This guide is to provide agency staff with information about identified areas of vulnerability that they may come across when dealing with clients. It highlights what the vulnerabilities are, as well as suggested further reading.

Follow these processes if you witness or suspect a client may be:

* **at immediate risk of harm**
* **at suspected risk of harm**
* **a suicide risk**.

This guidance is to inform you about what homelessness is, and provide further reading on the subject.

Homelessness is not always obvious. Even if someone has somewhere to stay, they may still be homeless. This can be because they don’t have the rights to stay where they live, or due to the home being unsuitable.

You should inform a client that they can [**contact the local authority(link is external)**](http://www.cosla.gov.uk/) for advice and support, and request emergency help if they have not already done so.

1. Further reading about homelessness

You can find useful information on [**homelessness rights and responsibilities on Shelter Scotland**](https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/legal/homelessness).

If you’d like to learn more about homelessness, visit the sites below.

[**What is homelessness? - Shelter Scotland**](https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/guides/homelessness/what_is_homelessness)

[**Homelessness: code of guidance**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-guidance-homelessness-2/pages/0/)

[**Ending homelessness together: updated action plan - October 2020**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-updated-action-plan-october-2020/)

**Clients who need extra support | Social Security Scotland**

**Examples of extra support needs and note taking best practice | Social Security Scotland**

**Advisory points for the Contact via Third Party indicator | Social Security Scotland**