

# First Release

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**Next publication:**  
21<sup>st</sup> Jan 2014  
(See Notes section)

## **Housing Benefit Speed of Processing: April 2013 to June 2013**

*This Statistical First Release contains Official Statistics produced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on Speed of Processing (SoP) of Housing Benefit claims.*

*These show the average time taken to process new claims and changes of circumstances for Housing Benefit (HB) in calendar days for each local authority, rounded to the nearest day.*

These statistics were released on 22 October 2013 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority and contain new statistics relating to quarter 1 2013/14 (April 2013 to June 2013).

These statistics are Official Statistics. See:  
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/types-of-official-statistics>.

This is the first release of these statistics since the abolition of Council Tax Benefit in April 2013; Council Tax Benefit was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by a system of localised support.

### **Key Findings**

- The average time taken to process new HB claims for quarter 1 2013/14 is 24 calendar days, compared with 25 calendar days in quarter 1 of 2012/13.
- The average time taken to process changes of circumstances for HB claims is 11 calendar days for quarter 1 2013/14, compared with 10 calendar days in quarter 1 of 2012/13.

### **Further information and detailed tables, including a breakdown by local authority, can be viewed at:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing--2>

*If you have any comments or requests regarding this publication, please contact DWP via [stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).*

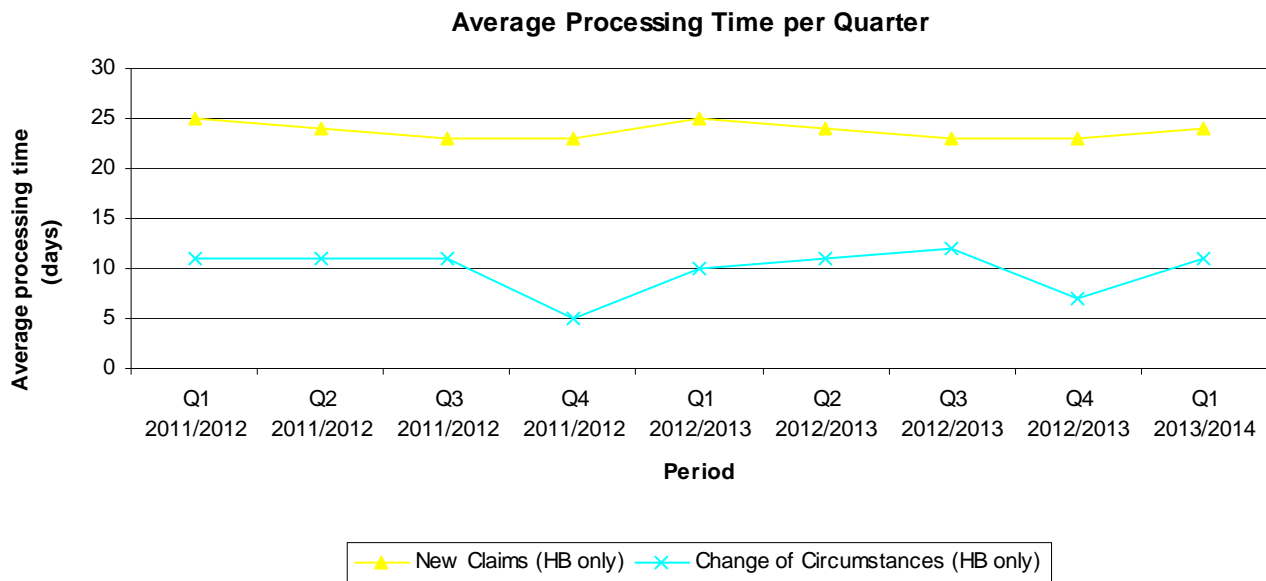
## HB Speed of Processing

HB is an income related benefit. Speed of processing relates to the average time taken to process new claims and changes of circumstances for this benefit. The average time is measured in calendar days, rounded to the nearest day.

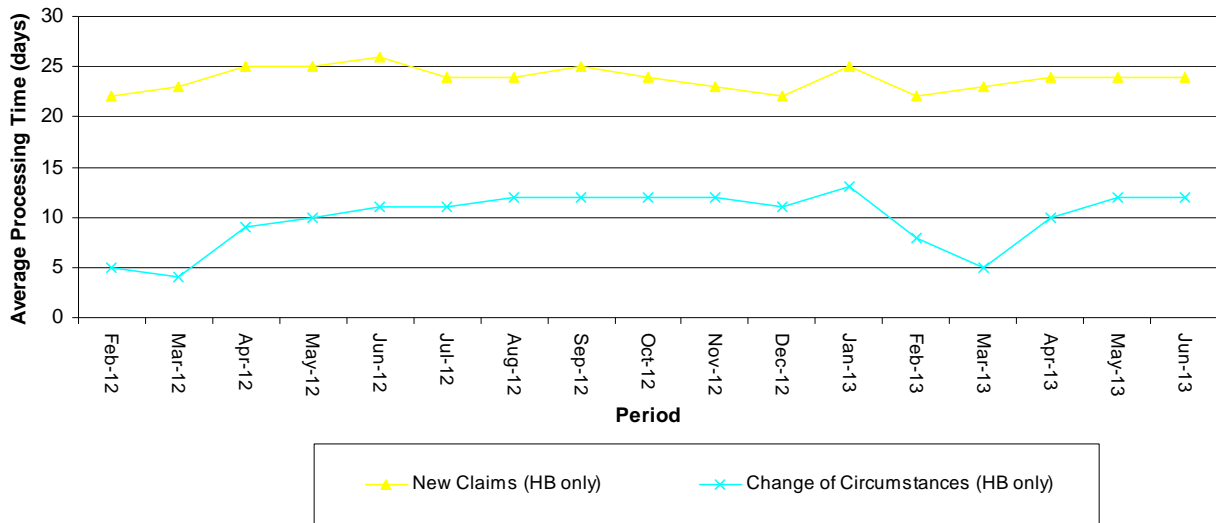
**Table 1 Average Speed of Processing for quarter 1, 2013/14:**

Average number of days to process (Great Britain)		
	New Claims	Change of Circumstances
<b>Quarter 1</b>		
April	24	10
May	24	12
June	24	12

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE)



### Average Processing Time per Month



**Notes:**

Further information on Speed of Processing data sources and methodology is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/209959/sop\\_rti\\_overview.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209959/sop_rti_overview.pdf)

Latest statistical breakdowns are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing--2>

## NOTES

### 1. Related Housing Benefit statistics

a) The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) also publish Housing Benefit monthly caseload National Statistics – the statistics detail the number of people in receipt of Housing Benefit and the amount of benefit received. They also include breakdowns by local authority, tenancy type, passported benefits, family type and age group. See <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-caseload-statistics--2> (for historic statistics).

b) The historical Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit Claims Administration Quarterly Performance Data which is available to 2007/08 are based on clerical returns made by individual local authorities. Breakdowns of new claims and changes processing times are available historically, and the new claims processing times are broadly comparable over time. However, a change in definition for changes of circumstances between 2007/08 and 2009/10 means that direct comparison of this element with Speed of Processing statistics is not meaningful. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-2012-13>

c) Access to previously reported Right Time Indicator statistics is available via the following page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-overview-of-speed-of-processing-right-time-indicator-statistics>

d) In addition, users can find links to DWP additional statistical analyses that have not been included in our standard publications at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/ad-hoc-statistical-publications-list>

### 2. National Statistics Code of Practice

DWP complies with the National Statistics Code of Practice and supporting Principles. Detailed policy statements and statement of compliance with the pre-release access to official statistics order 2008 are available via the link below:

[DWP policy statements](#)

DWP would like to hear your views on our statistical publications. If you use any of our statistics publications, we would be interested in hearing what you use them for and how well they meet your requirements. Please email DWP at [stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk). If you would like to receive occasional e-mails from DWP to directly inform you of documents seeking the views of users, join the “Welfare and Benefits” community at [www.statsusernet.org.uk](http://www.statsusernet.org.uk).

### 3. Known Issues, Changes and Revisions to SoP statistics

This is the first release of these statistics since the abolition of Council Tax Benefit in April 2013.

Council Tax Benefit was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by a system of localised support. In England, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) will be responsible for statistics. The Scottish and Welsh Governments have similar responsibility.

Quality assurance processes identified problems with quarter 1 data for 1 local authority in relation to these statistics. In keeping with UKSA protocols we did not publish data for this local authority for quarter 1 2013/14. Analysis indicates that this omission should not significantly bias the headline Great Britain estimates for the average speed of processing for new claims and changes of circumstance.

As always with these statistics, genuine variations between months can occur at a Local Authority level. Some of these are caused by time limited issues or localised changes in operational policy. Hence, figures for individual authorities should be interpreted with care.

### 4. Notification of future changes to SoP statistics

None planned.