Take identification with you if you can -
- proof of income
- proof of identity
- proof of where you used to live.
Also make a note of the person’s name as you may need to contact them again.

Who is in priority need?
- most 16- to 17-year-olds.
  This age group is classed as priority need and the council must house you, at least temporarily. The council will probably check that you can't go back and live with your family, but it can't force you to go back.
- 18- to 20-year-olds, if you've left care
- if you are responsible for a child/children
- if you are pregnant
- if your home has been damaged by fire or flood etc.
- if you are vulnerable (because of a disability, physical or mental health problems, some care leavers, those who were in prison or the armed forces, or people who’ve left their home due to violence).

The rules around these circumstances are complicated. If the council refuses to help you and you think your situation matches one of the above, ring Shelter’s helpline on 0808 800 4444.

Questions:
- Am I homeless?
  You don’t have to be sleeping on the streets to be homeless. You might be:
  - staying with friends
  - living in run-down accommodation
  - at risk of violence at home
  - about to be evicted.

- Am I eligible?
  Most UK citizens are eligible, but if you’ve lived or come from abroad, the rules are complicated.

- What does ‘becoming homeless intentionally’ and a ‘connection with the area’ mean?
  Becoming homeless intentionally means the council thinks that the reason you have nowhere to live is your fault. A connection with the area can mean you live or work somewhere, or have close relatives there.

Making a homelessness application to the council flowchart:

1. Go to the homelessness section of your local council’s housing department and say you want to make a homelessness application. Remember the council cannot turn you away – it must look into circumstances.

2. When you’ve filled in your application, the council will look to see if you’re:
   - homeless (see above)
   - eligible
   - in priority need (this is the council’s name for special circumstances). It must look into circumstances.

3. If the council thinks you are homeless, eligible, and in priority need, it must house you in temporary accommodation.

4. While you are in temporary accommodation the council will carry out further inquiries to decide if you are homeless, eligible, and in priority need. At the same time the council will decide if you:
   - became homeless intentionally
   - have a connection with the area.

5. If the council agrees to house you, depending on the area you may have to stay in emergency accommodation until a more permanent option becomes available. The accommodation the council provide you with has to be suitable, whether it is long term or not.

5. If the council doesn’t agree to house you and you feel the decision is wrong, contact Shelter via the helpline and someone will be able to advise you of what you can do next. The council must give you further help finding non-council accommodation, even if it cannot house you directly.