

**Support for Children and Families in**

**Sandwell who have No Recourse to Public Funds**

This guidance tells you about the support you can expect to receive from Sandwell Trust if you have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

**What we do, who we work with and how we might help**

Sandwell Children’s Trust Single Assessment Teams work with Children whose Parents are subject to immigration control and have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) as a condition of their immigration status. These groups of people are mainly people unlawfully present in the UK (e.g. people who have overstayed their visa) and people who have leave to remain in the UK with NRPF conditions attached to their leave.

Having NRPF means that a person is not entitled to welfare benefits; public housing; or financial support from the Home Office. Some benefits and state services are however not classified as ‘public funds’ and so may be accessed; this includes support from social services; primary healthcare; compulsory psychiatric care; emergency medical treatment and education for children up to the age of 18.

There are a few European Economic Area (EEA) nationals and people who have been granted refugee status by another EEA State, who would not normally be able to access public funds due to housing or welfare eligibility criteria.

If people are eligible for support from us, we can provide temporary financial support through the provision of accommodation and / or subsistence monies.

We are able to direct people to specialist help and support if they may have been subjected to family or domestic violence or are victims of trafficking / modern slavery.

This is a complex area of work which involves the interaction between immigration, children’s, homelessness/housing and human rights law.

**What can you expect from our service?**

You will receive a humane, fair and respectful response from our service. We will seek a solution to a family's destitution but must not act outside our legal duties and discretions / powers. We will assess the needs of children and consider their best interests in any decisions taken,

**Are you eligible for support from us?**

We will check to see if you might be eligible for our service. We will ask you questions about your situation and ask to see relevant documents. We also ask that you give us consent to share your personal information with other organisations so that we can work with them effectively.

**Items that we consider include:**

* whether, we as a Trust have territorial responsibility for you; or if not, whether you have urgent needs that we need to respond to straight away, before we redirect you to the Trust responsible for helping you or to other relevant agencies for assistance and advice;
* your immigration status and whether you have no recourse to public funds;
* whether you are excluded from support under legislation and if so carry out a human rights assessment to establish if the Trust has an obligation to provide support to you to avoid breaching your human rights;
* whether you are destitute i.e. unable to provide food and / or accommodation;
* how you have been living up until now and your support networks;

A social worker will carry out assessments to establish your support needs. If your situation appears urgent, we may provide temporary support before these assessments are completed 'without prejudice'; this means that we have no obligation to continue with this support, if we later find that you do not qualify. In order to receive this support, you will be asked to sign documents stating you understand and agree to the conditions of being provided such support.

We may give you information about or put you in touch with voluntary organisations which might be of help to you.

We cannot provide immigration advice and will always encourage you to seek advice from a solicitor or other person qualified and registered to give immigration advice. However, through our link with the Home Office we are able to receive information from the Home Office regarding your immigration application and status.

We can accept referrals from professionals, or the individuals or families themselves.

**What can you do to help us?**

* Be open and honest with us; tell us the truth, tell us about your situation and answer our questions fully.
* Keep letters, bank statements and documents safely and have them ready to show us when we ask for them.
* If you have news about your immigration / asylum application, please tell us straight away.
* Keep all appointments with us.
* Keep all appointments as required by the Home Office.
* Take legal advice about your immigration status.
* If you are at risk of losing your accommodation, please speak to us as soon as you can, before you have to leave.
* Seek and accept support from your own network of family, friends, faith groups, charities and other organisations.

**Where can you find us?**

Sandwell Children’s Trust, Wellman Building, Oldbury, B69 3DL

**What are our opening hours?**

Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm apart from Bank Holidays when we are closed.

**How can you contact us?**

Contact our Access Service for children's social care on **0121 569 3100**