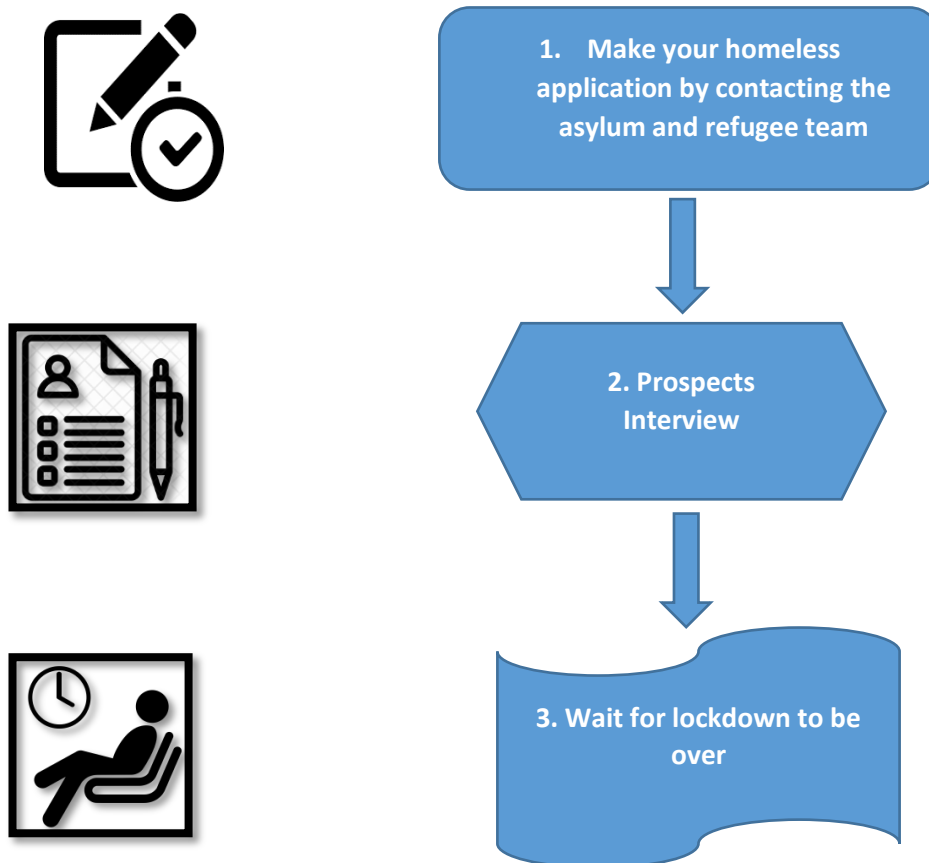


Factsheet - The Homelessness process in Scotland during COVID-19



This fact sheet is for people who have received a positive decision on their asylum claim and have decided to stay in Glasgow.

This factsheet explains:

- What you need to do before you leave your Home Office accommodation and the process and the organisations you will engage with.
- Your housing rights and your housing options.

What are my homeless right as a newly granted refugee?

When the Home Office writes to you to tell you that you have been granted status, they will also tell you when you will need to leave your accommodation. You are then at risk of homelessness. It gives you rights to get help with housing from the local Council, for example, Glasgow City Council.

Key changes due to COVID-19:

- As a temporary response to COVID-19, the Home Office decided that even if you receive a decision on your asylum claim, you will not have to leave your Home Office accommodation until further notice. We expect this to begin gradually in the Autumn.
- However you can still make a homeless application and we advise you to do so now. This will mean the council can start looking for a new home for you for when the crisis is over.

1. Homeless application

What is the homeless application?

If you are already homeless, or you are about to become homeless in the next two months, you can apply for help to get somewhere to live from your local council. This is called making a homeless application. The council will look into your situation to decide what help they will give you.

How can I make a homeless application?

Normally you can make a homeless application by going to your local council, COVID-19 means the safest way is to make the application is over the phone.

- To make your homeless application in Glasgow, you can simply phone the Asylum and Refugee Team on 0141 222 7300.

When can I make a homeless application?

As soon as you are granted status and have some proof of this (your biometric residence card or your asylum determination letter). You can start the process by phoning this number 0141 222 7300.

- If English is not your first language or you have difficulty communicating in English, you have the right to ask and be provided with an interpreter.
- You might be asked to email a copy (photo) of your documents, to the asylum and refugee team.

2. The prospects interview

After you phoned the council and made your homeless application, the council will arrange an interview for you with a homeless caseworker. This is called the **Prospects Interview**.

The aims of the Prospect Interview are:

- For you to understand the help you will receive from the Council
- For you to explain your needs and where you would like to live long term.

During the interview you will need:

- some documents such as your Biometric Residence Permit and documents confirming the identity of family members and their relation to you;
- to select up to **three areas** of Glasgow where you would like to live;
- to take a note of the name of your Homeless Caseworker

To prepare for this interview, think about how you will explain:

- Any health problems or disabilities you or anyone in your family has. This might affect the type of property you need to live in. If your GP/health specialist is not able to give you a letter explaining your health conditions, it is still important to talk about your health at this interview.
- Future changes in your family size because of family reunion/ pregnancy. This is important for the size of property you may need.
- Problems you had with domestic abuse or other forms of harassment. This will help to avoid areas where you cannot live.

3. End of lockdown – what next?

When the Home Office writes to you to give you a fixed date to leave your Home Office accommodation, phone your Homelessness Caseworker.

What about my permanent/ settled accommodation and how/ when can I get that?

This is a very difficult and uncertain time for everyone, and we do not know how long the lock down will last for. We do not know when the Council will be again able to find permanent/settled homes for people. We expect that once government restrictions begin to ease, there may be some properties that become available.

Scottish Refugee Council will update everyone and share information when we know of any changes. Until then you should continue to stay in contact with your Homelessness Caseworker.

Is the online bidding system working at the moment?

The **My Housing system** (GHA online bidding system) has been suspended.

You might still receive your reference number, to help you register online. You can register and we advise you to do so but you will not be able to make a note of interest on any properties.

Further help

If you have any question about your housing situation and about what the Glasgow City Council tells you, please phone Scottish Refugee Council's helpline on 0141 223 7979.

This fact sheet is created on 20/08/2020 and is accurate on this date. Information can change frequently. Please check for up to date information at the time of making an application.

Disclaimer:

This factsheet should not be used as legal advice and is intended for information and guidance only. Legal advice on any individual cases and assistance should be sought from a qualified adviser.