



**Emergency Accommodation
and Housing Support for
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and
Transgender + (LGBT+)
Survivors of Domestic Abuse**





This information sheet offers information on the emergency housing and support options open to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) people experiencing domestic abuse.

Your safety should always be your first priority and if you are ever in immediate danger, call the police on 999. Local domestic abuse services should be able to provide support. If you need confidential advice from an LGBT+ specific service, you can contact the National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0800 999 5428.

0800 999 5428
www.galop.org.uk

Contains information about:

■ Domestic Abuse

Finding yourself without a safe home

If it's unsafe for you to remain in your home or you are forced to leave because of domestic abuse, support exists to help you find a safe place to live. This can be temporary or longer term. If you know that you are planning to leave your home, *take a look at our 'Leaving an abusive partner or family member' information sheet.*

It's important to make a plan to keep yourself safe, contact support agencies where they're available and consider what (if any) Protection Orders might be necessary.

Even if you don't have time to plan ahead, you can still get support and advice. Contact support services as soon as you can (see below for a short list), speak to trusted friends or family and see if see anyone can offer you a place to stay while you make arrangements.

Going to your local council

If you're currently homeless or think that you're likely to become homeless in the next eight weeks, you can ask your local council for help getting somewhere to live. You can tell the council that it's not safe for you to go home because of domestic abuse. Once you have made a homeless application, the council must look at your situation and decide what help they can offer you.

It may take some time for them to reach a decision. The council may be required to give you immediate emergency housing (e.g. if you have children or are pregnant etc.) while they consider your application, and you can ask for this.

When asking for emergency housing, it can help to bring some or all of the following:

- Witness statements.
- Letters from professionals or support workers.
- Any incident logs you have made.
- Medical information if you have any disabilities or health conditions.
- Crime reference numbers.

These can help to prove that you are in a vulnerable situation.

It's important to know that there are immigration restrictions around getting homelessness help from local councils. *If you are not a British Citizen, you should get independent advice before making an application.*



Making an application

Find out where your local council's housing department is. Some councils will ask you to begin the process online and will call you to arrange a follow-up meeting. Other councils will require you to attend in person.

When you talk to the council, you should try to bring the following if you can:

- Photo ID.
- Proof of tenancy or mortgage.
- Evidence of why you have had to leave home (incident logs, crime reference numbers, letters from professionals etc.)

The next step is for a Housing Officer to arrange to speak with you. This could be the same day or soon after. They will ask for details concerning your situation, who lives with you and what support you need. They should also explain the process and how the council will decide if they can help.

You can ask for the interview to be performed in private, request an officer of the same gender as you to conduct the interview and/or bring a friend with you, if you want to. After this, the council should write to you about their decision. If they do not offer you housing, you can appeal their decision.

Refuge accommodation

A refuge can provide temporary safe accommodation and will be staffed by trained specialists. The staff at a refuge can help you plan your next steps, offer advice and help you contact other professionals. To access refuge accommodation, you will normally need to be referred by another support service. [See the list below for more information.](#)

When going to refuge it is often safer to go to one away from your hometown or borough to avoid the person abusing you finding you easily.

Housing associations

If your home is part of a housing association, then it may be worth checking to see if they have a domestic abuse policy. Many housing associations have made commitments to help people experiencing abuse by supporting them in accessing services, improving the security of their home or finding them alternative accommodation. Speak to your housing manager or admin team to find out more.

Support organisations

There are many services able to provide advice and support around domestic abuse and housing issues. Here is a short list to help you get started in finding support:

Housing Specialists

Stonewall Housing (providing specialist LGBT+ housing support for London)

Tel: 020 7359 5767

Online: stonewallhousing.org

Homelessness Support

Albert Kennedy Trust (providing support for LGBT+ young people aged 16-25 across England)

Tel: 020 7831 6562 (London office; contact numbers for regional offices are available online)

Online: www.akt.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Support

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline (provided by Galop)

Tel: 0800 999 5428

Online: www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse