

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 reformed England's homelessness legislation by placing duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas, and to provide homelessness services to all those who are eligible. Click [here](#) for details.

The Act introduced a duty on specified public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness/housing options teams. **This includes inpatient hospitals, minor injury units and walk-in centres.**

The service user must consent to the referral being made. The consent can be made in writing or given orally. A referral form is available [here](#); it will also be available on the intranet.

A person is considered homeless if:

- they do not have any accommodation which is available for them which they have a legal right to occupy; or,
- it is not reasonable for the person to occupy their current accommodation, for example, because they would be at risk of domestic abuse

The duty allows service users to choose which local housing authority they are referred to. However, when discussing the referral and offering guidance to the service user, it is important to be aware that local housing authorities owe more duties towards homeless applicants who have a local connection with their area.

If a person asks to be referred to an area they do not have a local connection to, the local housing authority might subsequently refer them on to another local housing authority to which they do have a local connection

Click [here](#) for the email addresses to send the completed referral form to.