No Recourse to Public Funds

What is NRPF?

NRPF, or “No Recourse to Public Funds,” is an immigration condition applied to many people in the UK who have limited leave to remain. It means they are not entitled to claim most welfare benefits, tax credits, or housing assistance funded by public money. This restriction is attached to various visa

categories, including work, study, and family routes, and is intended to ensure that migrants do not rely on state support during their stay.

Migrants affected by NRPF can be divided into the following groups:

- people on temporary (time limited) visas,
- those without legal status, and
- asylum seekers

NRPF can cause challenges with accessing housing and monetary support. Individuals and families may struggle to meet basic needs such as housing, food, and utilities because they cannot access benefits or social housing. This often leads to increased vulnerability, and reliance on charities or local authorities for emergency help. In practice, accessing support becomes extremely difficult, as many safety nets - such as Universal Credit or housing assistance - are unavailable, leaving people with limited options when facing job loss, illness, or domestic abuse.

Migrants Affected by NRPF

Migrants covered by NRPF include anyone who is “subject to immigration control,” meaning they hold limited leave to enter or remain with a specific NRPF condition, as well as those with no lawful status. This encompasses:

- Individuals on temporary visas - such as students, skilled workers, or those in family categories
- People with pending immigration or asylum appeals
- Failed asylum seekers whose appeal rights are exhausted
- Undocumented individuals who have entered or overstayed without valid leave.

Essentially, if someone is in the UK without settled status or indefinite leave to remain (ILR), and their leave comes with an NRPF condition or they lack leave entirely, they are barred from accessing most welfare benefits, tax credits, or social housing.

How to recognise someone has no recourse to public funds

To carry out a check on an individual's immigration status online, you will need to access the Check someone's immigration status service and complete the relevant steps to access their status information. You need the share code given by the individual (starting with the letter S) and their date of birth.

The NRPF Network also provides an online tool called the Recourse to Public Funds (RTPF) checker, which helps local authorities and support organisations quickly determine whether a person is subject to the NRPF condition. By entering details such as immigration status and type of leave, the checker

identifies eligibility for public funds and highlights what support options may be available. You can find out more about signing up to the RTPF checker here.

Lifting the NRPF Status

Not all migrants who have a temporary visa, are subject to NRPF. Some groups, such as refugees or victims of human trafficking, have limited leave allowing them to access public funds. The following groups may have some opportunity to lift NRPF status.

Family and private life routes

- Those with leave as a partner or parent (Appendix FM, 5- or 10-year route), under the "private life" rule, or as a Hong Kong British National (Overseas). These individuals may apply **if they can show** they are destitute, at risk of imminent destitution, facing exceptional financial hardship, or that a child’s welfare outweighs NRPF restrictions.

EU nationals

- EU nationals with pre-settled status have limited leave to remain and may still be subject to NRPF unless they satisfy the “right to reside” test—typically through work, self-employment, or family connections—before they can access means-tested benefits.

Hong Kong BNO route

- BN(O) visa holders who were previously granted access to public funds (e.g., via dependent applications) can similarly apply for a “change of conditions” to lift NRPF.

Discretionary cases (e.g., students or workers)

- Exceptionally, NRPF may be lifted outside of standard routes—e.g., student or work visa holders facing destitution—if Home Office discretion or court rulings apply.

Undocumented migrants/asylum seekers

- Those without leave (e.g., overstayers, appeal rights exhausted) are automatically subject to NRPF. If they can regularise their status (e.g., via human rights or family life routes), they may then apply for a change of conditions to lift NRPF.

Remember, NRPF status comes under the category of immigration advice, and any advice or support provided to individuals should come from an accredited source under the IAA (Immigration Advice Authority.)

Asylum Seekers

Section 95 support helps asylum seekers in the UK who are waiting for a decision on their asylum claim and are destitute or likely to become destitute. This support can include housing and a weekly cash allowance to cover basic needs like food, clothing,

and toiletries.

Section 4 support is a form of assistance provided by the Home Office to certain refused asylum seekers who cannot leave the UK and would otherwise be destitute. It offers basic accommodation and a small weekly allowance, usually through a payment card, but does not include cash benefits. Asylum seekers receiving Section 4 support are still subject to NRPF, which means they cannot access mainstream welfare benefits or housing assistance beyond the very limited provisions offered under Section 4.

Further Reading and Additional Resources

What is NRPF?

Public funds (accessible) - GOV.UK)

Immigration conditions | NRPF Network

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) – Right to Remain

What is the no recourse to public funds condition? - Free Movement

No recourse to public funds - House of Commons Library

Guidance for those on NRPF

Section 95 asylum support | NRPF

Asylum support: What you'll get - GOV.UK

Asylum Support: financial support and accommodation – Right to Remain

Asylum support and housing - Shelter England

Additional Support available for those with NRPF

Support options for people with NRPF | NRPF Network

Housing help for people with no recourse to public funds - Shelter England

Housing and support options for migrant families | Compas

Housing Rights Information for Housing Advisers (England & Wales)

Home | Project 17

Training for NRPF

Training | NRPF

Shelter Training - Homelessness training - Shelter England

Training | Project 17

Impact of NRPF

Deprivation and the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) condition - Migration Observatory - The Migration Observatory

No reason for no recourse: Why reform of ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’ conditions would be good for London and the UK | WPI Economics

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