

Vulnerability

→ It is a matter of 'evaluative judgement' whether the applicants circumstances make them vulnerable.

The test is:

"Whether, if homeless, the applicant would be significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person would be if they became homeless"

(See relevant case law in priority need folder)

→ The assessment must take into account all of the relevant facts and circumstances. You need to consider the impact of homelessness on the applicant.

→ You may take into account the services and support available to the applicant from a third party (inc family). In order to reach a decision that a person is not vulnerable because of the support they receive; you must be satisfied that the 3rd party support will be consistent and predictable. Even with support, could they be vulnerable?

→ You must be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 and our public sector equality duties towards people who have a protected characteristic.

Things to consider:



Old age alone is not sufficient for an applicant to be considered vulnerable



Nature and extent of illness/disability

Relationship between illness/disability and their housing difficulties

Relationship with drugs/alcohol, age, offending etc etc

Requires cooperation between housing, social services and mental health agencies. You should have regard to any advice from professionals.



Make enquiries into applicant's childhood history to confirm care leaver and then assess vulnerability



Regular naval, military or air forces

Consider length of time served, type of service, whether they spent any time in a military hospital, length of time since they left the armed forces and whether they have any existing support networks

Try and obtain medical history release form from the Forces medical and welfare advisors



Consider length of time served in custody or detention, whether they are receiving any supervision from probation or YOT, length of time since they left custody and whether they have existing support networks (positive ones).

You need to take into account the assessments completed by offender manager services



This does not include domestic violence.

The safety of the applicant and ensuring confidentiality are paramount

Consider evidence from Police



Consider all of the facts and circumstances of applicant

No blanket policies

Are they vulnerable due to a combination of factors?

Consider young people, people fleeing harassment, victims of modern-day slavery or trafficking, rough sleepers or after effect of Covid-19

Make sure you have sufficient evidence of any vulnerabilities and consider all information from external agencies. Ultimately, the final decision on the question of vulnerability is **YOURS**.