

# Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

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## **Background;**

- What is the Homelessness Reduction Act? (HRA)
- Three main aims of the HRA.
- Why has it been introduced?
- Purpose
- What has changed?
- Duty to assess all eligible applicants' cases and agree a plan
- Duties to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- Local connection of a care leaver
- Duty of public authority to refer cases to local housing authority
- Assessment process changes
- Positive outcomes of the HRA

# THE OLD SYSTEM

Are you eligible for assistance?



Are you homeless or likely to be homeless within 28 days?



Are you in priority need?



Duty to offer temporary accommodation



Are you intentionally homeless?



Do you have a local connection?



Full homelessness duty

# THE NEW SYSTEM

Are you eligible for assistance?

Are you homeless or likely to be homeless within 56 days?

New

New

Prevention Duty - Reasonable steps to help you keep your home

Are you in priority need?

Relief Duty - Reasonable steps to help you find somewhere else to live

New

Duty to offer temporary accommodation

Are you intentionally homeless?

Do you have a local connection?

Full homelessness duty

# LOCAL AUTHORITY DUTIES

- **Prevention duty** - Where eligible households are threatened with homelessness, councils must take reasonable steps to prevent them becoming homeless. (Period extended from 28 days → 56 days)
- **Relief duty** – Where households are homeless, councils must take reasonable steps to secure accommodation for them for 6 months (Duty lasts for 56 days)
- **Duty to provide advisory services** – bespoke information and advice on the prevention and relief of homelessness, and the rights of homeless people.

# ASSESSMENTS AND PERSONALISED HOUSING PLANS

- Local housing authorities must prepare an **Assessment** of the circumstances of *all* eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.
- A **Personalised Housing Plan** has to be drawn up which sets out the reasonable steps that the council and the applicant will take.
- The applicant will be required to co-operate with the local housing authority.

# OTHER CHANGES

## **Duty to Refer'**

Specified 'public bodies' must refer (with consent) details of any person they are aware of who is at risk of homelessness, within 56 days, to the housing departments

## **Care Leavers**

In addition to having a local connection to the authority who looked after them, a care leaver will also have a local connection with an area if they have lived there for 2 years, including some time before their 16th birthday

## **Assessment process changes**

Rotherham Council will carry out the holistic assessment and following this, the Personal Housing Plan will be created

## **Positive outcomes of the Act**

- Earlier intervention & tailored personal housing plans
- Focus on addressing the underlying causes of homelessness
- More opportunities for partnership working to prevent homelessness

# WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PRIVATE LANDLORDS

- New definition of “threatened with homelessness”
- Duty (either Prevention or Relief) will be triggered following a valid s21 notice being served
- Local authority will focus on prevention – can the tenancy be saved with appropriate intervention?
- Longer period of time for case officers to work with individuals & provide comprehensive housing advice
- Increased numbers of single people needing



# GOING FORWARD

- Joint working with private landlords
- Good quality affordable private rented accommodation
- Potential financial assistance for bond & rent in advance – Credit Union Loan or Discretionary Housing Payments
- Universal Credit – housing costs
- Direct point of contact to RMBC for any vacant properties [housingsolutionsteam@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:housingsolutionsteam@rotherham.gov.uk)
- Earlier contact from tenants after a valid notice is served allows longer prevention work to be completed

# Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

## Further information;

- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>
- Homelessness Reduction Act: new burdens funding  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-act-newburdens-funding>

**Any further questions**

**Thank you.**