

Next steps if you get refugee status

If you are granted refugee status or humanitarian protection, you can:

- work
- rent privately
- claim benefits
- apply for council housing

You will get an official immigration document with your photo on it about a week after a positive Home Office decision on your asylum claim.

This is called a biometric residence permit. It confirms that you have 'recourse to public funds'. It is proof that you can claim benefits and apply for help with housing.

Making a homeless application

You get a notice to leave asylum housing after you get refugee status (this can be from 7 to 28 days' notice).

You're likely to get this notice around the same time as your residence permit.

You can make a homeless application to a local council as soon as you are told to leave.

Which council should you apply to?

You can apply to any council.

You might be referred to a different council if you do not have a local connection.

You have a local connection if:

- you live in asylum housing in the area

They are other ways to get local connection to a council, please call Shelter to get advice on 0344 515 2000 (Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm) or email info@shelter.org.uk

LOCAL COUNCILS IN THE AREA:

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

100 Temple Street, 100 Temple St, Redcliffe, Bristol BS1 6AG

0117 352 6800

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL

01454 868005 between 8.45am-5pm Monday to Thursdays and 8.45am-4.30pm on Fridays

One Stop Kingswood Kingswood Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 9TR

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

01934 426 330

HP.Triage@n-somerset.gov.uk

Most councils have long housing waiting lists. You will probably need to rent privately at first.

London and the south of England have higher rents than other areas.

How does the council help?

You can get [emergency housing](#) if the council think you are homeless and in priority need.

You always have a priority need if:

- children live with you
- you're pregnant
- you're at risk of domestic abuse
- you're under 21 and were looked after by social services when you were 16 or 17

If these do not apply, you are in priority need if something else makes you vulnerable. For example, a disability or health problem.

'Vulnerable' has a special meaning in housing law.

You need to show that you would be much more vulnerable than most people if you were homeless, and likely to suffer more harm in the same situation. If you have medical letters take them to the local council.

SERVICES FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS

St Mungos: You can contact the team via phone on 0117 407 0330 Monday-Friday 9am – 5pm or via email on bristolspot@mungos.org If you are currently rough sleeping and would like to see a member of the Outreach team, you can come to New Street for one of our drop-ins on Monday and Thursday 10am-12pm: 1 New Street, Bristol, BS2 9DX

Spring of Hope for females: Tel: 0117 405 7121 Email: springofhope@inhope.uk

How to apply for benefits

You can apply for universal credit if you have no money or a low income.

Apply as soon as you get your refugee status. You can make an application online on: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim>

It takes at least 5 weeks to get your first universal credit payment.

You need a national insurance number to claim benefits. You can find this on the back of your biometric residence permit.

Help to claim from Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice are a charity who can help you to apply for universal credit.

Call a Help to Claim adviser on **0800 144 8 444**

Ask for a translator if you need advice in another language.

How much you get

Universal credit has a standard allowance plus extra amounts if you have:

- to pay rent where you live
- children or childcare costs
- a disability that stops you from working

You get more money than from asylum support. But you usually have to pay for rent and bills from this money.

Universal credit is usually paid monthly not weekly.

Your payments will be lower if you start work or have other income.

[Migrant Help](#) should contact you as soon as you get your refugee status to offer help with claiming benefits and applying for housing.

EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM TO CALL AFTER 5PM OR WEEKENDS

An emergency social work service at night, weekends and bank holidays, to help with personal, family or accommodation problems.

What do they do?

The Emergency Duty Team provides an emergency social work service for the four authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire at night, at weekends and bank holidays.

They can help you with personal, family or accommodation problems which reach a crisis at these times and cannot wait until the next working day.

What sort of problems?

- Difficulties with children and young people
- Concern about a child outside your family
- Acute mental health problems
- Older people at risk
- Concerns about a person with a disability
- Emergency housing advice

Call 01454 615 165.

If English isn't your first language

If English is not your first language, the Emergency Duty Team will arrange for an interpreter so you can tell them about your concerns.

A Emergency Duty Team Officer will contact you by text to discuss your concerns. This should happen within 30 minutes, although during busy periods this may take longer.