

The Homelessness Reduction Act at a glance

The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force 3rd April 2018. There is also a New Code of Guidance which provides advice and guidance on all the homeless legislation as well as an [overview of the different Acts](#) governing homelessness

The main changes in the new Act are listed below with links to the relevant sections of the Code of Guidance.

- [Eligibility](#) remains an important concept, not all customers will be eligible for housing assistance
- There is now an [extended duty to provide advisory services](#) and to meet the needs of certain listed groups including those leaving prison, hospital or care and those with mental health issues
- The definition of [threatened with homelessness](#) increases from 28 to 56 days
- [Homeless prevention becomes a statutory duty](#) for all eligible applicants regardless of whether they have a priority need or are seen as 'vulnerable'
- If someone becomes homeless there is a new duty known as a [homeless relief duty](#)
- Where prevention or relief duties are owed the council must [conduct an assessment](#) of the applicants' reasons for homelessness, the housing needs of the applicant and any support needs the applicant has
- A [Personal Housing Plan](#) must also be created with the applicant
- [Local connection](#) and [priority need](#) can make a difference at the homeless relief duty stage but councils cannot make an intentional decision here
- Both [prevention and relief duties last for 56](#) days but can be ended in several ways in that time
- If the relief duty is not successful then the main homeless duty may be owed, [intentional homelessness](#) does become relevant here
- There are some new rules around [local connections](#), especially for care leavers
- There is now a [legal duty to refer](#) those who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness placed on several public bodies (including prisons, hospitals, probation services and social care)
- There are lots more [review points](#) for customers who are unhappy with the decisions a local authority has made