Introduction

Housing Benefit/Universal Credit and Council Tax Support can help you to pay some or all of your rent and council tax costs if you are on a low income.

From 15 November 2017 you will not be able to make a new claim for Housing Benefit in this area unless you are in one of the eligible groups. Instead you will need to make a claim for Universal Credit.

Everyone liable for council tax will need to claim Council Tax Support from the council even if they are claiming Universal Credit for their housing costs.

Eligible people able to make a claim for Housing Benefit are those that:

- are of state pension age - both you and your partner if you have one (if you are a couple and only one is of state pension age then you will need to claim universal credit) OR
- are in specified accommodation (usually where care and/or personal support is provided), OR
- are (or their partner is) in receipt of a Severe Disability Premium as part of an existing benefit, or were within the last month and continue to satisfy the eligibility criteria for it

To check if you are of state pension age please check on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age).

Universal Credit

To make a claim for Universal Credit for your housing costs please click on the button on the right which will take you through to [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit).

Find out more about [Universal Credit](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit).

Council Tax Support

Please do not forget to also claim Council Tax Support for your council tax costs, if appropriate.

If you are in one of the eligible groups and want to claim Housing Benefit and/or claim Council Tax Support please complete our online claim form by clicking onto the button on the right.

[Apply for housing benefit and/or council tax support](https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/claimsee/browse?siteid=143395599105&mid=EC_ALB)

**Please note:** If you make a claim for Housing Benefit from 15 November 2017 when you are not in an eligible group your claim will be rejected when it is processed and you will be directed to claim Universal Credit. This may delay your application for Universal Credit and could delay the start of your claim.
Change of circumstances

You must tell the Benefits Department about any change in your circumstances as soon as you find out about the change.

If the change means that you are entitled to more benefit and you do not tell us about that change within one month of it happening, you could lose Housing Benefit.

Delay in telling us about changes which reduce benefit entitlement will result in an overpayment which will be recoverable from you.

Please note: at the moment this form cannot be used to notify a change of address within Peterborough or if you are moving to Peterborough and wish to claim benefit for the first time in our area.

We are in the process of improving our forms. In the meantime please use the change of address form (see right) for moves within Peterborough, or if you are new to the area please complete the full online claim form.

If you are moving outside the area and wish to notify us to end your claim you can use this form - please select 'Other' as the type of change. Please include all relevant details within the text box.

If your circumstances have changed, please fill in this form and submit it to the Benefits Department as soon as possible. You should tell us about any change in the financial or personal circumstances of any of the people living in your household, for example:

> changes in income, savings, investments or state benefits;
> a change in the rent paid to a landlord; or
> a change in the number of people living in your household.

Housing benefit BACS form

Please note: this online form is only to be completed by the tenant or landlord to which the claim relates.

The form can be used to:

> update your BACS details
> update payment details to receive payment by BACS instead of cheque
> landlords can request payments on behalf of their tenants (including safeguarding requests)
> tenants can request payments to be made to their landlord (including safeguarding requests).

Housing benefit for two homes

Housing Benefit may be paid for two different homes for a period of up to 4 weeks in certain circumstances where a permanent move from one address to another leaves you with an unavoidable overlap in rent liabilities.
Apply for housing benefit for two homes (claimants and landlords)

It is important to move to your new home immediately as you may not be entitled to housing benefit for your new address if you delay moving in.

You are not considered to have an overlap in rent liabilities if you move into a residential home or if the move is only temporary.

This form will need to be completed and submitted twice; once by the claimant and subsequently by your former landlord. We can only look at your request to award Housing Benefit on two homes once we have received a form completed by both the claimant and the former landlord.

Please note: this is not a form to notify us of a change of address. This is a form in which to claim benefit due to an unavoidable overlap on two properties. Changes of address should be notified using the change of address form.

Council tax support (when housing benefit is already in payment)

Complete the online form to apply online for Council Tax Support where Housing Benefit is already in payment.

Housing benefit backdated claim

Housing benefit and council tax support is normally awarded from the Monday following the date on which we receive your application. This form only relates to backdates where a claim has already been made for the current period.

If you have not yet claimed housing benefit or council tax support, you can claim a backdate on the main housing benefit and council tax support online claim form (https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/eclaimvw/afmain?eba=1_14408945689694&fromid=ECCLAIM).

The maximum period benefit can be considered is as follows:

- If you are of pensionable age you can apply for a maximum 3 months backdated award
- If you are working age (not of pensionable age) you can apply for 1 month backdated award.

You will need to provide full details, together with any supporting evidence, to explain the reasons you did not apply for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support at the correct time.

Sending evidence and documents
If you have evidence or documents to send to us please email them to benefits@peterborough.gov.uk after submitting the claim form, we accept digital photographs, scanned copies or electronic versions.

Please put your benefit claim number in the subject heading (this begins with a ‘2’ and can be found on any letter we send to you) and also mark it "Backdate Application".

**Discretionary Housing Payment**

We have a limited amount of money to make discretionary payments, so all applications are considered carefully. The more information you can give, the more likely it is that we can make a fair decision. It is important that you answer all of the questions. If an application form is not fully completed, it may cause a delay in considering your request.

Complete the online application to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

If you already receive Housing Benefit or the Housing Element in Universal Credit you may be able to get more help with your rent. You can only get this extra help if you already receive Housing Benefit or the Housing Element in Universal Credit, and if we feel that you need more help with this cost.

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot be awarded towards payment of your Council Tax.

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Please note: There are three steps to applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment using this online form:

1. Complete and submit the online form.
2. Follow the link given at the end of the online form to open the Income and Expenditure form. Download, complete and email it back to us at benefits@peterborough.gov.uk. Please ensure you include your claim number in the email subject line.
3. Email your supporting evidence (will be outlined in the form) to benefits@peterborough.gov.uk. Again, please ensure you include your claim number in the email subject line.

We cannot process your request until all three steps have been followed.

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**Other application forms**

You can download and complete the forms below and return them to the benefits service.

- **Certificate of earnings form** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)
- **Financial statement for overpayments** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)
- **Proof of rent certificate** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)
- **Self-employed earnings form** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)
- **Third party authority form** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)
- **Third party authority - landlord or agent** - [File](https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/336450)

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**Contact the revenues and benefits service**

**By email**

Please remember to include your reference number (i.e. council tax account number, benefit claim number, etc.) in all correspondence as this will help us to deal with your enquiry sooner.
By telephone

You can request a call-back for housing benefit enquiries by completing the housing benefit call-back request form (https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/356849).

You can request a call-back for business rates enquiries by completing the business rates call-back request form (https://forms.peterborough.gov.uk/356492).

Or you can call us Monday to Friday between the hours stated below:

- Business rates - 01733 452252 (9am to 5pm)
- Recovery - 01733 452651 (9am to 5pm)
- Benefits - 01733 452241 (8.30am to 5.30pm or 8am to 5.30pm on Monday only)

By post

Revenues and Benefits Service
Peterborough City Council
Sand Martin House
Bittern Way
Fletton Quays
Peterborough
PE2 8TY

By fax

- Business rates - 01733 452585
- Recovery - 0870 2384092
- Benefits - 01733 452579

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