

Housing and Council Tax Benefit

A guide to Housing and Council Tax Benefit

If you are from: Czech Republic, Estonia,
Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia,
Slovenia, Bulgaria or Romania

This leaflet can be provided in large print, Braille or
audio format by calling 0191 4334646.



When can I claim housing and council tax benefit?

You will be eligible to claim housing and council tax benefit if

- You are currently self-employed – you must be registered as self employed with HMRC, be responsible for paying your own national insurance contributions and keep self employed accounts showing income and expenses. Even if you are temporarily unable to work due to illness you could still be self-employed.
- You are in paid employment and have a current valid workers registration card and worker registration certificate – you should register with the UK Border Agency as soon as you start work **and** get a worker registration card and a certificate showing your employer. For every employer you have, you will need to get a certificate showing your new employer. Benefit can usually only be paid from the date of the certificate, not the date you started work for that employer, so do not delay applying.
- You are in paid employment and have worked for 12 months with a valid workers registration certificate and are no longer required to register - See below.

What do I need to do to apply?

Complete a benefit application form. Contact details for obtaining a form are given on the back page of this leaflet. Provide proof of your income and capital, and your workers registration card and certificate.

What counts as 12 months qualifying work?

You must have worked for 12 months with a valid worker registration card and certificate. During the 12 months, you must not have been out of work for more than 30 days in total.

If you have had more than one employer, you must have had a certificate for each one. Any period when you are not covered by a certificate would count towards the 30 days. We would need to see your worker registration certificates and confirmation from any employers during this period of how long you worked for them.

When can I not claim housing and council tax benefit?

You will not be eligible to claim housing and council tax benefit if

- You were self employed but have given up your business. Or have been unable to work through illness and there is no reasonable prospect of you being able to return to work.
- You are not in paid employment and have not already worked for 12 months with a valid workers registration certificate.

Can I claim if I have finished my 12 month qualifying period but I am not working?

You can only claim in the cases listed below. In all cases, you must satisfy the conditions for having completed 12 months qualifying work.

- You are temporarily unable to work due to illness or accident
- You are registered as a jobseeker and are receiving Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- You are registering as a jobseeker and have been involuntarily unemployed for less than six months after completing a fixed term contract, or becoming unemployed within the first six months of starting work
- You are registered as a jobseeker and are involuntarily unemployed, and have worked for more than a year
- You gave up work to do vocational training relating to your last job
- You have acquired a right of permanent residence
- You are considered to be self sufficient and habitually resident in the United Kingdom

When am I considered self sufficient?

You must have comprehensive private medical insurance, sufficient resources for yourself and your family and have reasonable prospects of finding work.

How can I become permanently resident?

You must apply for residency to the UK Border Agency.

How to get help and advice on housing and council tax benefit

Benefits: Phone: 0191 4334646
Email: benefitenquiries@gateshead.gov.uk

Council Tax Phone: 0191 4333600
Email: counciltax@Gateshead.gov.uk

Or visit our website at www.gateshead.gov.uk/benefits

Or visit us at Gateshead Civic Centre 8.45am –5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.45am – 4.30pm Friday.

Other useful contacts

UK Border Agency

– to register as a worker, for general information on living in the United Kingdom and for information about becoming a permanent resident

Tel 0114 2074074

PO Box 3468, Sheffield, S3 8WA

Website: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk

HMRC

– to register as self employed

Tel 0845 915 4515