

Homelessness

What should I do if I become homeless or think that I am likely to be made homeless

You should go in person to any local office during office hours.

You will be interviewed in private to discuss your situation. You can bring a friend or advisor with you to the interview if you want to. You can also request an interview with someone of the same sex.

What happens at the interview

You will be offered advice and assistance to try to prevent you becoming homeless. You will be asked details of your circumstances in order to assess your options and what can be done to assist you.

If you do not have a current housing application registered with the council you will be asked to complete an application at this stage.

A copy of the Council's housing Allocations policy is available from any Customer Service Centre where a member of staff will explain it to you if you ask.

Will the Council find me somewhere permanent to live?

If you are considered to be unintentionally homeless, and have a Local connection with West Lothian the Council will have a duty to provide you with permanent accommodation.

The Council has different legislative duties to all other homeless applicants depending on your individual circumstances. This will be discussed in detail with you at your interview. However if you have no accommodation which you are permitted or entitled to occupy the council has a duty to provide you with temporary accommodation for a reasonable period of time.

Contact the Council for further information.

Will I have a long wait in temporary accommodation for an offer of permanent accommodation

To keep the length of time you spend in temporary accommodation to a minimum you will be listed for all communities in West Lothian and must have an open choice of housing and heating type. You have a right to request certain areas only if you have a specific need. This can be discussed with the interviewing officer. Account will be taken of any special medical recommendations, or other special circumstances which may limit your choice of house/ heating type or communities selected.

If after investigation the council has a duty to provide you with permanent accommodation you will be given only 1 offer of housing.

Right of review/ appeal

If you do not agree with the Council's decision as to whether or not you are homeless you have a right to request a review. You also have the right to request a review of any temporary or permanent accommodation offered.

Details of how to do this will be given in the letter explaining the Council's decision.

If you are still dissatisfied with the Council's decision you have the right to judicial Review. To do this you should contact a housing solicitor, or Shelters Housing Aid Centre whose address is Ground floor, Unit 2, Kittle yards Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PJ. Tel No 0131-466-8031. They will be able to advocate on your behalf. You can also make a complaint to the Care Commission if you are unhappy about the quality of service you have received from the Council. Contact The Care Commission Stuart House, Eskmills, Musselburgh, Edinburgh EH12 7PB, Tel No 0131-653-4100.

Tel: 01506 280000



Email: customer.service@westlothian.gov.uk