

# First Release

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014  
ISSN: 2056-824X

Coverage: Great Britain

Theme: People and Places



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

**Issued by:**  
Information Exploitation  
Directorate  
Department for Work and  
Pensions

Telephone:  
Press Office: 0203 267 5144

Website:  
[www.gov.uk/dwp](http://www.gov.uk/dwp)

**Statistician:**

Katie Dodd  
Information Exploitation  
Directorate  
Department for Work and  
Pensions  
Room BP5201  
Benton Park Road  
Longbenton  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE98 1YX

Telephone: 0191 216 6263  
Email:  
[katie.dodd@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:katie.dodd@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

**Next publication:**  
21st January 2015  
(See Notes section)

## Housing Benefit Speed of Processing: April 2014 to June 2014

*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.*

*They 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 2014 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority and contain new statistics relating to quarter 1 of 2014/15 (*April 2014 to June 2014*).

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

There are no longer any Council Tax Benefit statistics to produce alongside those for Housing Benefit, as 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 of 2014/15 is 24 calendar days. This is consistent with the average time taken to process new HB claims for quarter 1 of 2013/14 (which was also 24 calendar days).
- The average time taken to process change of circumstances to HB claims for quarter 1 of 2014/15 is 9 calendar days. This average has decreased in comparison with quarter 1 of 2013/14 (where the average was 11 calendar days).

### 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

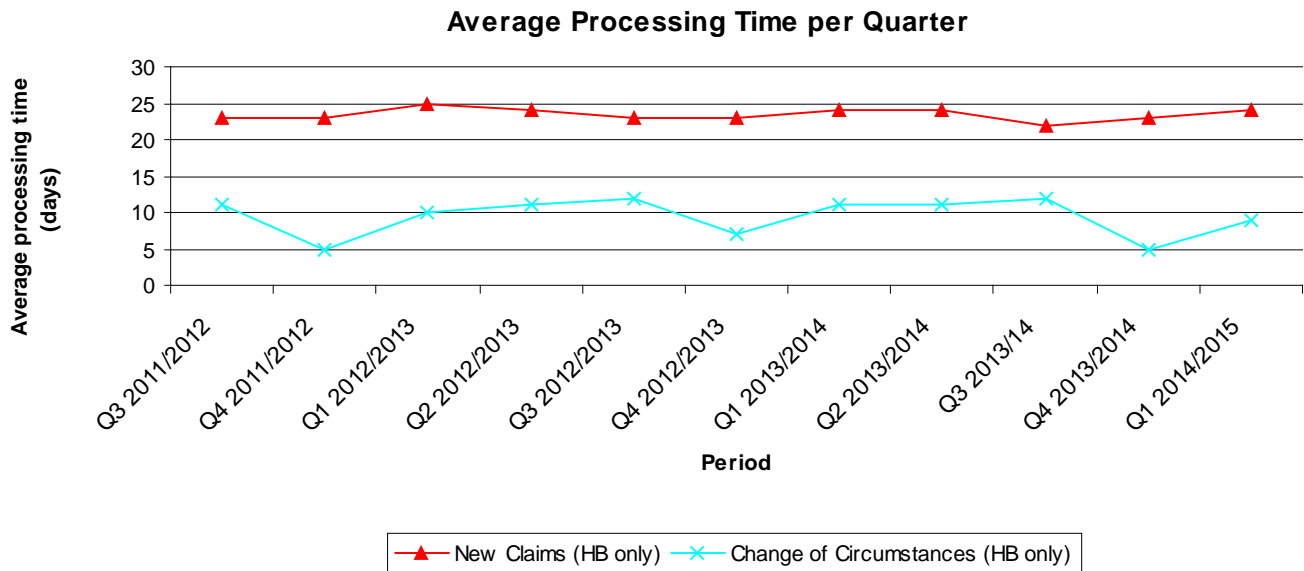
HB is an income related benefit. Speed of processing relates to the average time taken to process new claims and changes of circumstances for this benefit. The average time is measured in calendar days, rounded to the nearest day.

**Table 1 Average HB Speed of Processing for quarter 1, 2014/15:**

Average number of days to process (Great Britain)

	New Claims	Change of Circumstances
<b>Quarter 1</b>		
April	24	8
May	24	10
June	23	10

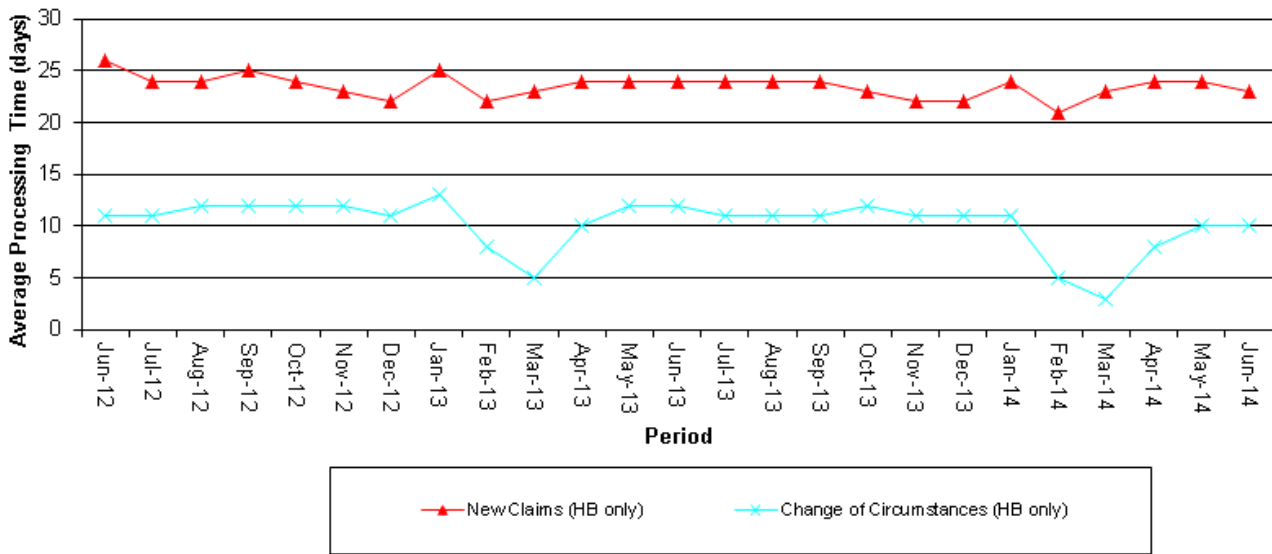
Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE)



### 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)

### Average Processing Time per Month



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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-benefit-caseload-statistics--2>

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) 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

Council Tax Benefit was abolished in April 2013. Therefore the January 2013 to March 2013 publication (quarter 4 2012 to 2013) was the last one to contain Council Tax Benefit.

Quality assurance processes identified problems with quarter 1 data for 6 local authorities in relation to these statistics. In keeping with UKSA protocols we did not publish data for these local authorities for quarter 1 2014/15. Analysis indicates that these omissions 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

We plan to improve the presentation and content of this statistical summary in future publications. Users are invited to send any related comments or requests *via* [stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) or by completing and returning the questionnaire here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-questionnaire>