

# Moving on from asylum accommodation – an Islington guide for people with refugee status

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# Overview

This guide is for people who have recently got refugee status. It explains what to do next to settle in the UK.

You must leave your Home Office accommodation within **28 days** after you get your status. This is a short time, so you should start planning now.

What you need to do:

- **Set up your eVisa:** you need to login to your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account to see your eVisa.
- **Apply for benefits:** benefits are monthly payments from the government for people with no or low income. You can apply online.
- **Open a bank account:** you need to a bank account to get Universal Credit (income support from the government), get paid for work, and pay rent.
- **Search for housing:** housing in London is hard to find. Start looking as soon as you get your refugee status. If you do not know where you will live after leaving the hotel, you should go to Islington Central Hub at 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR. They will help you to register as homeless and get support to find accommodation.
- **Look for work:** you can get support from the JobCentre and from Islington Council's iWork team.
- **Apply for the New Refugee Grant:** if you got refugee status whilst living in asylum accommodation in Islington, you may be able to get a one-off payment of £200.

## IMPORTANT

- If you have a medical condition and may become homeless, please tell Islington Council's housing team as soon as possible. Go to the Islington Central Hub at 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR.
- If you need extra support, please ask the staff at reception. They can direct you to resources or organisations that can help, including drop-in support on Thursday afternoons.
- You should not be asked to leave the hotel until your eVisa has been correct for at least 28 days. If your eVisa has mistakes, follow the steps in this guide to fix it quickly.

# Letters you will receive after a positive decision

You will get four important letters after your positive decision. These letters will explain when you must leave the hotel. It is important to receive the letters in the correct order and with enough time before you move on.

If you don't get all four letters, they are in the wrong order, or they don't give you enough time before leaving, please speak to hotel staff immediately.

- 1) **Asylum decision letter.** This is the first letter you will get. Below is an example of what this might look like. This letter will also contain instructions on how to access your eVisa.

The image shows a sample of an Asylum Decision Letter from the Home Office. The letter is addressed to a person whose name and date are redacted with black boxes. The letterhead includes the Home Office logo and contact information for Asylum Flow, Children and Complex, Asylum & Protection, Customer Services, The Capital, Floor 0, Riverside, New Hall Place, Liverpool, L3 9PP. The contact details provided are: Web: [www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk](http://www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk) and Email: [SecondaryDecisionsAdminSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:SecondaryDecisionsAdminSupport@homeoffice.gov.uk).

The letter contains the following text:

Claimed asylum: [Redacted]

Date: [Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]  
Ref: [Redacted]  
Re: [Redacted]

**Your claim for asylum has been successful and you have been granted refugee status five years permission to stay in the United Kingdom (UK).**

**This decision was made in line with the Immigration Rules which were in force before 28 June 2022 (because you made your asylum claim before this date). For further information on the Immigration Rules under which your asylum claim has been considered, please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/archive-immigration-rules#2022>.**

This means that we accept you have a well-founded fear of persecution and therefore cannot return to your country [Redacted] and we have recognised that you are a refugee under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

You have been granted permission to stay for five years.

Your permission to stay ends on [Redacted]. After 5 years you can apply to extend your stay in the UK. Information on how to do this can be found in the 'Next steps' section of this letter.

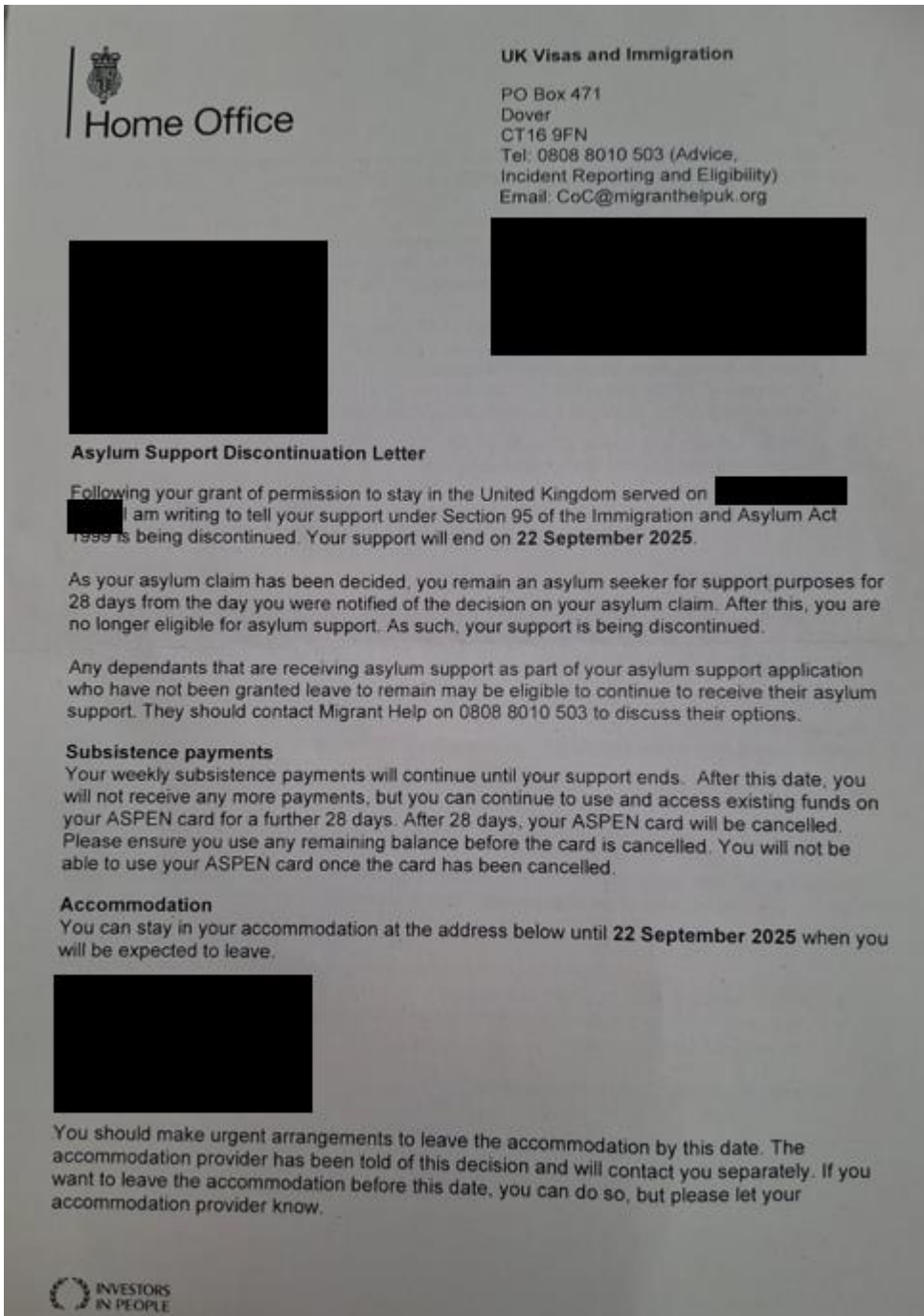
**Your conditions**

The following are all the conditions of your permission to stay in the UK.

**Work condition**

You can work in the UK, including paid and unpaid employment, paid and unpaid work placements undertaken as part of a course or period of study, self-employment and engaging in business or any professional activity.

- 2) **Asylum support discontinuation letter.** This letter tells you an exact date for when your financial support will stop, and triggers the start of your 28-day period. After 28 days, you must leave the hotel. Your **support must continue for at least 28 days from the date of this letter.** You must have set up your UKVI account before this. Below is an example.



- 3) **Notice to leave the hotel.** This may be called ‘notice to quit’, ‘notice to vacate’ or ‘eviction’ letter from Clearsprings Ready Homes. It must give you **at least 7 days’ notice before you have to leave the hotel.** Below is an example.

**READY HOMES**  
26 Brook Road  
Hayleigh SO4 7YC  
Phone: 01263 346030  
Fax: 01263 246000  
www.ready-homes.com

Date: **23/01/2025**  
Time:

**NOTICE TO VACATE THE ABOVE PREMISES**

Dear

We have been advised by UKVI that your support is being terminated and therefore Ready Homes is issuing you with a formal notice to permanently vacate the Premises by **24/02/2025**.

Please note that in section 5.4 of your occupancy agreement it states that at the end of the occupancy you are to leave the Premises clear of all occupants' belongings, possessions, rubbish and other objects. The Premises must be in a habitable state, along with all the Provider's fixtures and fittings as identified in Schedule 1. These must be in the same condition that they were at the start of the occupancy, subject only to fair wear and tear. Any possessions, rubbish and other objects left in the Premises will be treated as abandoned and the Provider (Ready Homes) has no responsibility to contact the you once you have left the Premises and may dispose of them as they think fit.

For further assistance with your move on, please contact Migrant Help on 0808 8010 503 or if you wish to be supported by a local support agency please ask your Housing Officer for their contact details.

Signed ..... Dated 24/01/25 ..... Signed,  
for and on behalf of Ready Homes.  
Ready Homes Signatory (Name in Full) .....

Signed .....  
(Service User - to sign here in his/her own hand writing and to acknowledge receipt of this Notice)

Service User (To add his/her full name) .....

Dated .....

# Set up your eVisa

Your eVisa is your digital proof of immigration status. You will need it to:

- Get a job
- Claim benefits
- Rent accommodation

## When will you get it?

The Home Office will give you instructions on how to set up your eVisa in your decision letter.

You will receive a UKVI customer number in the letter about your decision and the end of your financial support (S95).

## How to access it

The letter will explain how to log into your eVisa.

If your email address is wrong, you might not be able to access it.

To fix this, you need to recover your account here: [update-your-details.homeoffice.gov.uk/account-recovery/help](https://update-your-details.homeoffice.gov.uk/account-recovery/help)

## What to do if you need more help with your eVisa

If you do not receive your login details, or can't access your eVisa:

- Use the UKVI webchat by going to [www.gov.uk/evisa](https://www.gov.uk/evisa) and click "If you need help"
- Contact Migrant Help on **07483 170100** or [evisa@migranthelpuk.org](mailto:evisa@migranthelpuk.org)

Report errors as soon as possible here: [www.gov.uk/report-error-evisa](https://www.gov.uk/report-error-evisa).

Ask any questions on the eVisa webchat here: [ukimmigration-support-webchat.homeoffice.gov.uk/evisa](https://ukimmigration-support-webchat.homeoffice.gov.uk/evisa).

You can also ask at the hotel reception – they can contact the AMLO team for support.

# Set up a bank account

You should set up a bank account as soon as possible. This will be how you receive benefits (money from the government) and your salary (when you start working).

If you want to visit a bank in person, Islington Council recommend Lloyds Bank on 19-20 Upper St, London N1 0PJ.

## What you need to bring

- Your phone number and email address
- One proof of identity
- One proof of address

Examples of proof of identity (choose one):

- Passport
- eVisa
- Immigration status document

Examples of proof of address (choose one):

- Letter confirming your address from your hotel provider or a professional at your local authority (Islington Council)
- An employment contract or payslip

If you need help with obtaining a proof of address, ask the hotel staff. They will contact Islington Council's team to help you get one.

# Claiming benefits

Universal Credit is a monthly payment from the government. It helps people who are out of work, cannot work or are on low income. You do not have to pay it back. Universal Credit includes a standard monthly allowance, plus extra money for housing, children, caring responsibilities and living with an illness or disability.

It is important you apply as soon you get your eVisa. This money can help you to pay your rent and expenses before finding a job or add to your income if you earn a low wage.

You must have a bank account to receive Universal Credit. You can start the application process for Universal Credit without a bank account, but it must be ready before your first payment.

**If you are over 66** you should apply for 'Pension Credit' instead. It is similar to Universal Credit but may offer better support.

## How to claim Universal Credit – for residents aged 65 and under

- Create an account online: [www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start](http://www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start)
- You will need:
  - An email address
  - Access to a phone
  - A bank account (you can add your bank details after applying if you don't have one yet)
- Citizens Advice can help you apply: call 0800 144 8444, Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm. Tell them you need help applying for Universal Credit. Ask for an interpreter if you need one.
- If you need help with your claim or cannot claim online, you can claim by phone through the Universal Credit helpline: **0800 328 5644** (this phone number is free to call).
- Your first payment usually arrives in about 5 weeks.
- Check you online 'to do' list every day. It is important to complete all tasks and attend appointments. Missing anything could stop your payments.
- Find more information here: [www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim)

## How to claim Pension Credit - for residents aged 66 and over

- Create an application online: [apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/apply-citizen-ui/start](http://apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/apply-citizen-ui/start)
- You will need:
  - National Insurance number
  - Details about any income, savings, and investments
  - Your bank account information (including sort code and account number)
- If you need help with your application, you can call **0800 99 1234** (this phone number is free to call) to apply for Pension Credit. This line is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm. They can also fill in the application form for you over the phone. Ask for an interpreter if you need one.
- Find more information here: [www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim)

**To claim benefits, will need one of the below to prove your identity. Examples include**

- eVisa – you must be able to generate a sharecode. Log-in in advance, and check that you can access your account and the details are correct.
- Driving licence
- Passport
- Debit or credit card
- Payslip or P60

**You will need to provide information on which of the following applies to you**

- Your current housing (proof of asylum accommodation – this can be your notice to vacate letter, proof of address letter, or any other letter with your hotel address on)
- If you have a job - earnings (payslips)
- Any disability or health condition that might impact your ability to work
- Any savings you may have

**Further support with claiming benefits**

You can also get help applying for Universal Credit and other government benefits (if you have medical conditions or other needs) from Islington's Income Maximisation Service (iMAX). The phone number is free to call: **0207 527 8600**, or you can email at [claimit@islington.gov.uk](mailto:claimit@islington.gov.uk).

More information on what universal credit is and how much you could get is available at: [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/benefits/universal-credit/how-much-is-universal-credit](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/benefits/universal-credit/how-much-is-universal-credit)

# Search for housing

## Finding somewhere to live after leaving hotel accommodation

Securing housing is a priority. This can be difficult due to the national housing crisis and the high cost of living, especially for those in receipt of housing allowance within universal credit.

If you are under 35, you will receive the shared accommodation rate of housing allowance rather than the standard rate, this is a lower amount which can limit options.

The first housing you find may not be your permanent home, but it's an important step towards building a stable future. Therefore, it is important to go into this process with an open mind.

There are different ways you can search for accommodation. Islington Council can support people at risk of homelessness. If the council's offer does not suit your needs, you may need to look for accommodation in the private rented sector (PRS) yourself (for example, through Open Rent), or stay with friends or family if possible.

## How Islington Council supports people who are at risk of homelessness

Islington Council homelessness services are designed to prevent homelessness. This means that you will be provided with assistance to secure one suitable accommodation option. If you do not accept this accommodation, it is likely that Islington Council will not be able to offer you further support with your housing.

It can be difficult to have limited options, but it is important to understand that avoiding homelessness is a priority. Once you have a stable place to live, you can plan for the future and decide where you would like to live in the long term.

## How to approach Islington Council for housing support

- **As soon as you receive your decision** on your refugee status you must present as homeless to Islington Council. You can do this in person at Islington Central Hub, 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR. It is best to approach in the morning between 9am and 11am.
- You will need to bring with you:
  - ARC card
  - Proof that you currently live in the hotel (any letter that you have received to the hotel)
  - Proof of your positive decision (decision letter)
  - Evidence that you have claimed universal credit (show that you can log into your account)
  - Any medical evidence you have (for example, medical summary from GP)

- *You do **not** need to have an eviction letter. Your proof of positive decision is enough.*

**If you leave it too late to go through the appointment process, you will not have time for your housing advice and options to be explored. Instead, you may be referred to the 'homeless on the day' team.**

**Chances of relieving homelessness on the day are small, and options are often limited to shelters or hostels.**

### **What to expect if you come to Islington Council to ask for housing support**

- First, the Initial Assessments team will gather information about your case to check that you are eligible for housing support.

You will need to complete housing forms which include your personal information. You will need to complete a medical needs form. It is important to share any health issues that could impact your housing needs. You can ask the housing officer to help you to fill out the form with a translator if you need support.

- After up to 10 working days, you will be assigned a Homelessness Prevention and Relief Officer from the Prevention and Relief team.
- If you do not hear from the Prevention and Relief team 10 working days after you have seen the Initial Assessments team, please email [matthew.hill2@islington.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.hill2@islington.gov.uk).
- Once you have been assigned a Prevention and Relief officer, it can take 3-5 days to receive an appointment for housing advice and options. If you do not receive an appointment, please email your housing officer.
- Your allocated Prevention and Relief officer will refer you for viewings to help you to find a suitable property through the Private Rented Scheme.
- If you are over 35, this is likely to be in an outer London borough.
- If you are under 35, the housing options may be more limited due to the lower amount of housing allowance with universal credit. Accommodation is likely to be shared, and outside of London.
- The rent for this will be paid through universal credit. Your allocated Prevention and Relief housing officer will support you with paying your rent through universal credit.
- Islington Council can also support you in securing suitable accommodation that you find yourself (for example providing help with deposit or rent in advance payments). Please talk to your housing officer if you would like to do this.

- If your family are going to join you in the UK, you should accept an offer of accommodation even if there is only space for you. You will need to approach the council again when your family arrive. Please let your housing officer know if your family are planning to join you.

## Finding a property independently

1. Check how much housing allowance you will get from Universal credit to work out how much rent you can afford.
  - a. Go to [lha-direct.voa.gov.uk](http://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk)
  - b. If under 35, select shared accommodation, if over 35, select one bedroom
  - c. Enter the postcode of the area you are looking in
  - d. This gives you the weekly allowance. To calculate the monthly allowance, multiply the weekly rate by 52, and then divide it by 12. This is the maximum price your rent can be if you are on universal credit and not employed.
2. Search for accommodation:  
Not all properties accept payment from Universal Credit (also known as DSS). Properties that do can be found on the following websites:
  - [www.openrent.co.uk/properties-to-rent/london-uk](http://www.openrent.co.uk/properties-to-rent/london-uk) (select 'accepting DSS' in the advanced filter)
  - [www.spareroom.co.uk/dss-rooms-to-rent](http://www.spareroom.co.uk/dss-rooms-to-rent)
  - [www.lettingaproperty.com/private-landlords-accept-dss](http://www.lettingaproperty.com/private-landlords-accept-dss)
  - [www.dssmove.co.uk](http://www.dssmove.co.uk)
  - [www.nuroa.co.uk/rent/dss-welcome-london](http://www.nuroa.co.uk/rent/dss-welcome-london)
  - [www.gumtree.com/flats-houses/property-to-rent/uk/london/srpsearch+dss](http://www.gumtree.com/flats-houses/property-to-rent/uk/london/srpsearch+dss)
  - [www.newsnow.co.uk/classifieds/houses-flats-for-rent/dss-properties-to-rent-in-london](http://www.newsnow.co.uk/classifieds/houses-flats-for-rent/dss-properties-to-rent-in-london)
  - [dsslocal.com](http://dsslocal.com)
  - [movingsoon.co.uk/dss-accepted](http://movingsoon.co.uk/dss-accepted)

When looking on these websites, you must filter properties to only show those that 'accepts DSS' to make sure that the landlord will allow payments from benefits. You can then filter your search by area, price and number of bedrooms.

The London Lettings Network is a useful tool that lists all the rental properties in London which accept housing benefit. You can access it here: [housingjustice.org.uk/london-lettings-network](http://housingjustice.org.uk/london-lettings-network).

### Tips:

- It is useful to look for multiple properties at the same time because properties get rented out quickly, and some advertised properties might become unavailable.
- Make sure they are available to rent before your eviction date or as soon as possible and available to rent for at least 12 months.

- It is good to look with friends or people you know as this will make the search process easier. Renting can be more enjoyable if you live with people you know.
- For your first home, it is best to look outside of Islington or London for the most affordable accommodation.

Some of the cheapest areas to live in London and their average monthly rent for a room (according to Sparrerom, April 2025):

- E6 (East Ham), £775
- N9 (Lower Edmonton), £778
- E12 (Manor Park), £781
- E4 (Chingford), £785
- SE2 (Abbey Wood), £813
- E7 (Forest Gate), £813
- SE25 (Norwood), £814
- SE18 (Crystal Palace), £820
- N11 (New Southgate), £822
- E11 (Leytonstone), £824

If you find somewhere you like, you can request a viewing and send it to your housing support officer to tell them you are going to visit the property. They can help you with next steps if you agree you want to live at this property.

## Emergency support & further advice

Finding housing can be very difficult, and sometimes, things don't go to plan. Below are some resources that can help you if you have to leave the hotel and have not managed to make plans for future accommodation.

- **Atlas** - [www.lhfatlas.org.uk](http://www.lhfatlas.org.uk) This interactive website provides a map of different homelessness services across London. The maps tool displays information including locations of day centres, health services and accommodation.

### If you become street homeless, there are charities that can provide support:

- **Street link** – if you are rough sleeping, register yourself as a rough sleeper to access support during severe weather warnings and outreach services via **0300 500 0914** or [thestreetlink.org.uk/location](http://thestreetlink.org.uk/location).
- **Margins** – run two weekly crisis drop-ins, offering food, a hot shower, and support around housing and benefits issues. Drop-in on Monday or Wednesday 11am-2pm at 19b Compton Terrace, Islington, N1 2UN. Phone: 0207 704 9050, Email: [marginsdropin@unionchapel.org.uk](mailto:marginsdropin@unionchapel.org.uk).
- **Shelter** - [0808 800 4444](tel:08088004444) advice helpline open 8am-8pm Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm Saturday-Sunday. Interpreters available.
- **Crisis** – offer support with searching for somewhere to live, employment and wellbeing. They recommend that you find out what Crisis can offer you in London by emailing them first, at [london@crisis.org.uk](mailto:london@crisis.org.uk) before visiting. You can visit their Crisis Skylight centre at 50 – 52 Commercial Street, London, E1 6LT, Monday-Friday between 9:30am-4:30pm.
- **The Manna** – drop-in support offering advice, food, hygiene facilities and activities. Tuesday 2pm-7pm, Thursday 10am-4pm, Friday 10am-4pm at St Stephen's Church, 17 Canonbury Road, London, N1 2DF.
- **Streets Kitchen** – offering food and other essentials to those experiencing homelessness. Find your nearest location here: [www.streetskitchen.org/locations/london](http://www.streetskitchen.org/locations/london)

### Specifically for LGBTQ+ people:

- **Stonewall Housing** – support LGBTQ+ people experiencing or facing homelessness. Call for free housing-related advice Monday-Friday 10am-1pm 0800 6 404 404. For further housing advice you can refer yourself by filling in this form: [stonewallhousing.org/referralform/](http://stonewallhousing.org/referralform/). Please be aware they do not provide or have access to emergency accommodation.
- **AKT** – for LGBTQ+ young people, please see below.

## Specifically for young people:

- **AKT** – provide support for LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 that are at risk of homelessness or currently experiencing homelessness. They can provide emergency support, housing advice, support navigating benefits and budgeting, and finding community. You can email them at [gethelp@akt.org.uk](mailto:gethelp@akt.org.uk), or live chat on their website Monday-Friday 10am-5pm [www.akt.org.uk/get-immediate-support/](http://www.akt.org.uk/get-immediate-support/).
- **New Horizons Youth Centre** – support young people (16-25) who are experiencing homelessness. Day centre is 68 Chalton St, London, NW1 1JR and is open Monday to Friday between 10:30am and 4:00pm. Tuesday is appointment only, but any other day you can walk in.
- **Centrepoint** – support helpline to get advice on your housing situation and advice for 16–25-year-olds. Call free on [0808 800 0661](tel:08088000661), Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm, and ask for a translator if you need one. Or message via WhatsApp on [07557 255 965](tel:07557255965), Monday to Friday, 9am-4.30pm.
- **Depaul Night Shelter** – a national homelessness charity with a focus on young people offering a range of support including:
  - Housing advice - please call on 0800 160 1650 to make an appointment to visit them at Endeavour Centre, Sherborne House, 34 Decima Street, London SE1 4QQ.
  - Nightstop London: offers emergency accommodation for you people with trained volunteer hosts. Email: [nightstop.london@depaulcharity.org.uk](mailto:nightstop.london@depaulcharity.org.uk) or call on 0800 160 1650.
  - Mind Connect London: sometimes facing homelessness can contribute to or cause mental health problems. To refer yourself for a free counselling service for under 25s, call 0800 160 1650.

# Finding employment

It can be very difficult to cover all of your expenses with Universal Credit, so it is important to find a job to help you support yourself. Universal Credit will give you advice on finding work.

Volunteering can be a good way to get into employment, by learning skills, practising English, and building your networks.

**Voluntary Action Islington** can help you to find a volunteering opportunity that suits you. They have drop-in sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays 1pm to 4pm at 200a Pentonville Road, N1 9JP. You can find more information here: [vai.org.uk/volunteering/find-volunteering-opportunities/](http://vai.org.uk/volunteering/find-volunteering-opportunities/). Call 020 7832 5826 or email [volunteer@vai.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@vai.org.uk) for an appointment outside of the drop-in days.

The **Job Centre** can help you prepare, search and progress in work. You can find your local Job Centre at [find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk/search.php](http://find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk/search.php).

**Islington Council** has a Refugee Employability Programme that provides support to refugees and people seeking asylum in the borough. [www.islington.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/support-finding-work](http://www.islington.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/support-finding-work)

They can help you to:

- get your professional degree recognised in the UK (validation)
- find work
- find training to develop skills
- understand the UK job market
- learn about barriers that may stop you getting work
- make a plan to overcome any problems

They will invite you to employability workshops. All new referrals will have to attend 5 weekly workshops, and continue living in Islington, before you may be given your own caseworker who can offer 1-1 support including:

- skills to help you get work
- help finding out what work you want to do
- training in professional skills
- talking to employers
- information, advice, guidance and being on your side (advocacy).

## How to get a referral

- Ask for a referral to the refugee employability programme from an Islington Council Officer at our drop in or via email.
- Self-refer by emailing [islingtonworking@islington.gov.uk](mailto:islingtonworking@islington.gov.uk)

## Other employment opportunities for refugees

There are some organisations that you can self-refer to for employment support. These include:

- **Breaking Barriers** – offer personalised employment support, education programme, skills building and workshops, re-accreditation support and language tuition. Apply for support here: [breaking-barriers.co.uk/refugee-support/apply-for-support/](https://breaking-barriers.co.uk/refugee-support/apply-for-support/)
- **Hillside Clubhouse** – specialist support for Islington residents with mental health conditions in need of help preparing for or finding work. You can complete the self-referral form linked on this page: [www.hillsideclubhouse.org.uk/mhwi](https://www.hillsideclubhouse.org.uk/mhwi) or email [mhworking@hillsideclubhouse.org.uk](mailto:mhworking@hillsideclubhouse.org.uk).
- **Breadwinners** – programme of support for refugees aged 24 and under, including paid experience working on a bread market stall, ESOL, qualifications, network building and a mentor. Apply to the London scheme via the form linked on this page: [www.breadwinners.org.uk/breadwinners](https://www.breadwinners.org.uk/breadwinners)
- **Refugee Council** – there are different programmes available based on your previous experience. It can include advice, support to discuss career options, training, and access to opportunities. Read more information here: [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-help/refugees-into-jobs/](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-help/refugees-into-jobs/) or email [rjj@refugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:rjj@refugeecouncil.org.uk).
- **Refugee Action** – Pathways to Work is a project providing pre-employment support to refugees across England. You must have an English level of Entry 3 and upwards. Refer yourself for their support here: [www.refugee-action.org.uk/pathways-to-work-self-referral-form/](https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/pathways-to-work-self-referral-form/).

# Receive your New Refugee Grant payment

If you have recently received a positive decision on your asylum claim whilst staying in an Asylum Contingency Hotel or Dispersal Accommodation in Islington, you may be eligible for a £200 grant from Islington Council. This can help while you are moving out of your accommodation.

## You must have:

- Been granted refugee status and;
- Been living in an Asylum Contingency Hotel or Dispersal Accommodation in Islington when you received refugee status.

## To collect the card:

- Email [refugee.grant@islington.gov.uk](mailto:refugee.grant@islington.gov.uk) with the subject “New Refugee Grant Request” and your name
- Wait for an email with an appointment time to collect your card from 222 Upper Street
- **At the appointment you must bring:**
  - Photographic ID (e.g. ARC, eVisa, Passport, Driver’s License)
  - An eviction letter addressed to you at an Asylum Contingency Hotel or Dispersal Accommodation in Islington

## The cards:

- The pre-paid cards contain £200 and will be closed once all money is used. They are not a bank account.
- The card can be used to withdraw cash and pay via contactless payment or chip and pin.
- There may be a delay between receipt of the card and the card being available for online use.

# Settling into a new area

Once you have found somewhere to live, it is a good idea to connect with your local services to help you get settled in your new area. Before you go, you can ask professionals or charities working in the hotel to help you with this.

- **Register with a GP.** Your GP should be near where you live. If you have moved to a different area, you must register for a new GP. They will be able to get medical records from your previous GP.

You can find a new GP closer to your new home by entering your postcode here: [www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp). You will need to fill in a registration form on the GP surgery's website. If they do not have online registration, it will explain how to register at the GP.

- **Tell your bank about your change of address.** You can usually do this in your bank's app. Select your profile/settings icon and follow the process on screen to change your address. You will have to confirm that your identity using your password, or you might need to take a selfie. Changes usually take 48 hours to complete. If you need help, go into your local branch.
- **Find out who your local council is.** You can do this by entering your postcode here: [www.gov.uk/find-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-local-council). Once you know your council, you can look at their website to find out more about local service they offer.
- **Finding local community.** It is important to find your community to help you to feel settled and at home in your new accommodation.
  - Religious groups – on google maps, search for '[your religious space, e.g. church or mosque] near me'. This will show you some local options and often will link to their websites so that you can learn more.
  - Cultural groups – if you google your nationality and your local area, e.g. 'Iranian community group, London', a range of options may come up. Often, there are also community groups if you search on Facebook.
  - Volunteering – this can be a great way to get to know your new local community. You can google 'volunteering opportunities near me', or search on your local council's website.
  - Library – to find your nearest library, enter your postcode here: [www.gov.uk/local-library-services](http://www.gov.uk/local-library-services). It is useful to get a free library card if you would like to borrow books or films. You can ask for this at the library reception.
- **ESOL** – if you want to attend English classes near your new home, you can use this website to find a class near you. There are options for informal or formal classes, inside or outside of London. [www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/english-esol-classes-london/esol-outside-london](http://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/english-esol-classes-london/esol-outside-london)