



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Luke Hall MP

Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3460

E-Mail: luke.hall@communities.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

To all Local Authority Leaders in England

CC'd to all Local Authority Chief Executives in
England

27 April 2020

Dear Leader,

Support for Domestic Abuse Services: COVID-19

I would like to thank you for the work you are doing in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you will be aware, government is making available £750 million for frontline charities, including domestic abuse services. However, I also want to ask for your help in ensuring these services are well supported and equipped to deal with what are already challenging situations, and even more so during these uncertain times.

I am aware that a number of local authorities have already been working closely with their local domestic abuse safe accommodation providers, providing assistance and support where needed. However there is not a consistent picture across the country, and I am writing to you now to ask you to work closely with the domestic abuse services in your area, providing support where you deem it necessary in order to protect victims, for example by providing crisis funding to safe accommodation services.

You should also work closely with domestic abuse safe accommodation providers in your area to ensure that victims of domestic abuse and their families, including those from out of your area, can be provided with safe emergency accommodation with appropriate support to avoid further pressures on frontline homelessness services.

To support you work, the Government has announced a further £1.6 billion of additional funding for Local Government: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/communities-secretary-robert-jenrick-on-covid-19-response-18-april-2020>.

Local authorities are able to use the additional £1.6 billion to help protect vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.

We also recognise that housing provision is key. In 2018, Government published statutory guidance designed to help local authorities ensure that victims of domestic abuse in a refuge or other form of temporary accommodation have appropriate priority under their social housing allocation schemes. Today, we published non-statutory guidance for social housing landlords making clear that both supporting victims of domestic violence and providing move-on accommodation count as essential moves, and that these should proceed during this period where safe to do so. It is more important than ever to free up valuable bed space within domestic abuse services, enabling more survivors to escape from potentially life-threatening situations and to access safety and support.

If you need additional accommodation to meet demand then you can book rooms through CTM (who are working with Crown Commercial Services) who can be contacted on 01274 726424 (choosing 'Hotel Team', then 'Option 1'), or Covid19@travelctm.com.

I would like to thank you once again for all the work you and your teams are doing in managing the delivery of support in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, through your local services, during these unprecedented times.



LUKE HALL MP