



# Can I receive Housing Benefit for two homes?

 **Hackney**



## Claiming Housing Benefit for two homes

Under the Housing Benefit rules, you can usually only receive Housing Benefit for the home you are living in.

But, in certain circumstances, you may be able to receive Housing Benefit on two properties. To do this, you will have to meet certain conditions.

## When can I receive Housing Benefit on two homes?

You may be able to receive Housing Benefit on two homes if:

- you have moved from one home to another and you have to pay rent for the notice period on your old home for a short time;
- you (or a member of your household) have a disability and you are waiting for adaptations to be carried out in the property you are due to move into;
- you have to move because you are being (or think you may be) threatened with violence;
- you are a student and you cannot avoid renting a term-time home as well as your main home; or
- you have a large family and permanently need two homes.

## If you have moved from one home to another and you continue to pay rent for the notice period on your old home

You may be able to claim Housing Benefit on your new home and your old home, but only to cover the notice period for your old home.

If you want to claim, you must meet the following conditions.

- 1 You (and your household) must have moved into your new home. You will not be able to receive Housing Benefit on your new home while you are still living in your old home.
- 2 You could not avoid paying rent on both properties. (For example, if you knew you were going to move but did not tell your landlord and give notice in good time, we will not pay Housing Benefit on both homes as you could have avoided paying rent on both properties.)

We will only pay Housing Benefit on both properties for up to four weeks.

If your old landlord rents your old home to a new tenant during this time, we will stop paying benefit for that property.

## If you have a disability and are waiting for adaptations to be carried out on your new home

You may be eligible for Housing Benefit both on your new home for up to four weeks before you move in, and your current home. You will only be able to receive Housing Benefit on your new home if you meet the following conditions.

- The adaptations must be for you or a member of your family. This means you, your partner, your children, or any other young people in your household that you are responsible for.
- The type of work covered by an adaptation depends on the needs of the person with the disability. The adaptations must be carried out to make a home more suitable for a person with a disability. You cannot claim if you are simply waiting for your home to be decorated or for new carpets or furniture.
- The delay for the adaptations must be reasonable.

You will receive Housing Benefit for your new property for up to four weeks from the tenancy start date. This money will be paid as a lump sum after you have moved in to the adapted property.

## If you have to move out of your current home because you are being (or think you may be) threatened with violence

We can pay Housing Benefit on two homes for up to 52 weeks if you have left your home for one of the following reasons.

- Through fear of violence from anyone in your home
- Through fear of violence outside your home by a member or former member of your family

If you want to claim in these circumstances, you must be responsible for paying rent on both the property you have left and the property you have moved into. And, you must intend to return to your original home.

Once we decide to pay Housing Benefit on both homes, you must let us know straight away if at any time you decide not to return to your original home. This is because we cannot pay Housing Benefit once you decide not to return.



## If you are a student and pay rent on two homes

If you have a partner and one of you is (or both of you are) a student who is eligible for Housing Benefit, you may be able to receive Housing Benefit on two homes. For more information on eligible students please see our guide 'Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefits for Students', which is available from:

**Hackney Service Centre**  
**1 Hillman Street**  
**London**  
**E8 1DY**

We may be able to pay Housing Benefit on two properties if you (or your partner) are away studying at university and have a term-time home as well as your main home.

But, we can only pay Housing Benefit on both properties if you cannot avoid living in two homes (for example, if your course is not available locally and because of job commitments or because you have children of school age, your family cannot move). We will also decide whether it is reasonable for us to pay Housing Benefit on both properties.

When we decide whether you could avoid living in two properties we will look at several things, including:

- whether you could reasonably travel to the university each day; and
- whether you could have done a similar course within practical travelling distance from home.

We will also look at reasons why your partner and family could not move closer to the university, and the ties that keep them in their current area.

## If you have a large family

If you have a large family and you rent two homes because your family is too big to fit into one home, we may pay Housing Benefit on both properties.

To be able to claim benefit in this situation, we must have arranged both homes (although we do not have to own them). You cannot get help if you have found these properties yourself.



## Treating two properties as one home

If you and your family live in two homes we may be able to pay Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit if the properties are so close together that you use them as if they were one house.

Your family will need to live permanently in both properties, with all members of your household using both properties as one home.

This would not apply if your family have two homes which they move between, or where different family members live in each property.

In all cases the two properties would need to be next to each other or close enough to be used as one home.

## How do I apply for Housing Benefit on two homes?

If you want to claim Housing Benefit on two homes, write to us at:

**Benefits Service  
Hackney Service Centre  
1 Hillman Street  
London  
E8 1DY**

You should always apply as soon as you can because we award Housing Benefit from the Monday after you apply.

## When we can't pay Housing Benefit on two homes

The list below is not a full list but outlines some situations in which we can't pay benefit on two homes.

**1** You cannot move to your new property straight away because you are waiting for a Social Fund loan to help you move.

If you are waiting for a Social Fund loan to help with the move and you:

- have reached the qualifying age to receive Pension Credit;
- have a disability; or
- have a child who is under six years old;

you can apply for an advanced Housing Benefit payment. This means we will pay Housing Benefit on your new property for up to four weeks before you move in.

The Government are changing the age at which people can apply for Pension Credit. From April 2010, the qualifying age is being slowly increased. The Government plan to continue to raise the qualifying age for Pension Credit until 2020, when you will have to be 66 in order to claim Pension Credit. If you are not sure whether you are old enough to receive Pension Credit, phone us on **020 8356 3399**.



We will only pay Housing Benefit on one property. You cannot receive Housing Benefit for your old home while we are paying the advanced Housing Benefit payment.

**2** You are moving out of your home temporarily because your landlord is making essential repairs.

If your landlord asks you to move out temporarily so they can make essential repairs to your home, you will only have to pay rent on the property that is being repaired, not on both properties. So, we will only pay Housing Benefit on the property that is being repaired.

## Can I claim Council Tax Benefit on two homes?

No. If you have moved from one property to another, but are still legally responsible for paying council tax on your old home, you cannot receive Council Tax Benefit for both properties. You can only ever receive Council Tax Benefit for the property you are living in.

However, if one property is empty, you may be able to get an exemption (not have to pay council tax) for up to six months. Contact our Council Tax Department for more information on **020 8356 3154**.

## More information



If you need more information you can contact us in the following ways.

Write to:

**Revenues and Benefits  
Hackney Service Centre  
1 Hillman Street  
London  
E8 1DY**

Phone: **020 8356 3399**

Textphone: **020 8356 3725**

Fax: **020 8356 3655**

Email: **Benefits@hackney.gov.uk**

Website: **www.hackney.gov.uk**

If you prefer, you can drop in to our service centre (see above for for address) Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page and return it to the address below.

**Bengali**

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নিচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নিচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

**Somali**

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

**French**

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

**Spanish**

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**Kurdish**

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

**Turkish**

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**Polish**

Jeśli chcesz dowiedzieć się, jaka jest treść tego dokumentu, zaznacz odpowiednie pole, wpisz swoje nazwisko, adres i nr telefonu w dolnej części niniejszej strony i przeslij na poniższy adres.

**Vietnamese**

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

**Urdu**

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

**Chinese**

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**In another language, please state:**

Name:   
Address:   
Tel:

**Return to:** Hackney Revenues and Benefits Service,  
Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, London, E8 1DY.

