

28 November 2008

To Chief Housing Officers of all Local
Housing Authorities in England

Dear Sir or Madam,

HOUSING AND REGENERATION ACT 2008: COMMENCEMENT OF SECTION 315: CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN LOCAL CONNECTION MAY BE ESTABLISHED UNDER SECTION 199 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1996

This letter notifies chief housing officers that section 315 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 comes into force on 1 December 2008.

Section 315 of the *Housing and Regeneration Act 2008* (“the 2008 Act”) amends section 199 of the *Housing Act 1996* (“the 1996 Act”). Section 199 of the 1996 Act sets out the circumstances when a person may establish a “local connection” with a district for the purposes of an application for homelessness assistance under Part 7 of the 1996 Act or an application for social housing under Part 6 of that Act.

The effect of the amendments is that someone serving in the Armed Forces will be able to establish a local connection with a district through residence of choice or employment there, in the same way as a civilian person. The amendments apply in respect of all applications for housing under Part 6, or housing assistance under Part 7, of the 1996 Act made on or after 1 December 2008.

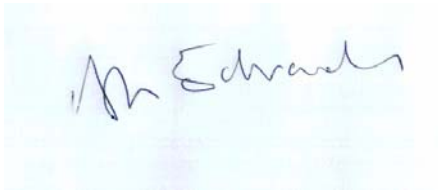
Local authorities are reminded that, as for other applicants, serving or former members of the Armed Forces may have a local connection somewhere other than the district where they have most recently been living or working. This could include residence in an area where they had previously been posted or residence in an area

prior to joining the Services. This is likely to be particularly relevant in the case of Service personnel returning from a final posting overseas.

The statutory codes of guidance on homelessness and the allocation of housing will be revised to reflect these changes, in due course.

Any inquiries regarding the changes to Part 6 of the 1996 Act (allocations) should be directed to Frances Walker. Inquires regarding Part 7 of the 1996 Act (the homelessness legislation) should be directed to Alan Edwards.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frances Walker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Alan Edwards

Homelessness, Overcrowding and Worklessness Division

Frances Walker

Allocations, Access to Housing and CBL Branch