

DA Funding Allocation Q&A for the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's office

Top lines

- The Domestic Abuse Bill, currently before Parliament, includes a new duty on Tier One local authorities to assess the need for and commission support to victims and their children in domestic abuse safe accommodation in England.
- Subject to the successful passage of the bill, the new duty will come into force in 2021, backed by £125 million funding
- Following consultation on how to distribute the funding, MHCLG is today announcing individual local authority allocations for 2021/22.
- Local authorities can now finalise plans for implementation of the duty, which will mean that in future those victims currently turned away from refuges and safe accommodation will be able to access life-saving support in future to help them recover and rebuild their lives.

Q&A

Will the new duty only be funded for one year?

- Following the outcome of Spending Review, £125 million new burden funding is today being allocated to local authorities, to cover costs of the new duty to provide support in safe accommodation for 2021-22.
- In the spirit of the New Burdens Doctrine, the new duty will be funded in future years.
- We encourage local authorities to look into longer term commissioning for these services.

Will funding begin from April? What if the Bill does not receive Royal Assent in time? Existing MHCLG funding expires on 31 March and some services are at risk of closure if there is a gap.

- Funding will commence in April 2021, and local authorities are being asked to start implementing the new duty from then, even if the legislation is not in force at that point.
- There is no reason why local authorities cannot re-commission existing services to ensure victims can access support in safe accommodation while they work with local partners to undertake full local needs assessments and develop their future domestic abuse safe accommodation strategy.

Funding for X area isn't enough, Government needs to change the allocation formula to include X (any other factor).

- MHCLG consulted on the allocation of funding for the duty, and carefully considered all responses to the consultation before finalising the allocation formula.
- As set out in the government response, MHCLG is committed to undertaking a post implementation review of the funding for the duty two years from commencement, including the allocations methodology.

How do you know the level of funding is enough? (Women's Aid estimated the costs of refuge provision to be £173 million)

- MHCLG engaged with local authorities and service providers in estimating the costs of the new duty, to ensure the duty is funded appropriately.
- This funding covers the estimated cost of providing unmet need for support in safe accommodation to victims and their children, as well as needs previously supported through MHCLG short-term challenge funds. The Women's Aid estimate included costs of all services, including those with existing funding.
- On the basis of evidence, we estimated the costs at £125 million for 2021-22.

- MHCLG will undertake a post implementation review to assess the delivery of the duty, including the level of funding and allocation method.

What happens to services that are currently commissioned by Tier 2 authorities, with contracts ending in March? Providing support cost funding to Tier 1s will cause these services to close.

- MHCLG is clear in that it does not expect local authorities to stop funding these services as a result of the introduction of the duty. Authorities will receive funding for support costs for the first year of delivery and it is therefore our expectation that this funding supports any transitional period needed at a local level.
- Tier 1 authorities should make arrangements to appropriately fund Tier 2 authorities, in two tier areas, to ensure victims can continue to access services while needs assessments and strategies are in development.