

PERSONAL DETAILS

“**Partner**” means someone of the same or opposite sex that you live with as a couple; you may be married or in a civil partnership or living together as if you were husband and wife or as if you were civil partners. From 5 December 2005 same sex couples living together will be treated as partners. This means if you have claimed benefits in the past as a single person, you will have to advise us that you wish to make a joint claim if you live with a partner.

Failure to inform Aberdeen City Council that you are forming a civil partnership or are living together as civil partners could mean that your Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit is overpaid and you may be asked to repay it.

“**Your Nationality**” - you **MUST** answer these questions, otherwise we cannot pay you benefit.

If you have not lived in the UK for the whole of the last 2 years, or if there are doubts about your immigration status, we may send you another form to complete.

Don't forget, for new claims you **MUST** give us proof of identity and National Insurance Number for yourself, and also for your partner if you have one. On the 'checklist', there is a full list of the type of documents we can accept as proof.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

If you have children or young people who live with you, please complete the 'Others in Your Household' supplementary form. A child or young person is someone is living with you, and that you get Child Benefit for. This would usually be your own children who are still at school, OR in further education or training and under 20. Adult children, or children who are in higher education (eg. University), who still live with you should be included in the section other people who live with you.

OTHER PEOPLE WHO NORMALLY LIVE WITH YOU

These people are often referred to in Benefits as “Non-dependants”. A non-dependant is someone who lives with you, but who does not pay any rent in the property. They may have an informal arrangement to give you an agreed sum for their keep. People in this group may include grown-up children; parents; other relatives or friends. A non-dependant is different from a boarder or a sub-tenant or a joint tenant.

A “**boarder**” is someone who lives with you and who has an agreement with you to pay for his or her accommodation. Part of what they pay will be for meals which are eaten on your premises.

A “**sub-tenant**” is someone who pays you for accommodation, but whose rent does not cover any meals.

A “**joint-tenant**” is someone (not your partner) who is jointly responsible with you for paying the rent at the property you live in.

INCOME

If you or your partner are not in receipt of Pension Credit, please complete the 'Income and Capital' supplementary form. If you cannot provide proof of your earnings, you will need to ask your employer to complete a Certificate of Earnings. If you have just started work and do not have any payslips, you can ask your employer to send us a letter telling us when you started work, what you will be paid, and how many hours you will work. You can send us your payslips as you get them. If you do send them in separately from your claim form, please ensure that your name, address and National Insurance Number are clearly marked.

"Self Employed Earners" - Where possible, you should send us properly prepared accounts. If you have not been self-employed for very long, or if for some reason you cannot provide accurate and complete accounts, we may have to send you another form to fill in. You can save time by calling us and asking for this now, if you know that you will need it.

"Students" - Most students cannot qualify for benefit, but the rules are quite complex and there are many exceptions. The following groups of students can claim: those getting Income Support; those on part-time courses; those over 60; those responsible for a child; those who have a disability premium or who have been classed as unfit for work for over 28 weeks. This is not a full list of students who can claim. If you are not sure if you are eligible, please ring us, or send in the completed form for assessment.

OTHER INCOME

You should use this Section to list all other income you may receive. Don't forget to tell us about any changes in your income e.g. when your Jobseeker's Allowance is due to end or you stop getting Child Benefit for one of your children.

SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

If you or your partner are not in receipt of Pension Credit, please complete the 'Income and Capital' supplementary form. So that we can assess your benefit accurately, you need to tell us about all your capital, which is held either here or abroad. "Capital" means bank accounts, building society accounts, deposit accounts with other organisations (e.g. Post Office or insurance companies), cash, National Savings Certificates, Premium Bonds, shares, stocks, unit trusts, PEPs, ISAs and TESSAs. Also any land or property which you own, apart from where you are living. We will also need to know if you have money in a trust fund. This is not meant to be a complete list - please telephone us if you have any questions. If your total capital exceeds £16,000, you may not claim Housing or Council Tax Benefit (or both) unless you or your partner are receiving Guarantee Credit. Claimants with capital in excess of £16,000 can in certain circumstances claim e.g. up to £20,000 Far Eastern POW payments can be disregarded.

YOUR TENANCY

“**A Factor**” is someone employed by the landlord. It can be an individual or a company, and they can be responsible for just collecting the rent from you, or they may provide your tenancy agreement as well, and be your contact point for any problems you may have. If you have a formal tenancy agreement, the details of both landlord and agent should be on the agreement.

YOUR RENT

Your landlord should have made clear to you whether or not any services are included within your rent, and you should give as much detail here as you can. If you cannot give us exact figures, we will have to make standard deductions, which are laid down by central government, or we may have to contact your landlord. We only need this information if you are a private tenant.

PAYMENT

For new claims, Housing Benefit is usually paid from the Monday after we receive your form. If you are also a new tenant, we can pay from the start date of your tenancy, but only if we receive your claim form by the Sunday after your tenancy starts.

Housing Benefit for private tenants is normally paid monthly in arrears.

Housing Benefit for Council Tenants is paid by a credit to your rent account.

Council Tax Benefit is paid by a credit to your Council Tax Account.

If you rent from a private landlord and are making a new claim, or you move address after 7 April 2008, you will have your benefit paid directly to you under Local Housing Allowance. The safest and easiest way to receive your benefits is directly into your bank account. We cannot pay Housing Benefit into a Post Office account.

BACKDATING

It may be possible to backdate your claim for 3 calendar months. If you wish your claim to be backdated, please provide evidence of all income and capital from the date you wish your claim to be backdated to.

APPEALS

If you disagree with any decision that we make about your benefit you have the right to appeal. You should put your appeal in writing, and send it to Aberdeen City Council as soon as you can, explaining why you think we have got it wrong - give as much detail as you can. If we do not uphold your appeal, your case will be automatically referred to the Independent Tribunals Service. Contact us if you require further information on the appeals process. Please note that there are strict time limits on appeals.

SECOND ADULT REBATE

Even if your income or capital is too high for you to claim benefit yourself, you could still get Second Adult Rebate. To qualify, you must be the only person in your home responsible for paying Council Tax, and someone else must live with you who is not your partner AND who is on a low income AND who does not pay rent to you. If you want to claim Second Adult Rebate, you need to complete the 'Others in Your Household' supplementary form.

WHY DO WE NEED SO MUCH DETAIL?

Do not be put off by the length of the form. We are sorry to ask so many questions, but we do need you to answer in full so that we can be sure to pay you the right amount of benefit. For example, if you receive an allowance for a disability, it could mean that you could get more benefit. Childcare costs paid to a registered childminder while you are working may also result in more benefit for you - but only if you tell us about them. If you are having difficulty filling in the form, are unable to visit the office, or send us evidence and need some help, please call the Council Tax and Benefits office on 08456 08 09 21. We can probably help you over the phone or we can arrange for a visiting officer to see you at home.

DON'T DELAY

You will see reminders around the form that you must send us original documents, not photocopies, and that we cannot process your claim until we have seen ALL of the documents. We understand that it is not always easy to get them to us straight away, so even if you haven't got everything, send us the form. If you don't you could lose benefit.

CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCE

Let us know in writing, as soon as possible, if any of these changes occur:

- changes to non dependants
- changes to your income
- changes to your capital and savings where the total is over £6,000, unless you are in receipt of Guarantee Credit.
- change of address or if you are temporarily absent from your normal home
- changes in rent or your tenancy

Most changes must be notified to The Pension Service, when in receipt of Pension Credit. However, if The Pension Service has set an assessed income period, you will not have to notify them of changes in state or private pensions or annuity income and capital until the end of that period. The assessed income period is written on the first page of your Pension Credit award letter.

- If you, or your partner, if you have one, have a change to earnings, working tax credit or social security benefits you must tell The Pension Service.
- If you have a change to child maintenance or child tax credit you must inform us.
- If you get just the Savings Credit element of Pension Credit, you still need to tell us if your total savings and capital exceed £16,000.
- If you get Guarantee Credit or Guarantee Credit plus Savings Credit, we ignore your capital, so we do not need to be advised if your total savings and capital exceed £16,000.

The second page of your Pension Credit award letter tells you which elements of Pension Credit you are receiving and how much.

THE PENSION SERVICE

The Pension Service's telephone number is 0845 6060265.

If you decide you wish to make a Pension Credit claim telephone the Pension Credit Application Line on 0800 99 1234.

Checklist

Have you answered every question? Have you signed the declaration? Have you enclosed the following original documents for you and your partner?

Evidence of National Insurance number - (for new claims only)

Yes N/A To Follow

One item for each of you (Such as P45 or P60 for last employer, NINo Card, printed wage slips, letter from Department for Work and Pensions/Job Centre, a letter or tax code from HM Revenues and Customs, occupational pension slip).

Evidence of identity - (for new claims only)

Yes N/A To Follow

As well as one item from the list above, at least one further item for each of you from the following list. (Such as up-to-date driving licence, passport, utility bill or bank statements, birth or marriage certificates, divorce papers, a medical card, residence Permit, letter from Home Office, probation officer, solicitor, social worker or HM Revenues and Customs).

Evidence of earnings - for each of you.

Yes N/A To Follow

2 monthly, 3 fortnightly, or 5 weekly consecutive payslips. Alternatively a detailed letter from your employer, or a completed certificate of earnings.

Evidence of self-employed earnings - for each of you

Yes N/A To Follow

Most recent accounts, bank statements, or a form for self-employed people - ask us for this if you need one.

Evidence of Benefits, Pensions or Allowances - for each of you

Yes N/A To Follow

Current award letters from DWP or other pension provider.

Evidence of any other income - including student grants or loans

Yes N/A To Follow

Evidence of savings and investments - for each of you

Yes N/A To Follow

Bank, building society and post office account statements or passbooks for the last two months. For all other investments and capital, please provide certificates or other documents.

Evidence of rent – private tenants and housing association tenants only

Yes N/A To Follow

Tenancy agreement, letter from landlord or agent, rent book. Include any evidence you have of service charges.

Evidence of income, capital and savings for all non-dependants

Yes N/A To Follow

These are the people entered in the section:

'other people who normally live with you'.

Evidence of payments to a registered childminder

Yes N/A To Follow

Evidence of Payments to a Pension Scheme

Yes N/A To Follow

Except those you make through your employer, they will show on your payslips.

Evidence that you are a student and details of your course.

Yes N/A To Follow

If you do not have all the evidence to hand, do not delay in sending or bringing this form to our office, as you could lose benefit. You can bring missing evidence in later.

If you do not have all the evidence to hand, do not delay in sending in or bringing this form to our office, as you could lose benefit. You can bring missing evidence later.

We cannot accept photocopies, but please do not send valuable documents through the post. If you require more time to provide any of the information/evidence, then please ask for this in writing and provide the date when you believe you can provide the information/evidence.

For help with **language / interpreting** and other formats of communication support, please contact: 01224 523 542

ভাষা/ইন্টারপ্রেটিং এবং অন্যান্য ফরমেটের
যোগাযোগ সাহায্যের জন্য দয়া করে
:01224 523 542
নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

如果需要語言/傳譯及其他形式的傳訊支援服務，
請聯絡:01224 523 542。

Если требуется помощь при выборе
языка / переводчика или других
способов общения, звоните по
телефону: 01224 523 542

للحصول على مساعدة بخصوص اللغة/ الترجمة
و وسائل الاتصال الأخرى، الرجاء الاتصال
بالرقم التالي: 01224 523 542

زبان / ترجمانی (انٹرپرائٹنگ) میں مدد اور اپنی بات دوسروں
تک پہنچانے میں مدد کی دوسری طرزوں کیلئے، براہ کرم اس نمبر پر
رابطہ کریں: 01224 523 542

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy **językowej /
tłumacza** lub innej pomocy w
porozumiewaniu się, proszę zadzwonić
pod numer: 01224 523 542