

Factsheet B19: Housing related Benefits

If you have to pay rent on your home, **Housing Benefit** may be paid in full to anyone on a means-tested benefit such as Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Income Related Jobseeker's Allowance.

Means-tested benefits are paid to people with no or low income or savings. There are some people who cannot get Housing Benefit, for example full-time students, so you need to check first.

Housing Benefit is paid by your local authority. The amount of benefit that will be paid is only enough to cover what is called your 'eligible rent'. This may be less than your actual rent. The local authority decides what they think is a reasonable rent, depending on where you live.

If you live in what is known as '**social housing**', in other words you rent from your local authority or from a housing association, your Housing Benefit should cover all of your rent, although there are some strict rules about how many bedrooms your household should occupy and this will affect how much Housing Benefit you get.

Please see our factsheets about the **Bedroom Tax** and **Discretionary Housing Payments**.

Tenants who rent from **private landlords** may find that Housing Benefit does not cover all of their rent. You will be paid at the Local Housing Allowance rate, which is a standard amount of maximum benefit set according to where you



live. Up to 70% of private rented property in your area will have rents higher than will be covered by Housing Benefit. It also depends on how many people are in your household, as they will only pay the Local Housing Allowance rate for the number of rooms that they think you need.

Council Tax Benefit has been replaced by a new scheme called **Council Tax Support** which is run by your local authority. This means that you may have to pay a small proportion of your Council Tax, but how much of a contribution you will be asked to pay depends on where you live, because different local authorities have different schemes.

People over State Retirement Age have been protected from this change, and at the moment they will have all of their Council Tax covered.

If you want to claim Housing Benefit or Council Tax support, contact your local authority. If you do not know who they are, use the local authority finder at www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council.

If you require further information or would like this factsheet in an alternative format you can contact us by calling: 01508 491210, by emailing: info@equallives.org.uk, or by writing to: Equal Lives, 15 Manor Farm Barns, Fox Road, Framingham Pigot, Norfolk, NR14 7PZ.

