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Digital Group

Housing Benefit: Speed of Processing overview

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What is Speed of Processing?

The average time taken to process new claims and changes of circumstance for Housing Benefit (HB). Speed of processing is the mean average processing time in calendar days, rounded to the nearest day. Speed of processing replaces the Right time indicator.

How is Speed of Processing derived?

Local authorities send DWP monthly customer level data electronically using the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE). SHBE provides information on current live HB claims and details of any changes of circumstance that have been processed. DWP uses this information to calculate Speed of Processing (SoP) for each local authority, as well as an overall national SoP figure. DWP has excluded from the calculations all cases that the SHBE data indicates have taken more than 12 months to process. Quality assurance work indicates that the majority of these cases are a result of processing or software errors. Therefore their inclusion in the SOP statistics would not provide an accurate picture of HB processing performance. A copy of the updated Speed of Processing Derivation Guide can be obtained by emailing: stats-consultation@dwp.gpn.gov.uk