



GUIDE: Hosting a Homeless Refugee or Asylum Seeker in Your Home

A Resource for hosts and potential hosts

Thank you for considering opening your home to a homeless refugee or asylum seeker. It's a generous act that can provide immediate safety and stability for someone in a very vulnerable situation. However, there are several important factors to consider, both for your own well-being and the well-being of the person you may host. This guide is intended to help inform your decision.

Key Considerations for you as a host or potential host:

1. Impact on Refugee/Asylum Seeker's Status and Support:

Financial Assistance: If the person you're hosting (or thinking about hosting) is currently considered homeless, they may be receiving an elevated payment for homelessness. By moving into your home, this payment will likely be discontinued.

State Accommodation: Once an asylum seeker is hosted in private accommodation, they may no longer be prioritised for state-provided accommodation. It's important to know that it could take up to three years for them to be offered state housing. International Protection applicants who are not in state accommodation have no recourse to medical help.

Future Stability: Hosting may prevent the individual from living on the street in the short term, but long-term issues, such as their financial and housing security, will still need to be addressed.

No Payment or State Support for Hosts: There is no financial support or payment provided by the state to individuals hosting refugees or asylum seekers. The Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP), which is available for hosting Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs), does not apply in this case.

2. What Happens If the Asylum Claim is Rejected (Deportation Order)?

Loss of Rights: If the person's asylum application is rejected and they receive a deportation order, they will lose their right to work and access to state support. They will have no source of income and may become entirely financially reliant on you, their host, which could create significant strain for both parties.

3. Mental Health Considerations:

For the Host: Opening your home to someone in need can be rewarding, but it can also be emotionally and mentally taxing. Be sure to consider your own mental well-being and ensure you have the support you need during this time.

For the Guest: The person you host may be experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety due to their uncertain status, separation from family, and past trauma. This could affect the dynamics of your household.

4. **Work Permit Process:**

After spending five months in Ireland, asylum seekers can apply for a right-to-work permit. The application process can take up to 14 weeks to be approved. This means they may still be unable to work for some time and could remain dependent on you during that period.

5. **Changing Legal Landscape:**

The list of countries deemed "safe" by the Irish government is subject to change, and this may impact the asylum process for individuals from certain countries. It's important to stay informed about these changes as they may affect the status and rights of the person you are hosting.

Legal Considerations:

1. **Right to Remain vs. Deportation Risk:** Asylum seekers do not have permanent legal status until their claim is fully approved. If their claim is denied and they receive a deportation order, they lose their right to remain in Ireland, which could create legal challenges if they continue living in your home while undocumented.
2. **Home sharing Agreement:** To avoid misunderstandings, it is useful to have a written home sharing agreement in place. This outlines the expected duration of stay, responsibilities within the household, and what happens if their asylum status changes (e.g., if they are granted status or receive a deportation order). This agreement can help manage expectations and provide clarity for both parties.

[Download a template from our website](#), and tweak as you need. Thousands of hosts have used these agreements to help document the terms of their arrangement and lay out expectations from the start. **It really helps.**

3. **Legal Responsibility and Liability:**

While hosting a refugee or asylum seeker, you are not legally responsible for their immigration status. However, you should ensure that you are not violating any laws related to immigration or housing by hosting someone without legal status.

It is also advisable to check your home insurance policy to confirm that there are no restrictions around hosting non-family members. Some insurance policies may have conditions or exclusions that could affect your coverage.

4. **Privacy and Data Protection:**

It is crucial to protect the privacy and personal information of the individual you are hosting. Avoid sharing details about their asylum case or personal situation without their explicit consent, and respect their confidentiality.

5. **Tenancy and Housing Laws:**

While hosting a refugee does not make you a landlord, it's still useful to familiarise yourself with basic tenancy laws. This can help avoid any potential legal issues, especially if the individual stays for an extended period.

6. **Access to Legal Advice:**

Ensure that the asylum seeker has access to legal support to assist with their asylum application or appeal. There are organisations like the **Irish Refugee Council** and **Nasc** that provide free legal services for refugees and asylum seekers.

7. **Immigration Law Changes:**

Irish immigration law can change, affecting the status of asylum seekers. Staying informed about any changes that could impact their legal status is important. Organisations such as the **Irish Refugee Council** and **Nasc** can help you and the individual you are hosting stay up to date with legal changes.

Legal Resources for Support:

- **Irish Refugee Council Legal Service** provides free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers. www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/legal-service
- **Nasc Legal Clinics** free legal clinics for migrants and refugees, which can help with understanding rights and navigating legal issues related to asylum. www.nascireland.org/legal-clinics
- **FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centres)** free and confidential legal information and advice, including on immigration and asylum matters. www.flac.ie

Additional Support and Resources:

- **Irish Refugee Council**
www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie
The Irish Refugee Council offers a range of services for refugees and asylum seekers, including legal advice, advocacy, and integration support.

- **Nasc - The Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre**

www.nascireland.org

Nasc provides legal information, advocacy, and support for migrants and refugees in Ireland, including a dedicated information and drop-in service.

- **Doras**

www.doras.org

Doras is a migrant support organisation offering direct support, advocacy, and education to asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants in Ireland.

- **Irish Red Cross**

www.redcross.ie

A final word

Hosting a homeless refugee can offer someone vital short-term relief, but it's crucial to be aware of the potential long-term challenges they may face, particularly around housing, financial stability, and their asylum status. We encourage you to carefully weigh these factors and consider both your own capacity and the needs of the person you may be hosting.

Ultimately, the choice is yours, and we hope this guidance helps inform your decision.

Thank you for your compassion and consideration in offering a safe place for someone in need.

Contact Us

Regardless of your decision, **HIH resources** are open to everyone who chooses to host an asylum seeker or refugee. These supports can provide guidance, practical assistance, and emotional support throughout the hosting experience.

We're always just a phone call away if you have any questions or need further assistance

www.helpingirishhosts.com

hostsupport@helpingirishhosts.com

HIH Host & Guest Support Line: 01 2630360

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