

# One Tower Hamlets

Tackling inequality

Strengthening cohesion

**No Recourse  
to Public Funds:**

A guide for  
service users

Building community  
leadership & personal responsibility



TOWER HAMLETS

## Introduction

This brief guide tells you about the support and treatment you can expect to receive from Tower Hamlets Council if you have no recourse to public funds. We are committed to helping the most vulnerable members of the community receive the advice and support they need.

If you have no recourse to public funds, the law in this country does not give you the right to financial or other forms of support from government agencies, **except in cases where your human rights under the Human Rights Act may be violated.** The Human Rights Act (HRA) protects you against the worst forms of hardship and abuse and the Council is obliged to act if we believe your human rights are under threat. You need to make sure that you tell us about anything that may be relevant.

Tower Hamlets Council aims to ensure that where you are entitled to assistance – either under the HRA or under other legislation – this will be provided. We guarantee that you will be listened to and your concerns will be taken seriously. However, we also need to act within the law so if we are unable to help you further, we will point you towards other organisations which may be able to do so.

# One Tower Hamlets: tackling inequality, strengthening cohesion and building community leadership and personal responsibility

Do I have no recourse to public funds?

**Page 4** will give you advice on whether you have no recourse to public funds.

What about my human rights?

**Page 5** will tell you how you may be entitled to public funds if your human rights have or may be breached.

What can I expect from the Council if I have no recourse to public funds?

**Page 7** explains how you should expect to be treated by the Council if you have no recourse to public funds.

Where can I get help if I have no recourse to public funds?

**Page 8** lists organisations that will be able to assist you with advice about health, domestic violence and general legal issues.

## Do I have no recourse to public funds?

No recourse to public funds means you are subject to immigration controls and have no automatic right to receive financial assistance from the state – for example, with welfare benefits or public housing.

If one of the four categories below applies to you then you may have no recourse to public funds:

- ⊙ You, or any dependents, have been granted refugee status by another EEA State (an EEA State is any country in the European Economic Area)
- ⊙ You are a EEA national or a EEA national dependent who are not exercising a treaty right
- ⊙ You are a failed asylum seeker, or a dependent, who has failed to comply with removal directions
- ⊙ You are unlawfully present in the United Kingdom

If you are permitted to work while in the UK and are paying National Insurance, you may be entitled to some of the following benefits:

- ⊙ Contribution based job seeker's allowance
- ⊙ Incapacity benefit
- ⊙ Widow's benefit and bereavement allowance
- ⊙ Guardian allowance
- ⊙ Statutory maternity and paternity pay

Healthcare and education also do not count as public funds so you should have access to these services. Your immigration status may affect whether you are eligible for free secondary healthcare.

## What about my human rights?

Even if you do not appear to be eligible for financial support because you have no recourse to public funds, the Council is obliged to consider whether your rights, under the Human Rights Act, are being violated or are in danger of being violated. We have direct responsibility for ensuring that our actions, or lack of action, will not lead to a human rights violation. We take this responsibility very seriously and we will do our best to make sure that your fundamental human needs are respected.

In the case of European Economic Area (EEA) Nationals, we also need to consider whether it may be necessary to act in order to prevent a breach of rights under the Community Treaties.

When we carry out a human rights assessment, we are obliged to consider a number of factors, including whether you have family or private life in the UK, whether a failure to assist would be a breach of your human rights, and whether you can be returned home without causing a breach of your human rights.

It could be a breach of your human rights if you are subject to:

- ⊙ Domestic violence
- ⊙ Inhuman or degrading treatment
- ⊙ Lack of treatment for a medical condition, including mental health conditions
- ⊙ Separation from your child or family
- ⊙ Unfair treatment by a public body
- ⊙ Disruption of your personal dignity or private life

This is not a complete list, and some of the issues are complicated. You are advised to seek legal advice if you are in any doubt.

It is important for you to tell us about any concerns you have which may fall under the Human Rights Act. We are obliged to help you in such cases and we will do our best to ensure that you feel able to raise these concerns, and to take them seriously.

## What can I expect from the Council if I have no recourse to public funds?

Council staff should treat you humanely and respectfully, regardless of your country of origin or immigration status.

Council Officers will explain to you the procedures of the assessment process and the potential outcomes of your case. If there is anything which is unclear, or if you would like to have an interpreter or advocate present, we will do our best to assist.

In cases where there is no duty on us to provide support, the Council will help you find other organisations which may be able to assist.

If you have an address in another borough, we will assist you in finding the details of the Council responsible for helping you.

## Where can I get help if I have no recourse to public funds?



### Advice and Advocacy

**Praxis** – Drop-in open Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10am - 1pm

**Tel:** 020 7729 7985

**Web:** [www.praxis.org.uk](http://www.praxis.org.uk)

**Address:** Pott Street, London E2 0EF

**Red Cross Refugee Unit** – By appointment only

**Tel:** 020 7704 5670

**Web:** [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

**Address:** Aztec Row, 5 Berners Road, Angel, London N1 0PW

**Tower Hamlets Law Centre** – By appointment only

**Tel:** 020 7247 8998

**Web:** [www.thlc.co.uk](http://www.thlc.co.uk)

**Address:** 214 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ



### Access to Health and Mental Health

**Project: London** – Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1pm - 5pm

**Tel:** 07974 616852/020 7515 7534

**Web:** [www.medecinsdumonde.org.uk](http://www.medecinsdumonde.org.uk)

**Address:** Pott Street, London E2 0EF

**Tower Hamlets MIND** – Monday to Friday 10am - 5pm

**Tel:** 020 8519 2122

**Email:** [info@mithn.org.uk](mailto:info@mithn.org.uk)

**Address:** 13 Whitethorn Street, London, London E3 4DA

**Health E1** – By appointment only

**Tel:** 020 7247 0090

**Web:** [www.healthe1practice.nhs.uk/](http://www.healthe1practice.nhs.uk/)

**Address:** Homeless Medical Centre, 9-11 Brick Lane, London E1 6PU



**Mapesbury Clinic** – Appointments by referral only

**Tel:** 020 7644 6253

**Web:** [www.mapesburyclinic.org.uk](http://www.mapesburyclinic.org.uk)

**Address:** 20 Lonsdale Road, London NW6 6RD

**Helen Bamber Foundation** – Appointments by referral only

**Tel:** 020 7631 4492

**Web:** [www.helenbamber.org](http://www.helenbamber.org)

**Address:** The Helen Bamber Foundation, 5 Museum House,  
25 Museum Street, London WC1A 1JT



## **Domestic Violence**

**The Sojourner Project**

**Tel:** 0207 840 7147

**Web:** [www.eaves4women.co.uk](http://www.eaves4women.co.uk)



## **Meals and Food Parcels**

**Tower Hamlets Foodbank** – Appointments by referral only

**Tel:** 020 7680 2779

**Web:** [towerhamletsfoodbank.org.uk](http://towerhamletsfoodbank.org.uk)

**Address:** Tower Hamlets Foodbank, 302 The Highway,  
London E1W 3DH

**Hackney Migrant Centre** – Wednesdays 12:30pm - 3:30pm.

**Tel:** 07504332706

**Web:** [www.hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk](http://www.hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk)

**Address:** St. Mary's New Church Rooms, Spensley Walk (off  
Stoke Newington Church Street), London N16 9ES

**Jesuit Refugee Service** – By appointment only

**Tel:** 020 7488 7310

**Web:** [www.jrs.net](http://www.jrs.net)

**Address:** The Hurtado Jesuit Centre, 2 Chandler Street,  
London E1W 2QT



## Homelessness and Day Centres

**Crisis** – Monday to Friday, 2pm -7pm, Saturday and Sunday 11am -5pm

**Tel:** 020 7426 3838

**Web:** [www.crisis.org.uk/](http://www.crisis.org.uk/)

**Address:** 66 Commercial Street, London, London E1 6LT

**Dellow Centre** – Monday to Friday 10am -12:30pm

**Tel:** 020 7375 0020

**Web:** [providencero.org.uk](http://providencero.org.uk)

**Address:** Dellow Centre, 82 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA

**Whitechapel Mission** – Daily 6am -11am

**Tel:** 020 7247 8280

**Web:** [www.whitechapel.org.uk](http://www.whitechapel.org.uk)

**Address:** 212 Whitechapel Road, London, London E1 1BJ



## Asylum Support

**Asylum Support Appeals Project** – Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2pm -4pm

**Advice Line:** 020 7729 3042

**Web:** [www.asaproject.org](http://www.asaproject.org)

**Address:** Asylum Support Appeals Project, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, E2 6HG

**Refugee Council** – Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays 9.30am -1pm and 2pm -5pm, Wednesdays: 2pm -5pm

**Tel:** 0808 808 2255

**Web:** [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

# Notes

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