

# Getting Help from Social Services

## Standards that you can expect from us

When you contact us you can expect to be treated with courtesy, honesty and respect.

- We will work with you and involve you in making any decisions.
- We will treat you fairly on the basis of your needs regardless of your race, religion, gender, age, disability or sexuality.
- We will provide information in other languages and formats.
- We will provide interpreters in other languages.

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## **What help is available?**

Social Services aims to help vulnerable adults from all ages and backgrounds live as independently and safely as possible. People may be vulnerable because of their physical disability or ill-health, their mental health, their learning difficulties or any combination of the above. Often their situation is made worse by poverty or housing problems. They may also care for other people.

This leaflet explains how we decide which services we can provide for each person who asks us for help. This decision is based on a Government policy, “Fair Access to Care Services”. It has to be followed by every Social Services Department in the country.

It is important to remember that, even if we cannot provide funded community care services in a situation, there are other ways that we can help. We can provide information and advice about staying independent and safe, or refer people on to other groups for specialised help. We are working more and more closely with Housing, voluntary and private community groups and the Health Service to enable individuals to remain living in the community.

## **Eligibility criteria for care and support**

### **Assessing your needs**

If you are finding it difficult to cope independently, you can ask Social Services for help (the contact numbers are at the end of this leaflet). A worker from Social Services will arrange to meet you to find out more about your needs and situations. This is called a ‘community care assessment; and is usually done within your own home. We will gather information about you, listen carefully to your views, and respect your wishes about confidentiality. After this, we will make a decision on which of your needs we can meet and discuss with you the services we may be able to provide to meet your needs.

## Deciding your eligibility in Waltham Forest

We use eligibility criteria to make sure that services are provided fairly to support those people who need them most. The Department of Health has developed an eligibility criteria framework for all Social Services Departments to use when deciding who can get services from Social Services. This framework is called “Fair Access to Care Services” and is based on an individuals’ needs and the risk these pose to their ability to stay independent.

The risks to your independence are split into four bands:

- **Critical** risk to independence
- **Substantial** risk to independence
- Moderate risk to independence
- Low risk to independence.

In general when we provide an assessment we will look ahead up to six months to see if your situation is likely to change, as well as thinking about the risks you are facing at the moment.

- Waltham Forest Social Services, like almost all other Social Services in London, provide funded community care services for **Critical** and **Substantial** risks only.
- Waltham Forest can also provide short-term services (for 7 weeks or less) to stabilise risks that are Moderate now but might otherwise increase and become Substantial or Critical.
- Apart from the above, if risks are assessed as Moderate or Low, these will not be eligible for funded services.
- If we cannot provide a funded service we will still try to help you address these risks by providing advice and information about other sources of support.

# What the risk bandings mean

## The Critical band

This band includes all risks that may either threaten life or result in serious harm to you or those around you if you do not receive social care help. This includes things such as:

- Health and safety
  - There could be a serious risk to life if no social care is provided
  - Health problems could develop or become worse which will result in a serious risk to life if no social care is provided
  - Neglect or physical or mental abuse has or may happen which could result in serious harm or a risk to life
- Independence
  - There will be reduced or no choice or control over immediate surroundings which may result in a serious risk to life
  - Specific personal care or domestic needs will not be completed which will result in a serious risk to life
- Social and family inclusion
  - Without help vital work, education and social needs will not be met resulting in a serious risk to life
  - Family and social relationships vital to health will not be maintained resulting in a serious risk to life

## The Substantial band

This band includes all risks that may severely reduce or limit independence and, without assistance, result in a risk of harm or injury to the person or others around them. This band includes things such as:

- Health and safety
  - There could be a high risk to life or health due to neglect or abuse
- Independence
  - The person will not be able to make a choice or influence their surroundings which may result in high risk to their life or health
  - **Many** of their personal care or domestic needs will not be met which may result in a high risk to life or overall health
- Social and family inclusion
  - **Many** areas of work, education or social needs will not be able to be met resulting in exclusion and high risk to life or health
  - **Many** family or social relationships important to the persons health will not be maintained resulting in high risk to life or health

## **The Moderate band**

This band includes all risks that may reduce your quality of life, reduce your independence or be of some risk to your health. This includes things such as:

- Health and safety
  - There are **some** health or impairment issues which could result in some risk to health
- Independence
  - You will not be able to have a choice or influence a number of aspects of their surroundings which will result in some risk to health
  - You may be unable to carry out some personal care or domestic needs which will result in some risk to health
- Social and family inclusion
  - Some areas of work, education and social needs will not be met resulting in some risk to health
  - Some areas of family and social relationships important to your health will not be maintained resulting in some risk to health

## The Low band

This band includes all health, mobility and impairment needs where there are no immediate risks to health. This includes things such as:

- Health and safety
  - There are **some** health or impairment issues which could result in low risk to health
- Independence
  - You will not be able to have a choice or influence one or two aspects of your surroundings which will result in low risk to health
  - You may be unable to carry out some personal care or domestic needs which will result in low risk to health
- Social and family inclusion
  - One or two areas of work, education and social needs will not be met resulting in low risk to health
  - One or two areas of family and social relationships important to the persons health will not be maintained resulting in low risk to health

If following your assessment of need you fall into the critical or substantial banding you will be eligible for care services to meet those needs that the local authority are responsible for.

## **Services that may help you**

### **Help in your home**

We have a range of services designed to help you live independently in the home and the community:

#### **Home care**

A carer can visit your home to help you with essential daily tasks such as bathing, dressing, preparing meals and shopping.

#### **Meals service**

You can have pre-prepared food delivered to your home. You can choose from a range of nutritious meals that cater for different dietary, religious and cultural needs.

#### **Equipment for daily living**

A wide range of equipment is available to help you with everyday tasks, including kitchen equipment, shower and bath chairs, grab rails, doorbells and alarms.

### **Help in the Community**

#### **Leisure and education activities**

You can take part in a variety of activities where you can learn new skills, enjoy yourself and meet other people. Activities include leisure and recreation, health education, training and work skills, and arts and crafts.

#### **Travel passes, free travel and disabled parking badges**

You might be eligible to apply for free travel on buses, reduced taxi fares and disabled parking badges. We can tell you more about these services and can help you make an application.

## **Help for extra needs**

### **Help with housing and residential care**

If you are no longer able to live by yourself or with family or friends, we can help you by arranging suitable accommodation that meets your needs.

### **Intermediate care at home**

Before deciding that you need 24-hour care, our Intermediate Care Team and residential units may help you to become more independent. For example, they can provide care if you have had an accident or left hospital.

### **A purpose-built home**

Supported housing is purpose built, or adapted, housing with the needs of its residents in mind. For example, the properties provide easy access for wheelchair users, and have support staff available.

### **A place in a residential care home**

We may be able to offer you a place in a residential care home if you need more intensive care, because of illness or disability, and need staff on hand to help you 24 hours a day.

### **Accommodation in a nursing home**

You can live in a nursing home if you need a lot of care and also need a nurse to be available at all times.

### **Continuing care**

If you have complicated health and nursing needs that need supervision by a health professional, you can apply for continuing care.

## **Direct payments**

### **Organising your own care**

If you are eligible for care services you can, if you want, organise your own care through the Direct Payments Scheme. This means that instead of Social Services arranging your care, we will give you money to arrange and organise service you have been assessed as needing. Direct Payments give you more choice about the care you are eligible for and more control over the care you receive.

For further information contact your Social Worker or one of the Social Services Access Offices listed on page 13 or call the Public Information Team on 020 8496 3231 and ask for our leaflet “Managing your own social care”.

### **Help for carers**

Many vulnerable people are helped to stay safe and independent by their family, friends or neighbours. People that provide essential help of this kind are described by Social Services as carers.

The support of carers should be recorded and acknowledged as part of an assessment. If carers are providing support that would leave the person they look after at Critical or Substantial risk if they were unable to care for them, the assessor should record the risk level accordingly.

Carers are also entitled to a separate assessment of their needs and may also be able to apply for a number of special services such as respite care. This means we will provide a Social Services carer either within your own home or in a community or residential setting if you prefer, to look after the person you care for. This will allow you to take a break from your caring responsibilities.

For more information about help and support for carers please call the Public Information Team on 020 8496 3231 and ask for our booklet “Caring for Carers”.

## **Charges for services**

People eligible for community care services will need to be assessed to work out what, if any, contribution they should make to the cost of their care. This depends on your individual financial situation.

There is a leaflet about this called “Community Care Charges” to get a copy contact Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000 and ask for the Financial Assessment Unit.

## **Adult protection**

It may appear to be a rare occurrence for adults to be abused – but sadly it does happen and perhaps more frequently than you would think.

If you think that someone you know has been abused, is being abused, or you think that they are at serious risk of being abused, you should tell someone about your concerns.

For further information contact your Social Worker or one of the Social Services Access Offices listed on page 13. Alternatively, contact Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000.

## **Seeing what’s on your file**

If you have had services provided to you by Waltham Forest Social Services and would like to see what information they hold on you, contact one of the Access Offices listed on page 13 and ask for the leaflet “Access to Personal Information”.

This leaflet will tell you:

- What information we might keep about you
- Who might see this information
- How you can see the information yourself
- What to do if you think the information is wrong

## **Making a complaint**

To ensure that you get all the support and care you need from us and that we have made the right decisions, please let us know if you are unhappy with either the service or the support you're getting from us, or the outcome of the assessment.

We understand that in some cases you might feel uncomfortable talking to us about how you feel. If you do, then you can speak to someone in our Complaints Unit on 020 8496 3250.

You can get a copy of our complaints leaflet from your local Social Services Office, your local library or from the Complaints Unit on 020 8496 3250. You can also make an online complaint from our web site by visiting [www.lbwf.gov.uk/care/adult\\_complaints.stm](http://www.lbwf.gov.uk/care/adult_complaints.stm)

## **Other sources of information**

We produce a charter called 'Better Care, Higher Standards'. The charter is for adults who have difficulties because of old age, long-term illness or disability, and for their carers. It tells you what standards of care you can expect from health, housing and Social Services and what to do if things go wrong with your service. To get a copy of the charter, call the Public Information Team on 020 8496 3231.

## **How to contact us**

To enquire about services for people who are over 18 and live Chingford or Walthamstow, contact:

**Please note:** Due to building works being carried out the First Response Team - North have moved to a temporary address as follows:

### **First Response Team - North**

47 Gainsford Road

Walthamstow E17 6QB

Tel 020 8496 3000 (via Waltham Forest Direct)

Fax 020 8496 2011

Minicom 020 8496 2002

To enquire about services for people who are over 18 and live in Leyton or Leytonstone, contact:

**First Response Team - South**

Leytonstone Access Office

90 Crownfield Road

Leytonstone E15 2AJ

Tel 020 8496 3000 (via Waltham Forest Direct)

Fax 020 8496 1203

Minicom 020 8496 1249

**Adults with Learning Disabilities**

To enquire about services for adults with learning disabilities contact:

**Learning Disabilities Independence Living Team**

47 Gainsford Road

Walthamstow E17 6QB

Tel 020 8496 3000 (via Waltham Forest Direct)

**For people affected by HIV/AIDS**

**HIV Care Management Team**

154 Blackhorse Road

Walthamstow E17 6NW

Tel 020 8496 3000 (via Waltham Forest Direct)

Fax 020 8496 1659

**Children and Families Service**

To enquire about services for children under 18, their families and carers, contact:

**First Response Team – Children**

8 Buxton Road

Walthamstow E17 7EJ

Tel 020 8496 3000 (via Waltham Forest Direct)

Fax 020 8496 2313

Minicom: 020 8496 2352

## **Hospital Social Work Service**

If you are in hospital, please contact:

### **Whipps Cross Hospital**

Whipps Cross Road

Leytonstone E11 1NR

Tel 020 8539 5522

Fax 020 8535 6548

Minicom 020 8558 2885

## **Asylum Seekers Service**

To enquire about services for asylum seekers please contact:

### **Asylum Seekers Service**

8 Oliver Road

Leyton E10 5JY

Tel 020 8496 2740

Fax 020 8496 2744

### **Mobility Team**

To enquire about the services the Mobility Team provides, please contact:

London Borough of Waltham Forest

16 The Ridgeway

Chingford E4 6PS

Tel 020 8496 3000

Fax 020 8496 6265

## For emergencies outside office hours

### Health

- For emergency or life threatening conditions call **999**
- Accident and Emergency, contact Whipps Cross University Hospital Trust. The A&E unit is on Whipps Cross Road, Leytonstone, call them on 020 8539 5522

### Social Services

- The Social Services Emergency Duty Team is available to give you help and advice outside of normal office hours. Call them on 020 8496 3000 and ask for the Social Services Emergency Duty Team.