



Breckland

Breckland Council

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Anglia Revenues Partnership



Forest Heath

District Council

Forest Heath District Council

College Heath Road, Mildenhall,
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Benefits Section Freephone 0800 163030
Fax: 01842 756513

Changes in Circumstances

If you receive Housing or Council Tax Benefit then you **must** tell the Benefits Section **immediately in writing** of any changes in your household circumstances. You must send this written notice to the address above. You can also visit our other offices (phone us on the above numbers for the addresses of these offices and their opening times).

What to tell us about

You should tell us about anything that could affect your benefit entitlement. If you are unsure about whether or not to report a change then contact us for advice. Some examples of what to report are given below:

- Changes in your income, (or your partner's income) e.g. wage changes, overtime worked, pension changes, awards of any benefit.
- When your job seekers or income support ends.
- If someone joins or leaves your home or if the circumstances of other people living with you changes.
- If your savings or investments change.
- If your rent changes or you move home.

Changes you do not need to tell us about

- **If you receive Pension Credit, you do not need to notify us of changes in your income. You may be required to notify the Pension Service direct. Please call 0845 6060265 for advice.**
- If the amount of your Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance or Pension Credit changes.
- If you are a Peddars Way or King's Forest tenant you do not need to tell us if your rent has changed.

When to tell us

You must write to us immediately. Do not delay for any reason. If you are overpaid benefit you could be required to repay it. If you report a change in circumstances late, (more than one month after it had happened) then you could lose your right to have the arrears paid to you.

How to tell us about changes

You must tell us in writing about changes in your circumstances. Overleaf we have provided you with a form to complete and return. You can also send us a letter to advise about any changes. You will also need to provide documentary evidence of any information you provide. **We can only accept original documents; (photocopies are not acceptable)** but you should not send valuable items to us in the post.

What to do now

The enclosed letter tells you about how we have calculated your benefit entitlements. You should check it carefully and make sure that all the information we have used to assess your claim is correct. If you suspect something is wrong contact us immediately.

Your rights

If you are unsure about or disagree with the way we have calculated your benefit entitlement then you have the right to:

- Ask us for a written explanation of our decision;
- Ask for us to look again at our decision and see if it should be changed;
- Ask for your case to be reviewed by an independent tribunal

Important

You have one month from the date of your decision letter to use these rights. If you take longer than this to query your claim or to ask for your case to be reviewed then you may lose your rights to challenge our decision.

Discretionary Housing Payments

Although Housing and Council Tax Benefits payments are governed by Social Security law the Council is sometimes allowed to provide additional help for anyone who is not entitled to receive full benefit. If you think that your circumstances are causing you hardship then contact us to find out more about Discretionary Housing Payments.

Jargon explained

Gross Rent	The rent your landlord charges you,
Eligible Rent	The part of your rent we can pay benefit on.
Deductions for excessive rent, fuel or other eligible amounts	The part of your rent we cannot pay benefit on.
Council Tax before rebate	The Council Tax payable for your home (before benefits).
Earned Income	Wages earned after deductions for tax, NI and half your pension.
Income from capital	Money we add to your income because you have savings.
Other Income	Any other money you have coming in.
Disregarded Income	Any money not taken into account when we assess your claim.
Applicable Amount	The amount of money the Government says you need.
Non Dependant Deduction	The amount of money other people in your home should contribute towards your rent/council tax each week.

Changes in Circumstances

Use this form to tell us about changes in your circumstances. Then send it to us at the address overleaf. Remember that we need to have documentary proof of any change. All documents you supply must be originals but do not send valuable items to us in the post. Contact us immediately if you need advice.

Your full name:

Your address:

Tell us what has changed:

Tell us the exact date this happened:

Sign here:

Today's date:

Claim Number: