

Housing Benefit

General Information Bulletin

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www.gov.uk/dwp

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

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New publication for communicating with LAs

1. As you know, Housing Delivery Division use two monthly routine publications to communicate news and general information and guidance with LAs; namely the HB Direct newsletter and this General Information Bulletin.
2. Over the past year, contributions for each of these communications have been irregular. It seems to follow that if we have a full issue of one then the other tends to be extremely light in terms of content or, as has happened recently, we have not issued an HB Direct at all. When this happens it can result in a lengthy period before some messages are communicated as contributors wait until the next suitable publication (in terms of the type and style of the article) to share with LAs.

New replacement publication and timings

3. To address this, following consultation/agreement with the LA Practitioners' Operational Group, we will be replacing the current publications with a new 'all in one' guaranteed monthly publication named 'LA Welfare Direct'. It will incorporate all the positive features of our current routine publications but will include both informal and more formal messages. We plan to issue this publication on the first working day of each month. However, this may be subject to a small delay each month if we need to include an urgent or time-bound message.
4. We will also issue a 'light' paired down version, namely 'LA Welfare Direct lite' mid-monthly if necessary to ensure our messages to LAs are communicated timeously.
5. We are planning to issue the first edition on Monday 3 September so this is the last edition of the General Information Bulletin.
6. Do note, Urgent Bulletins will still be used as and when needed but will remain reserved for urgent announcements (for example UC/Ministerial announcements, judicial review outcomes and such like) and this new publication will have no impact on our HB adjudication and subsidy circulars.

Benefits of an 'all in one' publication for LAs

- One style of publication containing all information
- Easier for recipients to find previously published articles
- Facility for an additional standardised (light) publication for time sensitive communications for the remainder of each month
- A guaranteed monthly publication due to 'running content articles' which will enable us to consistently engage with LAs
- Better facilitate improved contribution on all areas of DWP Welfare Reform that affects LAs; supported by the removal of HB in the title.

7. We hope you'll like the new style communication and welcome your feedback. Any questions or feedback should be emailed to the editor valerie.hunt@dwp.gsi.gov.uk on the HDD Communications Team.

Notice: Discretionary Housing Payments mid-year monitoring returns 2018-19 from English and Welsh LAs

8. Just to let you know we are approaching the next mid-year monitoring period for English and Welsh Local Authorities to report on their Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) expenditure. The period covered will be from 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018. Full details and monitoring return excel sheet will be sent out in September 2018. The DHP monitoring returns should include payments made to both Housing Benefit (HB) and Universal Credit (housing cost) claimants. Many thanks for your continued co-operation in providing this valuable information.

HB/CTB decisions by the Upper Tribunal

9. Decision Making and Appeals (DMA) Leeds is aware of the following HB cases that have been decided by the Upper Tribunal (UT):
- CH/979/18: Remit - FtT erred in proceeding in the absence of either the claimant or her representative.
 - CH/359/18: Claimant appeal dismissed. Money in account was not held on trust.
 - CH/2415/17: Capital. Further findings needed on difficulties in obtaining distribution of deceased's estate.
 - CSH/94/18: Renting previously owned property. Insufficient findings of fact.
 - CH/3617/14: Removal of Spare Room Subsidy. Remit. Nelson followed.
10. Decisions of the Upper Tribunal are published on their website which can be found here:
<http://www.administrativeappeals.tribunals.gov.uk/Decisions/decisions.htm>
11. If you have any queries about cases before the Upper Tribunal Judges or courts, please contact us by email at fldmdma.customersupportservices@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or Fax – on 0113 2324841

New Legislation

12. No new Statutory Instruments (SIs) have been laid since the last General Information Bulletin in July 2018.
13. Copies of SIs/SRs can now be downloaded from legislation.gov.uk

What's new on our HB pages on www.gov.uk

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

Document Type	Subject	Link
HB G7/2018	Customer Information System Interest Automation Non receipt of an HB Stop notification from Universal Credit HB Cases with the Upper Tribunal New Legislation What's new on our HB pages on www.gov.uk	<u>HB G7/2018</u>