

Housing Benefits News

This newsletter lets you know of changes
to the Housing Benefits Service

Issue 2



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Changes to Housing Benefit

You could you be better off after 2nd November 2009



Parents could be up to £39.44 p.w. better off if you have three children

Up to £17.00 p.w better off with one child

There are two changes to Housing Benefit that will take place in November,

- Child Benefit will no longer be counted as income and
- the savings rules for the over 60s are changing.

We will automatically recalculate your benefit to see if the changes will give you more benefit.

Child Benefit

The amount of Child Benefit you receive will not change but we will **not** include it as income when we work out your Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. This could mean that if you have one child and are claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit but not receiving Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance or Income Related Employment and Support Allowance you could be £17.00 per week (p.w.) better off. If you have two children you could be up to £28.22 better off.

If you have more than two children and are receiving Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, your benefits could increase by up to £11.22 p.w for each additional child for which you are claiming child benefit.

If you are claiming Council Tax Benefit only, your benefit could increase by up to £4.00 p.w. with one child or £6.64 for two children.

If you are not receiving income based job seekers allowance, income support or income based employment and support allowance you might be better off after 2 November.			
Receiving Child benefit for	Housing Benefit only	Council Tax Benefit Only	Both Housing and Council Tax Benefit
One child	£13.00 pw	£4.00 pw.	£17.00 pw
Two children	£21.58 pw	£6.64pw	£28.22pw
Three Children	£30.16 pw	£9.28 pw	£39.44 pw
Each additional child	£8.58 pw	£.2.64pw	£11.22 pw

For those receiving an income based benefit your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit will not change. This is because you already receive the maximum Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

Over 60 and savings between £6000 and £16000

You could be better off as well. Savings of up to £10,000 will not be counted although you must still tell us about them. Any savings above £10,000 will still affect your benefit but the change could mean that you are up to £6.80 p.w. better off if you are claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

The Over 60s could be up to £6.80 p.w. better off if your savings are between £6000 and £16000

If you over 60 and not receiving Guarantee credit you might be better off after 2 November?			
Savings	Housing Benefit only	Council Tax Benefit Only	Both Housing and Council Tax Benefit
£6000 – £6499	£0.65	£0.20	£0.85
£6500 – £6999	£1.30	£0.40	£1.70
£7000 – £7499	£1.95	£0.60	£2.55
£7500 – £7999	£2.60	£0.80	£3.40
£8000 – £8499	£3.25	£1.00	£4.25
£8500 – £8999	£3.90	£1.20	£5.10
£9000 – £9499	£4.55	£1.40	£5.95
£9500 – £10000	£5.20	£1.60	£6.80
£10000 – £15999	£5.20	£1.60	£6.80



Recently refused benefit because your Income was too high?

With the new rules from November you might now qualify so why not reapply if you have children or are over 60 with savings between £6000 and £16000.

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Other changes that could affect your Housing Benefit

If you rent from a private landlord and claimed benefit or changed address after April 2008 you are probably receiving Local Housing Allowance (LHA). LHA is based upon your household size and the average rent paid in your area. The Rent Officer has changed the boundaries of the area that affects properties in the south of the borough. This has slightly changed the LHA rates compared to the rates for October. If you live in the south of the borough and are currently receiving Local Housing Allowance your benefit will not change until you have been on your current LHA rate for a year. New claims, those who change address and anyone whose household size changes will be affected after 2 November 2009.

The new November LHA rates for Inner North London (which is the new name for the area) should show on the Valuation Agencies website from mid October 2009. <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk>

and on our website from November 2009
www.barnet.gov.uk/housing-benefits-lha-rates

Help during the recession

At Barnet we have gathered together some useful information that could help us all make it through the recession and called it "bright ideas help and advice during the economic downturn". The page is on our website at www.barnet.gov.uk/bright-ideas



Barnet's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor Andrew Harper said:

"As the recession continues to bite, it is important residents are aware of and take up any benefits they are entitled to which may help them during these difficult financial times."

How to contact us

tel: 020 8359 2111

in person at Burnt Oak Library or one of our surgeries or first contact points

By post to:

London Borough of Barnet
PO Box 333,
Sale M33 6XP

email:

benefits@barnet.gov.uk

fax: 0871 911 6101

We also support type talk
18001 020 8359 2111

If you know anyone claiming benefit fraudulently
tel: 020 8359 2007

It contains information from our website and other sites across the internet.

There is advice on

- income benefits and dealing with redundancy
- budgeting money and finance
- how to get involved with your community and the resources available at the libraries
- training opportunities
- getting fit
- housing and mortgage advice.

and much more

There is also **half price bus travel** across London for Barnet residents receiving Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance. Any resident wishing to find out more about the concessionary travel scheme should visit: www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets/faresandtickets/5568.aspx

Housing Benefit Surgeries

You can talk to a Housing Benefit advisor in person at Burnt Oak Library or one of our surgeries around the borough

Burnt Oak Library, Watling Avenue, Edgware. HA8 0UB
Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm

Hendon Jobcentre Plus, Crown Buildings, 10 Finchley Lane London NW4 1DP
Monday 9am to 4.30pm

Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone N20 0EJ
Tuesday and Friday 9am to 4.30pm

West Hendon Housing Office, 215 West Hendon Broadway London NW9 8DG
Wednesday 2pm to 4pm

Grahame Park Housing Office, 17 – 19 The Concourse London NW9 8DG
Thursday 9am to 4.30pm

How quickly are we assessing claims

We aim to assess new claims and changes of circumstance in an average of 14 days

Average time taken to assess:-	Year to date April 2009 – Sept 2009	Target April 2009 – 2010	Achieved April 2008 – March 2009
New Claims	22.99 days	–	27.18 days
Change of circumstance	5.54 days	–	6.11 days
Combined new claims and change of circumstance	8.63 days	Combined 14 days	10.56 days

