

# Housing Benefit

## General Information Bulletin

Department for Work and Pensions, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Caxton House, Tothill Street,  
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<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>

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**HB G4/2015**

**17 April 2015**

<b>Contact</b>	Queries about the <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>technical content of this bulletin</b>, contact details are given at the end of each article</li><li>• distribution of this bulletin, contact <a href="mailto:housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a></li></ul>
<b>Who should read</b>	All Housing Benefit (HB) staff
<b>Action</b>	For information

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## Reminder – notifying changes of local authority bank details

1. Changes of local authority (LA) bank details (for Housing Benefit (HB) subsidy, Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) and ad-hoc payments) must be notified to the following address:

Housing Benefit Unit  
Housing Delivery Division  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Room B120D  
Warbreck House  
Blackpool  
FY2 0UZ

2. Notifications should be addressed to your authority's usual subsidy/DHPs contact point at Warbreck House.
3. No bank details should be notified to Caxton House or Quarry House.
4. When notifying changes, the following new bank details are required:
  - bank name
  - bank address
  - account name
  - account number, and
  - sort code.
5. This reminder should be brought to the attention of relevant LA teams.
6. Any enquiries regarding this reminder should be e-mailed to:  
[michael.mina@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:michael.mina@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

## Benefit Cap – Benefits Up-rating Period

7. The Benefit Cap National Calculation Team has now received their annual up-rating entries for 2015 year. Almost 28,000 cases were identified which require a full case check in order to up-rate all benefits in payment and revise the existing Benefit Cap calculations. These cases will be processed from week commencing 7 April 2015 and due to the volumes of cases this up-rating exercise is likely to extend to the end of June 2015.
8. As each case is re-assessed a new Benefit Cap Calculation will be sent to the LA in the normal way for their action.
9. Where an LA is aware of a case which has not yet been up-rated please **do not** send an individual email template to the Benefit Cap Calculation Team **before** the end of June 2015. All cases will be up-rated in the order in which they are held on the Benefit Cap System. LAs are asked not to contact the Benefit Cap Calculation Team about individual cases until this exercise has

been fully completed. Should we receive enquires about uprating individual cases we cannot respond to them and will return the email to the LA un-actioned.

10. Thanks for your help and co-operation during this uprating period.

### **Armed Forces Reservists – increase to the training concession**

11. From 6 April 2015 claimants in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support who are in the Armed Forces Reserves can undertake 43 days of training in their first year without it affecting their entitlement to those benefits. Partners of claimants in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance are also entitled to the increased training concession. The training days will be formed of 3 – 4 training blocks.

12. Any queries please contact [housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Changes to Class 2 National Insurance contributions**

13. HM Revenue and Customs has reformed the way that self-employed people pay Class 2 contributions. These reforms have a technical consequence for the calculation of the notional Class 2 contribution for benefit claimants. The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No. 2) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/478) made amendments to HB legislation, simply to align the language and legislative references. The regulations came into force on 6 April 2015.

14. From the 2015/2016 tax year Class 2 contributions will become an annual liability to be determined retrospectively based on the person's tax self-assessment. The changes do not affect how decision makers should calculate notional Class 2 contributions.

15. The 'small earnings exception' for self-employed people is replaced by the small profits threshold, also from 6 April 2015. A self-employed person whose earnings are below the 'small profits threshold' will not be liable to pay Class 2 contributions. This has no affect on how decision makers calculate the notional Class 2 contribution. The 'small profits threshold' should be treated in the same way as the 'small earnings exception'.

16. Any queries please contact [housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Fit for Work**

17. Following feedback from the Advice Line on the amount of queries being raised, we are repeating this article first published in [G3/2015](#) to reinforce awareness of the scheme.

18. Last month General Practitioners (GPs) in Sheffield and North Wales were able to start referring eligible patients to a Fit for Work occupational health assessment.
19. Fit for Work is designed to support people in work with health conditions, and help people back to work who are off sick.
20. There are two main elements to Fit for Work:
  - free, expert and impartial work-related health advice via a website and telephone line
  - referral to an occupational health professional for employees who have been off sick or who are likely to be off sick for four weeks or more. The Fit for Work occupational health professional will identify obstacles preventing the employee from returning to work and produce a Return to Work Plan tailored to the employee's needs.
21. Fit for Work will rapidly expand across England and Wales with GPs being able to refer nationwide by autumn 2015. Employers in areas where GPs can refer may start to receive Return to Work Plans. These provide recommendations and evidence of sickness, replacing the need for a fit note. Employers will be able to refer from autumn 2015, once GP roll-out has been completed.
22. Fit for Work is being delivered in England and Wales by Health Management Ltd and in Scotland by the Scottish Government via NHS Scotland.
23. Further information on where the service is live and rolling out soon in England and Wales, can be found [here](#).
24. For information on Fit for Work Scotland roll-out, can be found [here](#).

## Statutory Instruments

24. The following Statutory Instruments (SIs) have been laid:
  - 2015 No.398, The Offshore Installations (Offshore Safety Directive) (Safety Case etc.) Regulations 2015, coming into force 19 July 2015
  - 2015 No.676 (C.38), The Pensions Act 2011 (Commencement No. 6) Order 2015, came into force 1 April 2015
  - 2015 No.740 (C.39), The Welfare Reform Act 2012 (Commencement No. 23 and Transitional and Transitory Provisions) (Amendment) Order 2015, made on 17 March 2015
  - 2015 No.742, The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Transitional Provisions and Appropriate Independent Advice) Regulations 2015, coming into force 6 April 2015

- 2015 No.879, The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) Regulations 2015, coming into force from 6 April 2015
- 2015 No.889, The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, coming into force 6 April 2015

25. Copies of SIs can now be downloaded from DWP's own website <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/specialist-guides/law-volumes/the-law-relating-to-social-security/> and the website of the Office of Publication Sector Information <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm>

## What's new on the web

26. The following items can be found on the website link shown

<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Link</b>
<b>HB G3/2015</b>	Universal Credit families' expansion Universal Credit national expansion Universal Credit at Work – spring 2015 Fit for Work Risk Based Verification Qualified HB Subsidy Claims HB Subsidy Team generic email address Debt Market Integrator Personal Independence rollout Benefit Cap – secure email addresses Cases with the Upper Tribunal	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417377/g3-2015.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417377/g3-2015.pdf</a>

	Statutory Instruments	
	What's new on the web	
<b>HB A5/2015</b>	Housing Benefit operational information, performance support and inspection in 2015/16	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a52015-housing-benefit-operational-information-performance-support-and-inspection-in-201516">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a52015-housing-benefit-operational-information-performance-support-and-inspection-in-201516</a>
<b>HB A6/2015</b>	Discretionary Housing Payments returns for April 2014 to March 2015	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a62015-discretionary-housing-payments-returns-for-april-2014-to-march-2015">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a62015-discretionary-housing-payments-returns-for-april-2014-to-march-2015</a>
<b>HB A7/2015</b>	Pension flexibilities, further guidance	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a72015-pension-flexibilities-further-guidance">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a72015-pension-flexibilities-further-guidance</a>
<b>HB S4/2015</b>	Additional funding to meet the costs of implementing welfare reform changes in 2015/16	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-subsidy-circular-s42015-additional-funding-to-meet-the-costs-of-implementing-welfare-reform-changes-in-201516">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-subsidy-circular-s42015-additional-funding-to-meet-the-costs-of-implementing-welfare-reform-changes-in-201516</a>
<b>HB Direct issue 158 April 2015</b>	Newsletter	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-direct-april-2015-issue-158">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-direct-april-2015-issue-158</a>