

Homeless ex-armed forces advice

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

To help support your case, you may need to provide medical evidence from the MOD, including a Medical History Release Form (if you were given one). It can be hard to establish that you are vulnerable.

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

Applying as homeless before discharge from the forces

Contact Newark and Sherwood District Council's Housing Options Team if you think you will be homeless after discharge from the services.

Upon the production of a letter of discharge or some other evidence that confirms the date of your discharge from the Forces, Newark and Sherwood District Council should accept that from the date of discharge you will become homeless.

In the event that you have not sought any housing assistance from this council prior to your discharge from the Forces you may need to stay in your accommodation as long as possible. Defence Estates have to give you a Notice to Vacate before they can take you to court in order that they can obtain a possession order. You can use any Notice to Vacate and any possession order that is obtained against you as evidence in support of your homelessness application.

Ex-forces and single, homeless, and on the streets

Many single homeless people do not qualify for emergency accommodation from Newark and Sherwood District Council or any other local authority. There is a range of services for people who find themselves homeless and on the streets, for example:

- day centres are a useful source of practical support – they provide a warm place to stay during the day and food, clothing, laundry facilities and showers;
- the Royal British Legion might be able to help with a rent deposit contact; www.support.britishlegion.org.uk
- the Newark Patriotic Society also provide advice and assistance to relieve the needs of ex-service personnel and their families in the Newark area; <http://newarkpatrioticfund.co.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
- Use the Homeless England directory to find details of other day centres and hostels in London and across the UK. This can be located at www.homeless.org.uk

Further housing support and advice

Veterans' Housing Advice is a new service which provides clear pathways for ex-Service personnel in housing need throughout the United Kingdom to move into permanent homes. It is provided in partnership with The Royal British Legion, Shelter and Connect Assist, its main aim is to make accessing the services of charities easier through a telephone helpline open seven days a week from

8am-8pm. It can, for example, provide a housing intervention that negates the need to consider a rent bond or rent deposit.

There is now a Veterans Housing Advice (VHA) web site www.veteranshousingadvice.org.uk and the direct number to an advisor is 0808 801 0880, that can also be accessed via the Veterans' Gateway on 0808 802 1212 that is available 24/7.

Homeless after dishonourable discharge

Newark and Sherwood District Council may not have a duty to help you if you are homeless after being discharged on disciplinary grounds from the UK armed forces.

Joining the Housing Register

The Armed Forces England Regulations 2012, provide that Additional Preference must be given to an applicant with urgent housing needs who falls within one of the Reasonable Preference categories referred to above if:-

1. S/he is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributed (wholly or partly) to his/her service; or
2. S/he has formerly served in the regular forces; or
3. S/he has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of his spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
4. S/he is serving or has served in the reserved forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service

Forces are defined as "regular forces" are the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, The Army and the Royal Air Force. "Reserved forces" are the Royal Fleet Reserve, The Royal Naval Reserve, The Royal Marines Reserve. "The Army Reserve" are the Territorial Army, The Royal Air Force Reserve or Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

NSDC usually define former and serving members of the armed forces as:

1. People who left the regular Armed Forces within the last 10 years, except those dismissed under Section 265 as set out in Schedule 3, Part 2 of the Armed Forces Act 2006.
2. Serving members of either the regular or reserve Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
3. Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner

Additional Preference for Armed Forces

An applicant who has been assessed as having Reasonable Preference and who meets the additional preference criteria will be have their banding increased by a maximum of one band. Those already awarded Band 1 will be given an additional six months waiting time.

Consideration has also been given to the Armed Forces Covenant (signed on 16 July 2013) between the Armed Forces community, Armed Forces Charities, Newark and Sherwood District Council and Newark and Sherwood Homes. More information about this can be found at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/communitycovenant/.

A full copy of the Newark and Sherwood District Council Allocation Scheme can be found at <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/newarkandsherwood/imagesandfiles/housing/affordablehousing/Housing%20allocation%20scheme%202017.pdf>

Contact us

If you prefer to speak to an officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council regarding your situation, contact the housing options team on 01636 650000 or to discuss a housing application you can call Newark and Sherwood Homes on 0845 2585550.