



South Tyneside Council



Advice for **homeless** people aged 16 and 17

A step by step guide to finding a safe place to stay.

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR TOP PRIORITY

Knowing you might not have a safe place to stay can be scary and confusing. We will explain your options clearly so you can make your best decisions. We want you to be fully informed and involved in every step of the process.

Step 1 - Contact

If you are homeless, you can make contact with several different agencies or settings, including

- Children's Services
- Other statutory or voluntary agencies
- Housing
- Accommodation providers

Step 2 - Interview

We will start with an interview/chat, asking you questions and getting to know your situation better. This helps us figure out the best way to support you.

We will cover:

- Why you need a safe place to stay
- Confirmation of your age
- Your family situation
- Any challenges you are facing
- Who you can count on for support

We want to understand your situation fully to find the best way to help.

Step 3 - Decision

We will use the information you give us to decide the best way we can help.

Here is what could happen:

- Go back home (if it is safe): If things can work out at home or with family or friends, we will help you plan for that.
- Staying with friends or family: If there is someone you can stay with safely, we will help connect you and offer any support you might need.
- Finding a new place (if you cannot stay with family or friends): If going home or staying with someone you know is not an option, we will help find you a safe and secure place to live.
- Getting the help you need: No matter what happens, we will connect you with any support services you might need.

Step 4 - Assessment of Homeless

Children's Services will need to confirm that:

- You are aged 16 or 17 and, in a situation, where you might need our help.
- You are within the Local Authority area and need a safe place to stay.
- You do not have someone to look after you, you are lost or alone, or the person caring for you is no longer able to.
- You are at risk of being unsafe if you do not have a place to stay.

We also need to know:

- Your thoughts on what would be best for you?
- What consideration is given to your wishes and feelings if someone who cares for you disagrees?

Step 5 - Temporary accommodation provided whilst we find somewhere permanent for you to live

If things cannot be worked out at home right away and you need a safe place to stay urgently, we will find you temporary accommodation to prevent you from being homeless. This means we will look after you for a short time while we decide on the best long-term plan for you.

Looking after you means providing a safe place to live, ensuring you have food and clothes, and any other support you might need. We might also work with other services to find the best outcome for you, while considering what kind of support will be best for you in the long run.

Step 6 - Finding a place to stay that meets your needs

While you are in temporary accommodation, we will work with you to find a long-term plan.

This includes:

1. A safe and permanent place: We will explore options like returning home, staying with family or friends, or finding a new home.
2. Support Your Needs: We will assess your needs for food, clothing and other help.
3. Informed Choices: We will explain your options and rights clearly so you can make informed decisions, even if you do not choose the stay with Children's services.

Step 7 - Pathways

Based on your needs and what we discussed, here are 4 options for your next steps:

1. Return home or stay with family and friends (if safe for you to do so).
2. Get help finding a safe, independent living situation (may include applying for housing assistance).
3. Get support from Children's Services in a safe living agreement (if they become your legal guardian)
4. Finding a safe place to live on your own with some ongoing support from Children's Services.

During this process, you will be offered an advocate. Your advocate will be your helper, they will listen to what you want and need. They will make sure your voice is heard when deciding where you will live.

For further information:

For more help and support please use the contact details listed below:



0191 424 5010



frontdoor@southtyneside.gov.uk



**Town Hall and Civic Offices, Westoe Road,
South Shields, NE33 2RL**

If you know someone who needs this information in a different format, for example large print, Braille or a different language, please contact Marketing and Communication on 0191 424 7385.