

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

**Phone enquiries:** 020 8356 3399

**Fax:** 020 8356 3655 **Textphone:** 020 8356 3725

**Counter enquiries:** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

**Email:** [benefits@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hackney.gov.uk)

**Website address:** [www.hackney.gov.uk](http://www.hackney.gov.uk)



Please write your Hackney Housing or Council Tax Benefit number in this box if you know it.

## Backdating your claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit

If you get Housing or Council Tax Benefit but would have made a claim for benefit sooner if you could have, you can ask us to backdate your claim for benefit. This means that we could treat your claim as if you sent us your claim form on an earlier date.

We can usually award benefit from the Monday after the day we receive your claim. Sometimes we can pay benefit from an earlier date if you have a good reason for not claiming earlier. This reason must have lasted throughout the whole period that you want us to backdate your claim for benefit.

From 6th October 2008, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit can be backdated for up to 6 months if you are working age. If you want us to consider paying your benefit from an earlier date, tell us the dates you want benefit from and why you did not claim earlier. People of pension age may have their claims backdated for 3 months.

If you believe we should backdate your claim, you must write to us to tell us your reasons for not claiming benefit sooner. You can use the form that is attached to this leaflet to ask us to backdate your claim.

### What would be a 'good reason'?

We look at each case for backdating claims individually. There is no set list of circumstances that count as 'good reason' for not having claimed sooner.

We look at things that may have affected your ability to claim benefit sooner, such as your age, and your health and other circumstances.

### What reasons might you accept?

Here are some examples of reasons we may accept. (This is not a complete list.)

- If you have been in hospital
- If you have severe and ongoing health problems
- If someone close to you has died

Whatever the reason, you will have to give us evidence, including, for example, medical certificates or hospital attendance records. This is not a complete list of the evidence we need. If we need more evidence we will write to you.

### What details do I need to give you?

You must give us:

- evidence of your reason for not making your claim for Housing or Council Tax Benefit earlier; and
- proof that this reason lasted throughout the whole period that you want us to backdate.

We will not normally accept that you did not know you were allowed to claim benefit as a good enough reason to backdate your claim.

It is important that you give us as much information as you possibly can. We do not share any information that you give us with anyone.

### What can I do if you do not accept my claim?

If we turn down your request to have your benefit backdated and you disagree with the decision, you can ask us to explain our decision.

If you still disagree with us and the explanation that we give you, you can ask us to change our decision. A different officer will look at your claim again to consider all the relevant facts.

### We will change our original decision if it is appropriate.

If you are unhappy with our decision, you can appeal to the Appeals Service. To find out about how you can do this, please contact our Call Centre on the number below.

### Where can I get more information, help and advice?

If you want any more information and advice, please phone us on 020 8356 3399 or e-mail us at [benefits.callcentre@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:benefits.callcentre@hackney.gov.uk). If you have hearing difficulties, call 020 8356 3725 for our minicom service.





