

ARE YOU HOMELESS OR FACED WITH HOMELESSNESS?

FIRST STEPS

If you are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless in the next 56 days your first stop should be your nearest Council Housing Office (Details below) to make a homeless application. You should then be asked to fill in a form by the people at reception (If you need help to fill this form in, the council staff should help). After this the Council will arrange for you to have an interview with a homeless officer.

THE INTERVIEW AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

During the homeless interview, a homeless assessment officer should explain about the process you will have to go through. If you are unclear about anything, ask them to explain a little more. They should then ask you if you have anywhere to return to. If the answer is no, the Council should then provide you with temporary accommodation for up to 28 days, if this is required, while they investigate your homelessness claim. *Remember, you do not have to accept the offer of temporary accommodation to make an application, if you have somewhere else to go temporarily!* The homeless assessment officer should then ask about your circumstances and the reason you are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is best to give as much information as possible at this stage.

THE DECISION

Once the Council have made a decision about your homeless application, they should send you a letter explaining about their decision, the reasons for it, and what happens next. The Council may decide that you are classed as homeless and in need of housing (although there are different rules that you have to meet). Or they may judge that you are not eligible to be housed through the homeless route (this could be for a number of reasons).

If you are unhappy with their decision you have a right to appeal it. This can be done through an advisor or advocate who can help you to challenge the Council's decision.

HOMELESS AFTER DARK?

If you become homeless out with normal office hours you can contact the North Ayrshire Homeless Standby team on **0800 0196 500**

LEAVING HOME IN AN EMERGENCY

Unless you are in danger, we would advise you to stay where you are until you are able to plan and organise your move.

But if you **HAVE** to leave, go to the North Ayrshire Council website or Shelter's website for further information.

www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk

<http://scotland.shelter.org.uk>