

HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT ON LINE CLAIMS/CHANGES

Direction of Chief Executive regarding Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support claims, Discretionary Housing Payment claims and changes to those claims.

This page sets out the Council's legal obligation to publicly state our policy regarding electronic collection of data relating to Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment claims and changes to those claims.

Electronic Communications

Direction of Andrew Flockhart, Chief Executive of Borough of Poole under the Housing Benefit (Electronic Communications) (Miscellaneous Benefits) Order 2006 and the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme in accordance with S13A and Schedule 1a of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Borough of Poole ("the Authority") in accordance with:

- Schedule 11 to the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
- Schedule 10 to the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006
- Section 101 to 106A.1 of the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme

hereby makes the following directions:

1. An individual who, in accordance with the above makes an application for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment or a change to a claim (change of circumstance) is authorised to do so by an electronic communication, provided that the individual uses the method approved by the Authority in relation to the claim or change of circumstance.

2. The methods and form set out, at the time of, and for the purposes of, the delivery of such a claim or change to a claim as referred to in paragraph 1, are respectively –

Electronic applications for Council Tax Support/Housing Benefit/Discretionary Housing Payment or changes of circumstance provided they are made via the online application system (official computer system) or face to face interview with an officer of the Authority and are received in the Authority's official computer system.

The person making an electronic claim/change of circumstance must complete the electronic form in accordance with the instructions. To ensure the authenticity of the identity of the sender the electronic communication must include the following:

The claimant's name and any two of the following:

The address of the benefit claim

The claimant's date of birth

The claimant's National Insurance number

The Authority may accept digital photographic and scanned images of notices, forms, evidence, and information provided by a person where it has been verified by an authorised officer of the Authority. Where it has not been verified, the Authority may request to see the original where its authenticity cannot be corroborated by other means.

The Authority's 'official computer system' for the purposes of recording information relating to electronic communications is provided by Victoria Forms.

The information provided to the Council will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

3. The Authority may require further information and/or original supporting evidence before the claim for Housing Benefit/Council Support, Discretionary Housing Payment or change of circumstance can be processed. The evidence required is detailed on the electronic form. The Authority may verify claims, certificates, notices, information or evidence by using third party systems and sources of information as well as by direct contact with a person using electronic communications or by some other means.

4. Any electronic form that has been completed in accordance with the instructions but is not submitted to the Authority's official computer system is not regarded as having been delivered.

5. This direction may be withdrawn or amended at any time by the issue of a further direction.

Signed by



Andrew Flockhart
Chief Executive