and their families. SSAFA can be contacted through www.ssafa.org.uk

