



SUPPORTING AND  
EMPOWERING  
REFUGEES

ASAP

ASYLUM  
SUPPORT  
APPEALS  
PROJECT

# Briefing on the revised Domestic Abuse Guidance

## 1. Introduction

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019 the Home Office published their revised [Domestic Abuse Guidance](#). This is the key document Home Office caseworkers will use when responding to reports of domestic abuse from people seeking asylum who are receiving accommodation and financial support (asylum support) from the Home Office or who might be eligible for it. The guidance also sets out the role of accommodation providers and that of Migrant Help<sup>1</sup> in responding to reports of domestic abuse.

The Refugee Council and the Asylum Support Appeals Project have worked closely with Home Office officials to develop this revised guidance.

The new guidance includes a number of significant improvements. It covers all survivors of domestic violence, irrespective of gender, although this briefing refers to women survivors due to our focus on the rights of women. This briefing document sets out the key points contained within the new guidance.

## 2. Key aspects of the revised guidance

The key points of the revised guidance include:

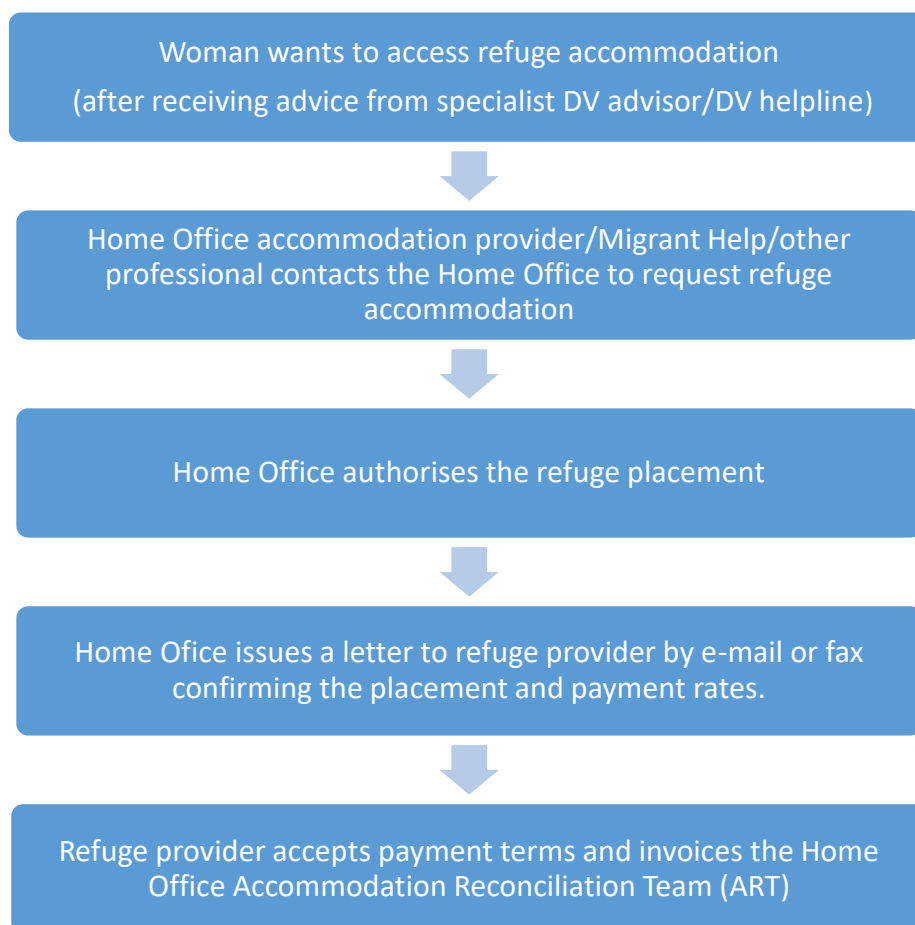
- A new Home Office funding mechanism to allow women to access specialist refuge accommodation.
- An expansion of the guidance to include women not already receiving asylum support but who may be eligible for it.
- A Home Office commitment to consider and act on the views of women, and the professionals working directly with them, when making decisions about safe housing.
- A Home Office commitment to believing women and not seeking corroborating evidence of domestic abuse.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Migrant Help hold the national contract to provide information and advice to asylum seekers in the UK.](#)

- An emphasis on a quick response whether a woman is already on Home Office support or is applying to enter the system.
- A commitment to avoid using mixed sex hostel accommodation (initial accommodation) as an emergency response
- A recognition of domestic abuse as a gender-based form of violence which disproportionately affects women
- Increased role of the Home Office Safeguarding Team, in terms of monitoring cases, collecting data and taking part in case-conferences.

### 3. Summary of the process to access refuge accommodation



### 4. Monitoring the implementation of the revised guidance

We will be monitoring the implementation of the new guidance and feeding back any issues directly to the Home Office. For further information on the revised guidance or to provide feedback on the implementation please feel free to contact:

Andy Hewett at [andy.hewett@refugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:andy.hewett@refugeecouncil.org.uk) or Alice Webb at [Alice@asaproject.org.uk](mailto:Alice@asaproject.org.uk)