

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit:

# **Appeals**





When you apply for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, we will give you a decision in writing about your claim.

The letter will explain how we worked out your Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit, including details of your household income, rent and Council Tax. The letter will also tell you the start and end dates of your claim. If you disagree with our decision or the details in the letter, you can write to us to look at it again.

#### I don't understand the decision

If you do not understand our decision or want to know more about how we made our decision, you can request a 'Statement of Reasons' in writing. You need to tell us what part of your claim you need explaining within one month of our notification letter.

We will respond to your request in writing, giving a detailed breakdown of the information used to work out your claim. If you are happy with our response, the matter will end there.

### I think your decision is wrong

If you disagree with our decision or are not happy with our response to your request for a 'Statement of Reasons' you can ask us to look at our decision again. This is called a 'Reconsideration'.

You must write to the Benefits Team within one month of the notification letter or 'Statement of Reasons' and explain what decision you think is wrong, why you disagree with our decision and provide supporting evidence.

# I have asked you to look at the decision again, what happens now?

When we receive your signed, written request for a Reconsideration, a Senior Benefits Officer will look at your claim again to decide if the original decision was correct or not.

If the Senior Officer decides the original decision was correct or we cannot award more benefit from the date of the original decision, we will write to you explaining why.

If the Senior Officer decides the original decision was not correct, your claim will be amended and we will send you a new notification letter. If you are awarded more Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit from the date of the original decision or your benefit claim is amended to start from an earlier date, you will have new rights to appeal the new decision.

# I still don't agree with your decision and want to refer my appeal to the Tribunals Service

Following a Reconsideration, if we have not changed our original decision and you still disagree, you can make a signed, written appeal within one month of our decision letter. We will then refer your case to the independent Tribunals Service.

The Tribunals Service will send you a form to complete and return within 14 days if you wish to proceed with your appeal. If you delay sending the form, your appeal may not be heard.

If you write to us to appeal a decision without having previously asked for us to reconsider our original decision, we will normally undertake the Reconsideration process before referring your case to the independent Tribunals Service.

### Can I withdraw my appeal?

You can withdraw your appeal at any time prior to a hearing date with The Tribunals Service. You must withdraw your appeal by writing to the Benefits Team. Cases from Basildon Council that are referred to the Tribunals Service are dealt with their offices in Birmingham.

The contact details for the Tribunals Service in Birmingham are as follows:

Visit www.tribunals.gov.uk

Write Tribunals Service

SSCS, Administrative Support Centre

PO Box 14620, B16 6FR

Email ASCBirmingham@tribunals.gsi.gov.uk

Phone 0845 4083500

### Find out more

You can find out more, make a claim or tell us about a change of circumstances by visiting:



www.basildon.gov.uk/benefits

## You can also use the following contact details:

Write The Benefits Team, PO Box 4
Basildon, Essex SS14 1BY

benefitsection@basildon.gov.uk

**Telephone** 01268 294575

### This leaflet is one of a series, as follows:

1. A General Guide

**Email** 

- 2. Second Adult Rebate
- 3. Non-Dependent Deductions
- Discretionary Housing Payment
- 5. Overpayments
- 6. Appeals
- 7. Landlords

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