



Important information about your housing and council tax benefit

This leaflet tells you:

- about the way we review your benefit claim;
- how to report a change in your circumstances that may affect your benefit entitlement;
- how to contact us about housing and council tax benefit.

Fraud hotline

If you know someone who is fraudulently claiming council tax or housing benefit please call our hotline number to report it, your call will be dealt with confidentially.

Telephone: (01983) 823969 or email us at benefit.fraud@iow.gov.uk

To report a change in circumstances

You can use the form on page three of this leaflet to tell us of the change. We will need documentary evidence of this, please include it with the completed form. However, do not delay notifying

the council's benefits section of the change as you could lose benefit if you do not report it within one month.

You must report all changes for you and your partner (if you have one), and anyone else living with you, such as the following changes:

- to your income and savings or your rent;
- to your address or if you go into hospital, or any absence from the dwelling likely to exceed 13 weeks;
- to the number or income of people living in your household;
- if you or someone who lives with you starts to receive or stops receiving Income Support/Job Seeker's Allowance/Pension Credits/Employment Support Allowance;

- if a child ceases full time education or takes up full time work;
- you get married, form a civil partnership or start living with someone as if you are married or civil partners;
- if your savings/investments are valued over £16,000 or increase above this level you must contact us immediately.

If you are not sure please ask us.

Review of claims

We are required to review a percentage of claims each year. If your claim is selected for review we will either visit you, telephone you or send a brief form asking you to confirm that the information previously provided is still correct.

We use visiting officers to help us check the information we hold is accurate. All visiting officers carry an identity card. Make sure you ask to see it before you give information or let them into your

home. If you are unsure please ring us on 823903 to confirm that we have asked them to call.

Discretionary housing payments

These payments can provide an increase in the amount of benefit but only in exceptional circumstances. For further information please contact us at one of our local offices (listed opposite) or by telephone on 823950 or by visiting our website at www.iwight.com.

Disputes and appeals

You must contact us within one month if you require more information about your benefit entitlement or disagree with our decision. You can either ask us for an explanation, ask us to look at the decision again or appeal against the decision. If you decide to appeal it must be in writing. Appeals are heard by an independent tribunal administered by the tribunal service.

Notification of change of circumstances

Name:

Address:

Housing benefit reference (if known):

National insurance number:

Date of change:

Details of the change

I still wish to claim housing/council tax benefit:

Yes

No

Signature:

Date:

Please remember to include documentary evidence of the change(s)

Please return to: Isle of Wight Council, Revenues and Benefits Division, Council Offices, Broadway, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9EA or hand it to one of the offices listed.

Where can I get more advice?

If you want more help or advice, you can contact us at:

Council Offices

Civic Centre,
Sandown,
Isle of Wight
PO36 9EA

Tel: 01983 823950

Email: housing.benefit@iow.gov.uk

Opening times:

8.30am to 5pm, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

8.30am to 4.30pm Friday.

This office is closed all day on Tuesdays.

Late night for phone calls to the benefit team on
Wednesday evenings until 6pm.

Customer Services Centre

County Hall,
Newport,
Isle of Wight
PO30 1UD

Opening times:

8.30am to 5pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday.

8.30am to 4.30, Friday.

Ryde Help Centre

Ryde Library,
101 George Street,
Ryde,
Isle of Wight
PO33 2JE

Opening times:

9am to 5pm, Monday, Tuesday and Friday

Freshwater Library

41 School Green Road,
Freshwater,
Isle of Wight
PO40 9AP

Opening times:

9.30am to 12.30pm, and 1.30 to 4.30pm, Tuesday

If you would like more information on benefits, please refer to our website at iwight.com and follow our quick link to **revenues and benefits**. Alternatively visit direct.gov.uk

You can also get more help from the following websites:

www.dwp.gov.uk – Department for Work and Pensions

www.therentservice.gov.uk – The Rent Service

www.adviceguide.org.uk – Citizens Advice

Independent advice

If you need independent advice, contact your

local citizens advice bureau. You can find their phone number (and the numbers for other local advice agencies) in the phone book and at your local library, or by contacting your local council.

This leaflet is a guide and does not cover every circumstance. Some of the information in this leaflet may have been simplified and some information may become out of date because of changes to the law. We recommend that you get independent advice before making financial decisions based on this leaflet.

Isle of Wight Council, Revenues and Benefits,
Council Offices, The Broadway, Sandown, PO36 9EA

Telephone (01983) 823950

Email housing.benefit@iow.gov.uk

Web www.iwight.com

If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.