



Home Office

Chris Philp MP
Minister for Immigration Compliance
and the Courts

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

Ms Mahlea Babjak
Migrants' Rights Network
The People's Place
80-92 High Street
London
E15 2NE

DECS Reference: MIN/0121922/20

28 October 2020

Dear Ms Babjak,

Thank you for your email of 1 October to the Prime Minister on behalf of 225 organisations that work to support migrants' rights in the UK, and the 575 individual signatories of people that work or volunteer to support migrants' rights, about persons in the UK with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). Your email has been forwarded to the Home Office and I am responding as the Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts.

The Government remains committed to protecting vulnerable people and has acted decisively to ensure that we support everyone through this pandemic. We have announced a range of measures to ensure people can stay safe and many of these are available for those with NRPF.

Local authorities may provide basic safety net support, regardless of immigration status, if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question.

We recognise the important work being undertaken by the voluntary sector and have also allocated £750 million funding for charities who are providing vital support to vulnerable people at this difficult time.

On 18 July, the Homelessness Commission launched the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. This programme includes financial resources to support local authorities and their partners to prevent people from returning to the streets. £161 million has been allocated to deliver 3,300 units of longer-term move-on accommodation within the next 12 months, and a further £105 million of additional funding has been provided to pay for immediate support, including to fund reconnections locally and overseas, access to sustainable accommodation and interim accommodation to ensure that people do not return to the streets. This funding builds upon the £4.3 billion we have made available to local authorities since the start of the pandemic.

The Government has published guidance on the support available for migrants who are affected by COVID-19 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-get-support-if-youre-a-migrant-living-in-the-uk>.

Failed asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute and do not have children are only subject to cessation of their support if they have exhausted their appeal rights in their asylum application and have no further applications outstanding which makes them eligible for support. This usually means a Court has supported the decision to refuse the asylum application. It is therefore only right that they take steps to leave the UK.

We offer assistance to those who choose to do so by actively promoting the Home Office Voluntary Return Service. Information on next steps, such as the Assisted Voluntary Returns scheme is provided throughout, so that individuals are informed of their options. We have also asked Immigration Enforcement officials to ensure we are clear with people about the support they can get to leave the UK.

I trust this clarifies the Government's position.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Philp', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Philp MP