

Ukraine support: information about accommodation and helping you settle in

This information has been provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. We provide support to people arriving in Edinburgh to stay in our council area.

If you are here under the UK Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme to live with a host in our area, we will be able to provide you with support and advice. If you arrive in Edinburgh on this scheme but have arranged to stay with a host in another council area, that council will give you the support and advice.

If you have selected to stay in Edinburgh area under the Scottish Government's Super Sponsor Scheme, we will help you with temporary accommodation or a hotel until you are matched with a host/sponsor.

As the capital city of Scotland, Edinburgh is a very popular tourist destination, so hotel rooms and temporary accommodation are very busy. We may not always have enough hotels or temporary accommodation in Edinburgh, so we are working with other councils and using hotels in other areas of Scotland to make sure people who arrive from Ukraine have a safe and comfortable place to stay. We will keep you informed and talk to you about options. If you move to another area of Scotland, the council in that area will give you support and advice and arrange things like the resettlement payments.

When will I be matched with a host?

If you selected 'Super Sponsor' as part of your visa application, when you arrived in Edinburgh airport, our welcome team will have arranged for you to come to our welcome hub which is located near the airport. Or you may have gone to our customer help team in our High Street office in the centre of Edinburgh. The teams at both those locations would have found out what support you might need and offered you short term accommodation until we find a match with a super sponsor host (also known as a sponsor). This short-term accommodation may be a hotel.

Matching you with a Super Sponsor Scheme host

The process to match super sponsor hosts with people arriving from Ukraine is managed by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA). COSLA is the organisation that represents and works with the 32 councils in Scotland.

Even if you arrived in Edinburgh and we help you with initial temporary accommodation, you may be matched with a host/sponsor in another part of Scotland.

The council in the area that your host/sponsor lives in are responsible for checking that the properties being offered by the host are suitable, are of a good standard and who they would be suitable for. Councils will also do official checks on people who wish to host – looking for things like criminal records, convictions or warnings. This matching process is important for everyone's safety and wellbeing. They must follow all steps in the matching process carefully.

Once you have been matched with a host (sponsor), we will contact you to discuss the arrangements.

If you will be staying with a host (sponsor) in the Edinburgh area, we will also recommend that you meet the potential host at our welcome hub near the airport. This helps you and the host get to know each other before you move into their property.

Once you move in with a host (sponsor) in the Edinburgh area, we will visit you at the property to make sure that everyone in the house is safe and well. We will also offer you any other support you or the host may need and give you contact details for services or organisations who can help.

Other councils in Scotland may manage this process slightly differently so if you are matched with a host in another area of Scotland, you should speak to the local council in the area live in.

Can I find my own host?

Informal matches via social media or other forums are not part of the UK or Scottish Government schemes. As we do not carry out the necessary safeguarding checks, informal arrangements could potentially place you or the host at risk. We do not advise that you arrange to live with someone that you do not know or have only met over the internet.

If you are living in the Edinburgh area and you arrange to live with someone that you know, please fill in [our online form](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ukraeenquiry) (www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ukraeenquiry) to let us know where you are living - gives us your name and contact details as well as the name, address, telephone and email address of the person that you are planning on living with.

Do I have to pay any rent with a sponsor?

No. You should not be charged any rent by your sponsor. The Government is offering an optional 'thank you' payment to people who are hosts through the Homes for Ukraine or the Super Sponsor Schemes. This payment is given to the sponsor for up to the first 12 months of hosting.

If your sponsor asks you to pay or forces you to work in payment - for the accommodation, we recommend you speak to the local Police. You can call them on their non-emergency telephone number 101.

What happens at the end of the six-month sponsorship period?

Sponsors must host guests for a minimum of six months. This can continue beyond the initial six months if you and your sponsor wish it to.

If your sponsor doesn't want to continue the arrangement beyond six months, they must let you know in plenty of time so they can make other arrangements. We are asking the Scottish Government for clear guidance on what happens if your sponsor does this.

After six months, your sponsor should give you at least two months' notice to end a match.

After leaving your sponsor's home, you will be able to rent a property like anyone coming to live in Scotland. You are free to find accommodation to rent anywhere you wish – you do not have to stay in the council area where your sponsor lived. If you need to, you will be able to claim the housing part of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. The council in the area you are living in can help with this.

If are living in the Edinburgh area and you need help to do claim benefits, you can come to our customer help centre on a Tuesday and a Thursday between 10am to 12 noon, and 2pm to 4pm at 249 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JY. People from DWP will also be there to give advice on benefits. They also go to some of the Ukrainian social hub coffee morning

What if sponsorship breaks down?

If the arrangements under the Homes for Ukraine or Super Sponsor Schemes end early, you must let the council in the area you are living in know as quickly possible. They will help you to find alternative accommodation or match you with a new host/sponsor.

If you are living with a sponsor in the Edinburgh area, please go to the nearest local housing office. You can find details on our website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localities

What will happen to me if I am placed in temporary accommodation following a host breakdown?

If you live in the Edinburgh area, and you go into temporary accommodation following a breakdown in the arrangement with a host/sponsor, our housing officers will meet with you regularly. You will be able to apply for Housing Benefit. If you have paid employment, this will be adjusted to reflect what you earn. This is the same for anyone in Scotland. We can also give you support to bid for council or other social housing.

If you live in another council area, that council will be able to give you the same help.

Am I eligible for benefits and/or to work?

We have a welfare system in the UK which is designed to help people who face financial hardship, or who have specific needs. You may be eligible for social security benefits such as Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will help you find out which benefits you may be able to apply for. If you are living in the Edinburgh area, people from DWP will be in our customer help centre on a Tuesday and a Thursday between 10am to 12 noon, and 2pm to 4pm at 249 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JY. They also go to some of the Ukrainian social hub coffee morning.

Important:

- if you are applying to DWP for benefits, you will get a National Insurance number as part of the process to sign you up for benefits. Please do not apply separately for a National Insurance number as it is then difficult to match you up on the DWP systems which share information, and this could delay this process.
- you will receive a text message from the DWP with a link to provide information to help this process. You must respond to the text quickly. If you do not respond, it may delay you getting a National Insurance number, and delay payment of benefits.

Can I get paid work?

If you come to Scotland through the Super Sponsor or the Homes for Ukraine schemes, you will be able to take a paid job. DWP and the council in the area you live in can help you find paid employment.

If you are living in the Edinburgh area, people from DWP will be in our customer help centre on a Tuesday and a Thursday between 10am to 12 noon, and 2pm to 4pm at 249 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JY. DWP and our job seeking partner organisation also go to some of the Ukrainian social hub coffee morning.

Support and resources

Emergency services

If you are in immediate danger, telephone 999. Tell the person who answers what the emergency is, and they will make sure the right services are there:

- Police - to report things like crime, theft, assault, if you are in immediate danger
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Services – to deal with fires and water rescues
- Ambulance service.

If it's not an emergency, and you need the Police, telephone 101 to report minor and **non-emergency** crimes, where you do not need an immediate or high-priority response, and you are not in immediate danger.

National Health Scotland (NHS)

The NHS provides health care in Scotland – hospitals, doctors and other health care professionals.

If you are feeling unwell and need urgent care advice and mental health support day or night, telephone 111 or go to their website www.nhs24.scot

If you are well but have a question about your health or local NHS services, you can get quality-assured health and care information on their website or on their telephone service:

- www.nhsinform.scot
- 0800 22 44 88 (open Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm).

If you would like to speak to someone in your own language, you can use NHS inform's interpretation service, Language Line. It is free to use. To use Language Line, telephone 0800 22 44 88. Tell the person who answers that you need an interpreter and what language you want to speak in. Once

you're connected to an interpreter, you'll have a three-way conversation with the call handler to get the advice you need.

Legal advice

The Ukraine Advice Scotland project has been funded by the Scottish Government to provide free, confidential legal advice and information to people from Ukraine on legal routes for seeking safety in Scotland. This service is provided by qualified solicitors and legal caseworkers. Telephone 0800 995 6045 on either

- Tuesday from 11am to 1pm
- Thursday from 11am to 1pm.

Email: ukraine@justrightscotland.org.uk

Information on living in Edinburgh

The Scottish Government's website as a lot of information for people from Ukraine

- www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-displaced-people-from-ukraine

The Council also has information on our website in English and Ukrainian. This covers more information that you might need when settling into Edinburgh if you are staying in our area including information about schools and language classes. This has links to other organisations that can give advice and support

- www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ukraine

If you are looking for information on things to do in Edinburgh, see our official website guide to Edinburgh

- edinburgh.org

There are lots of things to do for free including our own museums and art galleries

- www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk