

WHAT IS HOUSING BENEFIT?

Housing costs are a large part of most people's expenses. If you do not own your home and you pay rent, you may be able to claim Housing Benefit.

WHO CAN CLAIM?

People who pay rent and are getting any of the following:

- Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance or Pension Credit.
- Another DWP benefit, for example Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance.
- A low earned income from employment or self-employment.

The above is not a complete list. If you think you may be able to get help, please ring the benefit telephone number on the back of this leaflet.

ELIGIBLE RENT

Before we are able to work out how much Housing Benefit you may get, we need to work out your eligible rent. We may need to send details of your rent to the Rent Service (see leaflet BF5) depending on the type of accommodation you live in.

Housing Benefit cannot be paid for services such as heating, lighting and water charges.

WILL I QUALIFY?

- If you have savings over £16,000 you normally cannot get Housing Benefit.
- If you have savings over £6,000, this will affect how much Housing Benefit you can get.
- If you have come to the United Kingdom (UK) within two years of your claim, this may affect Housing Benefit.

HOW IS HOUSING BENEFIT WORKED OUT

We will look at:

- The income both you and your partner have coming in, including benefits and earned income.
- The savings and investments you and your partner have.
- The personal circumstances of you and your partner, including your age(s), the size of your family and anyone else who lives with you.

HOW IS HOUSING BENEFIT PAID?

If you rent from a private landlord or a Housing Association, we can pay you or your landlord. You can choose to have your benefit paid direct to your landlord or letting agent.

Your Housing Benefit is normally paid 4 weekly in arrears.

WHEN SHOULD I CLAIM?

You should claim straight away. If you delay you may lose benefit. You can claim up to 13 weeks before you want your Housing Benefit to start.

If you move address or other circumstances change, you should tell us straight away. You may need to make a new claim for Housing Benefit.

EXTENDED PAYMENTS

These are awards of up to an extra 4 weeks Housing Benefit. You may claim if:

- You have been getting Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based), or a combination of the two, for at least 26 weeks.

OR

You or your partner has been getting Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance for at least 26 weeks.

- You or your partner has stopped getting Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based), Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance as you have started work, increased the number of hours you work, or your wages have increased.
- You expect the work, or increase in hours to last for at least 5 weeks.

You can claim by phoning the benefit number given on the back of this leaflet or by visiting the Customer Services Section

ABSENCE FROM HOME

In some cases you can get benefit during time away from your home. However your address must continue to be your sole or main home. Examples of this are given below:

- If you are in hospital for less than 52 weeks.
- If you are on remand.
- If you are sentenced to prison, and the length of your sentence, including the time you have been on remand, is less than or likely to be less than 13 weeks.

HOUSING BENEFIT ON TWO HOMES

If you have to pay rent on 2 properties and the reason could not be avoided, you may receive Housing Benefit on Two Homes, please contact the office for details.

SUPPLYING PROOFS

You can hand in benefit forms, proof of income or rent, or any information relating to benefits at the following:

- Customer Services at Bayard Place
- A Cross Keys Housing Office

Original documents will be photocopied, checked and returned to you.

CONTACTING US

To find out further information, you can phone the following:

(01733) 452241

Or send us an email to:

benefits@peterborough.gov.uk

Or visit our website at:

www.peterborough.gov.uk

The website also includes answers to a number of questions often asked about benefits.

“Look out for other leaflets in this series”

- BF1 “Claiming help with your rent”
- BF2 “Claiming help with your Council Tax”
- BF3 “The Verification Framework”
- BF4 “Non-Dependants”
- BF5 “The role of the Rent Service”
- BF6 “How to Appeal”
- BF7 “Second Adult Rebate”
- BF8 “Backdated Claims”
- BF9 **Not currently available**
- BF10 “Overpayments”
- BF11 “Opening a basic bank Account”

This leaflet is available in the following languages

- Czech
- Kurdish Sorani
- Lithuanian
- Portuguese
- Polish
- Urdu

You can request one in any of the ways shown above.

BENEFITS SERVICE

CLAIMING HELP WITH YOUR RENT



HOUSING BENEFIT & COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT

PETERBOROUGH
CITY COUNCIL

Leaflet – BF1