

What to do now

You should check the details of this notification to make sure everything is correct.

What you should do if you think the decision is wrong

If you want to know more about this decision or if you think it is wrong you must get in touch with us. Please send an email to benefits@hillingdon.gov.uk or write to the address on the front of this letter, giving details of why you think it is wrong. For housing benefit you should contact us within **one month** of the date of this notification. For council tax reduction (CTR), please contact us as soon as possible.

For more information on housing benefit & council tax reduction please go to www.hillingdon.gov.uk/benefits.

What if your circumstances change or have changed?

While you are getting benefits / reduction it is your responsibility to tell us about any changes in your circumstances. To report changes go to www.hillingdon.gov.uk/benchangeincircs or send an email to benefits@hillingdon.gov.uk. You will need to scan / photograph any supporting documents and save these onto your computer before you start to complete the form so you can upload them to the form / email. You can also write to us at the address at the front of this letter. You need to tell us even if you have told the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – a phone call is not always enough. You must tell us of any change within **one month** of it happening for housing benefit or you may lose some of your benefit. For council tax reduction you must tell us as soon as possible. Overpayments resulting from a failure to notify us of a change will be recovered from you.

These are some examples of changes you should tell us about

If you, or your partner start or stop getting:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Tax Credits
- Pension Credit
- Child Benefit

- anyone has a change to income, savings or child care costs
- starting or stopping work,
- someone leaves or moves into your home,
- going into hospital,
- you move out of your home,
- you have a child who leaves school,
- anyone becomes or ceases to be a full time student
- if you or your partner are away from your home for 4 weeks or more
- you have a change in your rent

If you are getting Pension Credit you must report any changes in your income directly to the Department for Work and Pensions. If you are getting Savings Credit you must tell both the Council and the Department for Work and Pensions about changes to your savings and investments.

How your housing benefit / council tax reduction will be paid

If you rent privately, your housing benefit will be paid 2 weekly in arrears to yourself or 4 weekly in arrears to your landlord. If you rent from the Council it will be paid direct to your rent account every week. Council tax reduction is paid to your council tax account. Any shortfall of rent or council tax will need to be paid by you.

Explanation of some terms used overleaf (if you are unsure about any other terms please contact us)

Weekly earned income – if you are working we have converted your wages to a weekly figure

Weekly other income – includes child benefit, pension credit, private pensions, tax credits, tariff income from capital.

Eligible rent – the amount of rent on which benefit can be paid. This can be less than the actual rent you pay due to rent restrictions and / or ineligible charges.

Rent reduction – if your eligible rent is less than the actual rent you pay this figure will show you the amount of the reduction.

Applicable amount – this is the weekly figure that the Government has worked out as the amount needed for day to day living expenses. The amount we use takes into account your individual and family circumstances.

Non dependent deductions – if you have any adults aged 18 or over, other than you and your partner, living in your home, they may be expected to contribute towards your rent / council tax. A deduction may be made from your housing benefit / CTR. For more information please go to www.hillingdon.gov.uk/benefits.

Extra help

It may be possible to give you additional help if your rent is restricted eg by the benefit cap - to apply for a discretionary housing payment please go to www.hillingdon.gov.uk/dhp.

Useful Information/ Data Protection Privacy notice

If you have any queries please phone us on 0300 123 1384 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

If you want to write to us please use the address overleaf or send an email to benefits@hillingdon.gov.uk.

Self serve forms along with help and advice is available on www.hillingdon.gov.uk/benefits. The Data Protection Privacy notice can be found on our website, please visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/privacy

Help us to stop fraud!

If you fail to report a change in circumstances, or commit fraud then you could face criminal proceedings such as a financial penalty or prosecution. To report someone who may be claiming fraudulently, for all Hillingdon Council fraud (including Council Tax) please call free on 08003898313, email on fraud@hillingdon.gov.uk or visit <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/reportfraud>; for Department of Work and Pensions benefit fraud please call the free 24 hour fraud hotline for 0800 854 440 or visit: www.gov.uk/report-benefitfraud.