

Asylum Seeker Support Fund Round 3

Post Decision and Discontinuation of Asylum Support- Immediate Signposting and Support,

The purpose of this funding is to provide information, advice and guidance to individuals and families who have received their asylum decision and are faced with making decisions on their next steps, including housing applications. Having been placed into accommodation within Croydon by the Home Office and residing here for many months, there is an immediate need for support and signposting available to people in the hotels where they have been placed.

Asylum Seeker Support summary

There are increasing numbers of Displaced People entering the UK through visa schemes and through asylum routes. Those seeking asylum are placed in Home Office accommodation for extended periods of time whilst their claims are assessed.

The Home Office has 5 hotels used for initial accommodation for asylum seekers in Croydon.

The Home Office has implemented a programme of “Fast Tracking” claims through the Streamlined Application Process, leading to more people receiving their asylum decisions. In addition, on 1st August 2023, the Home Office has taken steps to discontinue support in line with Legislation, section 94(3) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Previously, individuals would be given either 28- or 21-days’ notice that their support was going to end. From 1 August 2023 as per Regulation 22 of the Asylum Support Regulations, having already received notice their support will stop within their decision letter after either 21 or 28 days, individuals will receive a ‘notice to quit’ support letter, which will be issued in writing at least 7 days before their accommodation and support payments are due to end.

There is a need for immediate signposting support to ensure understanding of the correspondence from the Home Office, timescales for applying for housing support, access to community support through VCFS partners and ensuring individuals are aware and able to access Migrant Help Move On support.

In Croydon social housing is particularly challenging, with demand for emergency accommodation already far outstripping the supply. Advice and signposting on housing applications is the most pressing issue for people given leave to remain in the UK.

This grant funding is intended to provide information, advice and guidance within the hotels to signpost asylum seeking people in Home Office accommodation that have recently received a decision on their asylum claim.

This information, advice and guidance must NOT be used to provide advice on immigration claims. It is a criminal offence for a person to provide immigration advice or services in the UK unless their organisation is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) or is otherwise covered by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Activities may include,

- Provide onsite support and signposting surgeries to asylum seekers who have received a decision letter regarding their asylum claim.
- Work with the Asylum Seekers and Displaced people team, using live data to ensure services are available in a timely way to prevent additional stress and enable individuals to plan their next steps.
- Provide practical support arranging appointments and support to attend appointments where necessary.
- Provide a dynamic and flexible response, ensuring availability both on site and by phone / text.
- Ensure individuals and families are signposted to information, advice and guidance on resources within the community that can provide emotional and practical support.
- Work within good practice guidelines and in line with government advice.
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements, policies and procedures are in place.
- Provide monthly snapshots of activity undertaken.
- Signposting to support from statutory services including housing, health and education.
- Signposting to accredited support for immigration advice
- Liaison and engagement with Migrant Help, the organisation commissioned nationally to provide move-on support.

Who can apply?

Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations able to provide Information, advice and guidance to asylum seekers placed in Croydon hotels and hostels by the Home Office who have received notification of the outcome of their asylum claim.

The project funding will be up to £15,000 per organisation. Funding for up to 3 organisations is available. VCFS organisations are invited to advise how they will meet the overall grant purpose set out above. Partnerships between organisations are also encouraged.

Bidders should note that most of the people served by these grants are based in the North of the Borough and have limited funds to pay for travel.

Organisations should be non-profit and be at least informally constituted, which means having a bank account in the name of the group with a minimum of 2 signatories.

This funding is to be used between October 2023 until the end of March 2024

Funding may be used to provide management and safeguarding oversight of projects; it cannot be used to pay mortgage arrears or funding of premises.

Organisations must have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place and will be required to complete a Memorandum of Understanding, administered by accommodation providers, to be able to visit and deliver support and signposting within Home Office accommodation.

People engaging directly with service users will be required to have a valid DBS check.

Timetable

This fund is open from **Friday 29 September 2023 to midnight on Sunday 8 October 2023** for VCFS organisations to apply.

Applications will be evaluated and confirmed by email with decisions in principle by **20 October 2023**.

Mobilisation and start dates will be confirmed with individual projects, please consider how you will be able to mobilise in your response.

How to apply

To apply please download and complete the

Asylum Seeker Support Fund Round 3, Post Decision Signposting and Support, application form and email back to displacedpeoplesupport@croydon.gov.uk

Evaluation

For all awards a monthly snapshot of activities will be required that provides a summary of how many families and individuals were assisted. Short weekly virtual network meetings will be held to share intelligence and issues as required.