

Claiming Backdated Benefit

- Who can claim?** Anyone who is in the process of submitting a claim (or in certain situations if you are already in receipt of housing or Council Tax Benefit).
- Under what circumstances can you claim?** Normally your claim will be paid from the Monday following the first point of contact. However, if you have good reason (described in the scheme as “good cause”) which is acceptable for you having delayed making your claim, then the Council can backdate.
- What counts as “Good Cause”?** You must show that your circumstances are exceptional and you had continuous good cause during the period that you want your claim to be backdated. The Council will only be able to backdate if you can do this. Examples are :-
- You were prevented from making a claim and you had no-one else to act on your behalf. For example because you were in hospital.
 - You have been given incorrect advice from someone whose advice it would be reasonable to accept. For example from a Solicitor or an Accountant – but they would need to verify this.
 - You have learning or language difficulties and have no-one who could assist you.
- What sort of thing doesn't count as “Good Cause”?** Generally you will be expected to make reasonable enquiries at the right time about claiming Housing and Council Tax benefit. This would normally involve asking at the Council's Benefits Section or the local office of the Benefits Agency. Here are some examples of where you won't be successful :-
- You say that you didn't know about the scheme – ignorance of the law on its own is not normally good cause.
 - You obtained advice from a non-official source such as a friend or relative
- How long can your claim be backdated?** Working age claimants - You can be paid for up to 6 months before you made your claim for backdating provided you have **continuous** good cause and have entitlement throughout the whole period.
Pensioners - Can be paid for up to 3 months.
- Can you seek help to submit your claim?** Yes the Council will be glad to assist. Please contact the Benefits section at the address shown over the page or if you would prefer to seek independent advice, then you should contact someone like the Citizens Advice Bureau or Law Centre.
- What happens next?** The Council will consider your claim and the reasons that you have given for it. You will then be formally notified once a decision is reached.

IMPORTANT – Please submit any supporting documents to support your claim