

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Benefits Officer	
Service Area:	Benefits	Team: Benefits
Organisation:	Anglia Revenues Partnership	
Reports to:	Benefits Team Manager	
Responsible for:	None	

Main Purpose of Job:

To correctly assess and process applications for housing benefits, to target and in order to provide an excellent benefits service.

Key Responsibilities:

- Dealing with all matters associated with Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support decision making: new claims, change of circumstance, intervention reviews and queries that may arise. This includes:
- Verification of claimant identity, income/capital and crosschecking of data, as specified in the Verification Policy. Use of secure DWP, HMRC and Government systems to check and download confidential information.
- Calculating entitlement (manually if required) to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support identifying potential entitlement to other State Benefits, including underlying entitlement and Second Adult Rebates cases
- Referrals to the Rent Officer for private tenant claims and correctly entering the eligible rent on the claim record.
- Calculating amounts of overpayments and categorisation, and initiating the appropriate recovery action.
- Being alert to attempts to defraud or abuse the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support system and referring cases to the Fraud Investigation team as appropriate.
- Notifying claimants of all determinations using the appropriate letters, amended as necessary to give clear advice and guidance.
- Identify and assess requests for back-dated awards and reconsiderations.
- Assisting customers by telephone, personal interview as required, by e-mail, letter or SMS text to determine the personal circumstances, providing advice, explanations or clarifications, as appropriate.
- To undertake home welfare visits which may include new claims, gathering evidence and checking existing cases. Necessary training will be provided.
- Liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions offices; housing associations, landlords/letting agents of privately rented properties, care/advice agencies, and Council Tax to obtain information necessary to assess benefit claims; other

departments within the Authority such as Housing Options / Housing Service to advise on issues concerned with claiming Benefits and preventing homelessness.

- To advise customers on the Discretionary Housing Payments / Council Tax Support Exceptional Hardship Schemes and collecting relevant information.
- Determining Discretionary Housing Payment applications and reconsiderations of such decisions.
- Prioritising workload in order to achieve Service targets and maximise Subsidy.
- To assist the Customer Services Team when dealing with difficult and complex benefit queries.
- To attend training sessions to ensure working knowledge is kept to an optimum level to enable legislation to be applied accurately and correct advice given to customers.
- To maintain a high level of accuracy and productivity
- A requirement to undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required and compatible with and/or arising from those listed above.

Additional Note:

Vulnerable People

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable people and we expect all employees to share this commitment. All employees must familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Children and Young People and Guidelines for Working with Children and Young People policy.

Health Safety & Environment

Managers are responsible for the health and safety of their staff and their actions that may affect others; this is clearly set out in the Health and Safety Policy. It is the duty of all employees, while at work, to take reasonable care of their health and safety, and of other persons who may be affected by their activities; this includes colleagues, contractors and members of the public.

All employees must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety and Environmental Policies.

Note: This is a description of the job as it is constituted at March 2017 but, as the organisation develops, it may be necessary to vary the duties and responsibilities from time to time. It is the practice of ARP and employing Council to periodically review Job Descriptions to ensure that they relate to the job as being performed or to incorporate whatever changes may be necessary. It is both Councils' and ARP's aim to reach agreement to such reasonable changes with the post holder but if agreement is not possible the Councils and ARP reserve the right to insist on changes to the Job Description after consultation with the post holder.

On signing your Statement of Particulars it will be deemed that this Job Description has been accepted by the post holder.