



Move-on Pack

This pack offers basic advice to people living in the Leicester area on how to obtain housing and benefits once you have received a positive decision on your asylum claim from the Home Office.

It does not tell you everything you need know and you may need to seek further advice and assistance.

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Introduction

What is the Move-On Process?

This is the process that people go through when they receive refugee status or are given leave to remain in the UK.

If you receive support from the Home Office this will normally end 28 days after you receive your decision. Within the 28 days you will need to:

- find housing
- start claiming benefits or find work
- apply for a National Insurance Number
- obtain help from the Social Fund

Move-on checklist

A person who gets refugee status or leave to remain in the UK should receive the following documents:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| ✓ Grant of Status letter | Issued by the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA). It notifies you of a positive decision on your asylum claim. |
| ✓ Immigration Status Document | This has your personal details and photograph and the length of leave to remain you have been granted. |
| ✓ Discontinuation letter | Issued by UKBA, it tells you when UKBA/NASS support will end. |
| ✓ Notice to Quit letter | Issued by your housing provider (landlord). It tells you the date you have to leave your accommodation. |
| ✓ NASS 35 | Issued by UKBA, it gives the dates when UKBA support started and stopped. Please note that a NASS 35 is not issued to people in Initial Accommodation, on Section 4 support or who do not have a UKBA reference number. |

If any of these documents do not arrive please contact UKBA on **0845 6021739**, your case owner or, Refugee Action on **0116 261 6226**.

Organisations you will need to contact

- ✓ **Jobcentre Plus** To claim benefits
 To obtain a National Insurance Number
 To get help finding work
 To get help from the Social Fund

- ✓ **Housing Department** To apply for Council Housing

- ✓ **Immigration Advisor/ Solicitor** To apply for a travel document
 To apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain
 To apply for Family Reunion

Claiming Benefits

Which benefits are available?

Job Seeker's Allowance

Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) can be claimed by people who are actually seeking full time work. JSA is not available for people who are studying for more than 16 hours a week. You will need to "sign on" every 2 weeks at the Job Centre and give details of what you have been doing to find work.

Income Support

Income Support (IS) can be claimed by some people who cannot look for work. This includes single parents with a child under 5, pregnant women, carers and some young people who cannot live with their parents. In addition people with **Refugee Status** may claim Income Support, for up to 9 months, if they are on an ESOL course for more than 15 hours a week and when they started this they had been in the UK for less than a year

Refugees can no longer claim Income Support backdated to when they applied for asylum, this ended in June 2007.

Employment Support Allowance

Employment Support Allowance (ESA) can be claimed by people who are unable to work due to sickness or disability and have a certificate from their doctor confirming this.

Apart from the most severely ill, people will receive ESA whilst they are helped to prepare to work again.

To make a new claim for Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support or Employment Support Allowance:

Call the Jobcentre Plus Contact Centre: 0800 0556688 – (Free call from a landline only.)

- If possible call from home or somewhere confidential. You can ask them to call you back if you need to.
- Phone lines are open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The call will take about 40 minutes.
- An interpreter will be provided if requested.
- At the end of the call an appointment will usually be made for you to attend a local Job Centre. Ask for an interpreter if you need one.

When you visit the Job Centre for the first time, you must take proof of your identity. For example:

- Immigration Status Document
- Passport
- Grant of Status letter
- NASS 35
- Birth or marriage certificates
- Proof of address in the UK

Once you have made your claim for benefit, if you need to find out what is happening about this, or you need to ask about payments call **0845 6088525**.

Getting a payment

Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support and Employment Support Allowance cannot normally be paid until you have a National Insurance

Number. However, if this leaves you without any money, ask the Job Centre for 'Interim Payments' in the meantime.

In an **emergency** you may need to apply for a Social Fund Crisis Loan but remember you will have to repay this money later.

Call **0800 0327952** or if you have children you may be able to get help from 'Social Services' at 1 Greyfriars, Leicester, LE1 5PH.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit can be claimed by people over 60 who have no income or a low income. Call **0800 99 1234** to make a claim.

Child Benefit

This is a benefit for people bringing up children. Child Benefit is paid for each child in the family. To be eligible you must be bringing up at least one child under 16 or a child under 20 who is studying full-time (up to A-level, NVQ Level 3 or equivalent) or on approved training.

Call **0845 302 1444** for a claim form or download one from HM Revenue and Customs Website <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit/cb-key.htm#e>

Child Tax Credit

Child Tax Credit is a benefit to help families with children who are on a low income. The rules are very similar to those for Child Benefit.

Call **0345 300 3900** for a claim form.

People granted Refugee Status may claim backdated Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit, the difference between NASS support paid and Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit from the date asylum was claimed. People granted Humanitarian Protection, Discretionary Leave or Indefinite Leave to Remain will **not** be eligible to claim this. The initial claim for Child Benefit must be made within 3 months and for Child Tax Credit within 1 month of the grant of Refugee Status.

Working Tax Credit

Working Tax Credit is a benefit for people who work but have low earnings. How much you receive depends upon your income. To claim, you need to fill in the same form as for Child Tax Credit (see above).

Working Tax Credit may be claimed if:

- You are a couple with children and one of you works at least 24 hours a week. Or one of you works at least 16 hours a week and the other either works at least 8 hours a week or is unable to work due to ill health or because they care for a disabled person or
- You are a single parent who works at least 16 hours a week, or
- You do not have children but work for at least 16 hours a week and have a disability or
- You are over 25 and work at least 30 hours a week.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

If you receive Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit or are on a low income, you will be able to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit to help you pay your rent and Council Tax.

To make a claim contact:

The Revenue and Benefits Service, Wellington House, Wellington Street, or call 0116 252 7006

Disability Benefits

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) may be claimed by people with physical or mental disabilities who have difficulty walking or need help with their personal care and:-

- are under 65 years of age
- have been in the UK for over six months

Attendance Allowance (AA) can be claimed by people with physical or mental disabilities who need help with their personal care and:-

- are over 65 years of age
- have been in the UK over six months

Call the Benefits Enquiry Line on **0800 88 22 00** for a DLA or AA claim form.

Carer's Allowance can be claimed by people who cannot work or have very low earnings because they care for someone who receives a disability benefit.

Call the Carer's Allowance Unit on **01253 856 123**, the Benefits Enquiry Line on **0800 88 22 00** or your local Jobcentre Plus office for a claim form.

Other Help

If you receive Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit or Child Tax Credit, you are entitled to free prescriptions, glasses, dental treatment, and fares to hospital. Some people on a low income may also be able to claim this help. Families getting the above benefits can claim free school meals. To claim, contact your child's school or call **0116 2527865** for a claim form. Families getting these benefits, with a child under 4 years and pregnant women can also claim Healthy Start Vouchers towards the cost of food. Call **0845 607 6823** or ask your Health Visitor or midwife for a claim form.

Pregnant women should also ask their Health Visitor or midwife about claiming a Sure Start Maternity Grant although you will not usually get a grant if you have other children under 16 living with you.

Benefit Changes

From 2013 the Government intends to introduce major changes to existing benefits. A single new benefit, Universal Credit, will replace Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit. Disability Living Allowance will be replaced by a new Personal Independence Payment.

Applying for a National Insurance Number

In order to work or claim benefits and tax credits you will need a National Insurance Number (NINO).

Some people receive one automatically or will be sent a form to complete when they are given Refugee Status or Leave to Remain. Most people however will need to apply for a NINO.

If you are looking for work, call **0845 6000 643** to arrange an appointment for an interview. These normally take place in Nottingham or Coventry.

If you are not looking for work but are claiming benefit the Job Centre will arrange an appointment for you and issue a temporary NINO in the meantime.

Opening a Bank Account

If you do not already have a bank account you will need to open one in order to receive benefits. However, in the short term, you should be paid benefit by giro cheque which you can cash at a Post Office. This method of payment is due to be replaced by a Simple Payment card which will allow you to collect benefit at any PayPoint.

Contact any bank or building society to get advice on opening a 'basic account' which is suitable for your needs.

All banks and building societies will require some sort of photo ID, evidence of where you live and will sometimes ask for a supporting letter from a college, social worker or somebody official who can confirm who you are. It should be addressed to a specific bank/branch confirming the applicant's details (Name/DOB/Nationality/Address).

Different banks and branches have different requirements. You may need to approach several banks before you find one that will let you open an account with the documents you have.

If you are having problems opening a bank account, you should think about opening a Post Office account instead. If you are claiming benefit, ask your Job Centre to help you do this.

Finding housing

People who have been granted Refugee Status, Discretionary Leave, Humanitarian Protection or Indefinite Leave to Remain have 28 days to leave their UKBA/NASS accommodation and find somewhere else to live. Other people may be living with friends or relatives but may need their own accommodation.

To apply for housing through Leicester City Council you will need to fill in a Home Choice application form. You can get this from:

Leicester City Council, Housing Options Centre, Phoenix House, 1 King Street, Tel: 0116 2528707

Or apply on line at www.leicesterhomechoice.co.uk

Getting housed

Council Housing Departments have a duty towards people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This includes people who have just been granted refugee status and have a 'Notice to Quit' their accommodation, giving the date they have to leave.

However, this does not mean housing will be provided immediately. Everybody who needs housing, including refugees, have to fill in an application form to register on the Council's waiting list. You should do this as soon as you receive your Grant of Status letter. People who are treated as vulnerable will be given priority and placed in temporary accommodation until they are re-housed. By vulnerable, the council mean

- the elderly
- children, families and pregnant women
- people who have disabilities or major health problems
- young people who have been in Social Service's care

People also have to show they have a 'local connection' to the area. This includes people:

- placed in UKBA accommodation in Leicester
- in higher education here
- in permanent temporary or full time employment in Leicester
- with family ties here
- who have lived here for at least a year

Everyone else who is not considered to be vulnerable will also be placed on the housing waiting list but **the Council will not have a duty to provide them with temporary accommodation in the meantime.** However, they may assist you to find a hostel or private rented accommodation if you have nowhere else to live.

Home Choice

Under the Council's Home Choice scheme, all empty Council and housing association properties are advertised on the Home Choice web site and on a list available at the Housing Options Centre, council offices and libraries.

Once you have completed an application form and have been registered on the housing waiting list, you will be put into one of 5 'bands' that reflect how urgently the council think you need to be re-housed. You will then be able to apply on line for up to 3 suitable properties a week. If you do not have internet access, you can use a computer at Housing Options or your local library for free. You can apply for a property anytime between Wednesday morning and Monday night. The Council will then offer each property to the applicant in the highest band who has been waiting the longest.

Usually the Council only makes one offer of accommodation to people who are homeless and accepted as vulnerable and **this may include the offer of a privately rented property.** If you do not want to accept the property you are offered, do not just refuse it. Seek advice from a housing specialist as the Council does not have to offer a second choice.

Other people who refuse 3 offers of accommodation in 12 months will have their housing application suspended for a year.

If you are penalised for refusing an offer after you have applied for a property there is an appeals process.

There is heavy demand for council housing in Leicester with long waiting lists. How long you will have to wait will depend on which band you are placed in, how long you have been waiting and how many other people are applying for the same properties. Applying for less popular properties in less popular areas will ensure you are re-housed more quickly.

Private Rented Accommodation

You may also wish to consider looking for private rented accommodation yourself. There are many private landlords offering a variety of properties across Leicester. Tenancies normally last from 6-12 months, after which you may need to move if your tenancy is not renewed.

The Council can assist families who are homeless or about to become homeless to secure private rented accommodation and will guarantee the deposit on the property. Ask the Council about their LeicesterLet Finders' Scheme.

Getting help with a deposit

If you are not accepted as homeless and vulnerable, you may also apply for privately rented accommodation. If you are single or a couple without children the Council may be able to assist you with a rent deposit guarantee or you can apply for a Crisis Loan or Integration Loan for this (see below).

Rent and Housing Benefit

Privately rented property varies in price, depending upon the type of property and the area it is in but tends to be more expensive than council or housing association properties.

Before accepting a private tenancy you will need to check with the Housing Benefit office how much of your rent they will help you with. This is called the Local Housing Allowance. If your rent is more than this you will have to pay the difference yourself.

Single people under 35 without children have the lowest Local Housing Allowance as they are only entitled to the rate for shared accommodation.

Setting up home

Community Care Grants

People who receive Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Pension Credit can apply for a Social Fund Community Care Grant to pay for furniture and other basic household items and will not have to repay this money. However, you will usually need to show that an agency is helping you with a programme of resettlement or your family is facing exceptional pressures. Further information is available from Job Centre Plus. Call **0845 6036967** to request a claim form.

If you are not entitled to a Community Care Grant, you can buy cheap furniture from Stride or other charities in Leicester. Proof of low income may be required, for example evidence of benefit entitlement.

Integration Loans

People over 18 with Refugee Status or Humanitarian Protection may be able to apply for a loan from the Home Office for items such as additional furniture or household items, deposits or rent in advance for private tenancies or training costs. Integration loans have to be paid back through deductions from benefit or earnings. An application form should be issued with your Grant of Status letter but can also be downloaded from

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/workingwithus/workingwithasylum/integration/integrationloan/>

Finding work

People with Refugee Status or Leave to Remain in the UK have the right to work. You do not need permission from the UKBA. You are also entitled to all Job Centre Plus services, including help with job preparation, advice on training and help starting up your own business.

Anyone over 18 years of age who receives Job Seeker's Allowance meets with their Job Centre Plus advisor every two weeks to discuss job vacancies and training opportunities.

Jobs are advertised in The Leicester Mercury each Wednesday, in Jobcentre Plus offices and in private employment agencies. In the Yellow Pages they are listed under the heading *Employment Agencies*.

Other Training/Support back to Work Agencies:

Working Links

1st Floor.

60 Charles Street

Leicester.

Tel: 0116 242 7010

Next Step

91 Charles Street

Leicester

Tel: 0800 0850 330

Adult Education

After reaching the age of 19, everybody has to pay fees to follow most higher education courses and some further education courses. However, most English classes, basic skills and vocational courses are free to people on specified benefits.

As a general rule, if a course requires 16 hours a week or more of study, it is not possible to claim benefits. However, there are exceptions for single parents, some young people under 21 who cannot live with their parents and people with Refugee Status who have been in the UK for less than a year and are on a full time ESOL course. The rules are complicated so seek further advice from your college or Jobcentre Plus.

Course Fees

Higher education courses can sometimes be very expensive and in most cases you cannot claim benefits whilst studying for a full-time degree. However, people on low incomes can apply for financial help.

Further information about course fees and support can be obtained from the college at which you are hoping to enrol.

There are a number of organisations that offer advice on adult education. They include

Connexions

Halford House
91 Charles Street
Leicester
LE1 1HL

Tel: 0116 262 7254 or
0116 262 0682

leicester@connexions-leics.org

Local Education Authority (LEA)

NIACE
20 Princess Road West
Leicester
LE1 6TP

Tel: 0116 20 44 200 or
0116 20 44 201

Education for Children

Every Local Education Authority is legally required to provide education to all children of school age, regardless of their immigration status.

The City's Lifelong Learning Service has a specialist team which provides a range of services to schools for newly arrived, non-English speaking pupils, refugees and asylum seekers.

Staff can offer advice about school admission and other issues such as

- free school meals
- travel passes, if applicable
- the induction of new pupils

The best starting point is to approach the local school at which you want to enrol your child.

Application forms and further information can be obtained from

School Admission Service
New Walk Centre
Welford Place
Leicester
LE1 6ZG

Tel: **0116 252 7009** or,
E-mail: admissions-online@leicester.gov.uk

Applying for travel documents

A refugee or someone who has been granted Leave to Remain in the UK can apply for a travel document to use when travelling abroad, if they are unable to obtain a passport. The application form can be found at

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/traveldocuments/td112>

It is best to get help from an immigration advisor when making this application.

Family Reunion

A refugee who has been granted Leave to Remain in the UK can apply for their family to join them.

The law regarding Family Reunion is complex. You need to make an application through an immigration advisor or solicitor.

British Red Cross: Messaging & Tracing Service

To trace members of your family or friends whom you have lost touch with contact:

British Red Cross
54 Kenilworth Drive
Oadby
Tel: 0116 2710359

People can contact the British Red Cross at any time during the asylum process to trace and send messages to family overseas.

Other Useful Organisations that can help

There are a number of organisations in Leicester that can help and support you. Here are a few:

Refugee Action

Chancery House

7 Millstone Lane

Leicester

LE1 5JN

Tel: 0116 2616200

Advice Line: 0116 2616223 – Tuesday /Friday

(Provides: Level 1 immigration advice; information, advice and assistance to access asylum support; impartial advice on voluntary return and capacity building support for refugee community organisations)

The Race Equality Centre

3rd Floor, Epic House,

Lower Hill Street,

Leicester,

LE1 3SH

0116 2999 807

(Provides: help with settling into a new community– including assistance with housing, welfare benefits, access to education and health services, basic form filling, level 1 immigration advice and support in challenging racial discrimination or racial harassment)

Catch 22

12 Upperton Road

Leicester

LE3 0BG

0116 254 1420

(Assists with resettlement for those without refugee status but Leave to Remain and provides support when you first get rehoused)

Community Legal Advice Centre

60 Charles Street

LE1 1FB

Tel: 0845 4560074

(For advice on benefits, housing, employment and debt)

Shelter Housing Aid and Research Project (SHARP)

13 Welford Road
Leicester
LE2 7AD
Tel: 0116 2546064
(For housing advice)

Voluntary Action Leicester

9 Newarke Street
Leicester,
LE1 5SN
0116 258 0666
(For voluntary work)