

# Housing Benefit – what you need to know

Allerdale Borough Council:	01900 702650
Carlisle City Council: (option 4)	01228 817200
Copeland Borough Council:	0845 054 8600
Eden District Council:	01768 212235
South Lakeland District Council:	01539 797757
Barrow Borough Council:	01229 404242
Lancaster City Council:	01524 582965

If you start to receive Housing Benefit, and then your circumstances change, you **must** inform Housing Benefit and complete a change of circumstance form (please also inform Impact). If not, you will need to pay back any money you've received which you weren't entitled to, and in some cases you could be convicted and even face imprisonment.

If you're not working or on a low income, and your savings are below a certain level, you may be able to claim Housing Benefit for all or part of your rent.

You can't usually claim Housing Benefit if you have savings of over 16,000 or you're in full time education (unless you're disabled or have children).

If you live with a partner or civil partner only one of you can get Housing Benefit.

In order to claim Housing Benefit you need to complete a Housing Benefit application form. Once you have completed this, the form will be assessed by a Housing Benefit Officer to see if you are eligible to claim and to calculate the amount of Housing Benefit you will be able to claim.

It is important that you fully complete your housing benefit application form **as soon as possible**, and also to provide any other information requested. Failure to provide the information needed may delay your application and your housing benefit payments. This might result in you falling into arrears and being threatened with legal action.

It is very important that the information that you provide is truthful and correct. If you fail to do this, you may need to pay back the benefit money you have received, or in some cases you could be convicted and even face imprisonment.

Your Housing Benefit department will need to see proof of some of the things you write about on your housing benefit claim form. You must provide ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS, copies will not be accepted.

If you do not provide all the proof needed, the council might not be able to pay you any benefit. They will need the same proof for your partner, if you have one. If you cannot send the proof required immediately, send the form back anyway and send the proof later. That way they can start to process your claim, but will not be able to pay you any benefit until they have all the proof.

You will normally need to provide some of the following things: -

- Proof of identity - such as a birth certificate, marriage or civil partnership certificate, passport, medical card, driving

licence, UK residence permit, ID card (Resident permit), EEC identity card or recent gas or electricity bill.

- Proof of your current address - such as a recent gas or electricity bill or a TV licence.
- Proof of your national insurance number – such as National Insurance card or payslips.
- Proof of your capital, savings and investments - such as all your bank statements.
- Proof of earnings (for all adults living in your home) – such as payslips for the last 2 – 5 weeks.
- Proof of benefits, allowances and pensions - such as current award notices or letters from your Jobcentre Plus office.
- Proof of rent and tenancy - such as your tenancy agreement

