SLIDE 01 / CLEAR GROUND

Are homelessness templates really ’legally checked’?

A helpful question for teams working under significant pressure. Templates are meant to make that work easier.

SLIDE 02 / CLEAR GROUND

The assumption

When a template is already in the system, it is understandable to trust that it is legally sound.

This is a common and reasonable sector pattern. A template may feel established because:

- it is already part of the case-management system
- it was originally provided by a consultant
- teams have relied on it for many years

Inherited templates are a normal part of busy services.

SLIDE 03 / CLEAR GROUND

The reality

A template is usually a helpful starting point, designed to be adapted locally.

Most providers explain that their templates:

- are examples
- may need local adaptation
- are not legal advice

Legal responsibility remains with the local authority. A review supports clear, safe decision-making; it does not confirm legal compliance.

SLIDE 04 / CLEAR GROUND

What I have seen

Small wording adjustments can improve clarity and reduce risk.

- wording that may no longer reflect current practice
- Part 6 and Part 7 duties sitting too closely together
- statutory exceptions that are easy to overlook
- tone that could be clearer or more supportive
- questions that could align more closely with the legal test

Templates naturally change over time as teams copy, adapt and repurpose them to meet local needs. Most only need small, practical adjustments.

SLIDE 05 / CLEAR GROUND

Why it matters

Clearer templates can ease pressure at every point.

- referrers can understand what information is needed
- households can experience a clearer, safer process
- officers spend less time working around unclear wording
- authorities can reduce avoidable challenge and pressure

Sometimes a small change to the template can make a sound decision easier to understand and use.

SLIDE 06 / CLEAR GROUND

Consultancy vs legal advice

Different roles. Both matter.

Legal teams confirm legal accuracy and compliance.

Consultancy supports clarity, accessibility, structure and everyday usability.

Clear Ground brings:

- a legal background (previously a Fellow of ILEX)
- 17+ years' experience across homelessness, housing, service design and accessibility
- professional indemnity insurance

This supportive review work complements formal legal advice. It does not replace it.

SLIDE 07 / CLEAR GROUND

Clear Ground | PAYG service

Make each template clearer, safer and easier to use.

Flexible support for busy teams. Pay-as-you-go template reviews include:

- Plain English
- WCAG-aware accessibility
- GOV.UK content design
- neurodiversity-aware tone and structure
- 17+ years of sector experience
- affordable, flexible support

Small, practical improvements for clearer, more accessible and safer templates - when you need them.

For organisations supporting people in England. Not for private individuals or households.