

THE HOMELESS BILL OF RIGHTS

I. THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

The most important right a homeless person has is the right to housing. Services that support access to appropriate accommodation must be accessible to all homeless people.

II. ACCESS TO DECENT EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

Where housing cannot be immediately provided, the right to access decent emergency accommodation must be maintained for all homeless people.

III. THE RIGHT TO USE PUBLIC SPACE AND TO MOVE FREELY WITHIN IT

People who are homeless should be granted the right to use public space, and to move freely within it, with no greater restrictions than apply to others.

IV. THE RIGHT TO EQUAL TREATMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that our staff and services uphold the right to equal treatment for all, without discriminating against those who do not have a home.

V. THE RIGHT TO A POSTAL ADDRESS

People who are homeless often experience restricted access to the labour market and public services because they cannot provide a postal address. People who are homeless have the right to an effective postal address.

VI. THE RIGHT TO BASIC SANITARY FACILITIES

The right to access basic sanitary facilities must be provided for. This includes running water (drinking fountains), showers, and toilets, of a standard that allows a dignified level of hygiene to be maintained.

VII. THE RIGHT TO EMERGENCY SERVICES

Homeless people should have the right to emergency services – social services, health services, the police and the fire service – on equal terms with any other resident of the Council area.

VIII. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

People experiencing homelessness should be included on the electoral register and given the necessary documents to prove their identity when voting in elections, without being discriminated against because of their housing situation.

IX. THE RIGHT TO DATA PROTECTION

Homeless people have the same right to data protection as other citizens and the same right to exercise control over their personal records (health, housing, any criminal record) and information.

X. THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

A homeless person's right to privacy must be respected and protected to the fullest extent possible in all types of accommodation, including any communal accommodation structure or informal accommodation they may occupy.

XI. THE RIGHT TO CARRY OUT PRACTICES NECESSARY TO SURVIVAL WITHIN THE LAW

Homeless people should have the right to carry out practices necessary to survival within the law. Survival practices such as begging, or foraging for discarded food should not be criminalized, banned, or arbitrarily confined to specific areas.