

Do I have a local connection?

The Homelessness Code of Guidance requests that information be given to you when being referred for help by a housing authority you wish to be referred to. This can include information on how local connection arrangements might affect you if you are homeless and wish to be referred to a district where you have no local connection.

If you are referred to a local housing authority under the s213b “Duty to Refer” you may be entitled to some assistance regardless of local connection. However, the authority may refer you on to another local housing authority to which you do have a local connection. You should give careful consideration to local connection when choosing which local housing authority you ask to be referred to.

You may have a local connection with the district of a housing authority because:

a) **[You are, or were in the past, normally resident there, and that residence was of your own choice](#)**

A working definition of normal residence sufficient to establish a local connection should be residence for at least 6 months in an area during the previous 12 months, or for 3 years during the previous 5 year period.

b) **[You are employed there](#)**

You should actually work in the district: it would not be sufficient that your employers’ head office was located there

c) **[You have family living there](#)**

Family connection is usually limited to close family such as parents and children. The local housing authority will determine family associations with regard to the facts and circumstances of each individual case.

d) **[Or any special circumstances.](#)**

Special circumstances might include (for example) the need to be near special medical or support services which are available only in a particular district. The local housing authority will determine special circumstances with regard to the facts and circumstances of each individual case.

Some people will have individual circumstances that are subject to specific local connection guidance. Advice in relation to these is also provided here.

I. Care Leavers

A young person owed leaving care duties under section 23C of the Children Act 1989 will have a local connection to the area of the children services authority that owes them the duties.

If a care leaver is aged under 21 and normally lives in a different area to that of a local authority that owes them leaving care duties, and has done for at least 2 years including some time before they turned 16, the young person will also have a local connection in that area.

II. Ex-Service Personnel

Armed forces personnel establish a local connection in an area through residing there by choice, or being employed there, in the same way as a civilian.

III. Ex-prisoners and detainees under the Mental Health Act 1983

Detention in prison (whether convicted or not) does not establish residency of choice in the district the prison is in, and will not create a local connection with that district. The same is true of those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983

IV. Former Asylum Seekers

A former asylum seeker has a local connection with the district of a housing authority if they were (at any time) provided with accommodation there under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (section 95 accommodation), unless, they have been subsequently provided with section 95 accommodation in a different area (or the accommodation was an Accommodation Centre within the district).

Where a former asylum seeker has been provided with s95 accommodation in more than one area, the local connection is with the area where the applicant was granted status, i.e. leave to remain.

** Different rules may apply if you wish to apply to join a local authority housing register.