

# Independent Advice is available from your local Citizens Advice Bureaux

## **Bishop's Stortford**

Methodist Church  
34B South Street  
Bishop's Stortford  
CM23 3AZ

## **Hertford**

Sele Community Hub  
18 Fleming Crescent,  
Hertford,  
SG14 2DJ

## **Buntingford**

Manor House  
High Street  
Buntingford  
SG9 9AB

## **Stevenage**

Sixth Floor  
Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
SG1 1BY

## **Hertfordshire telephone advice line**

**03444 111 444**  
**10am-4pm Monday - Friday**  
**[www.ehcas.org.uk](http://www.ehcas.org.uk)**

## Information

If you would like a translation of this document in another language, large print, Braille, audio, or electronic, please contact us:

**For East Herts Council** 01279 655261

Our opening hours are as follows:

Tuesdays - Wallfields, Hertford, 10am-2pm.

Wednesdays - Bishop's Stortford Library, 10am-1.30pm.

Thursdays - Wallfields, Hertford, 10am-2pm.

Fridays - Bishop's Stortford Library, 10am-1.30pm.

Council Offices, Wallfields, Tues 8:30am - 4pm

Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ Weds 8:30am - 12:30pm

**For Stevenage Borough Council** 01438 242440

Customer Services Centre,  
Daneshill House, Stevenage,

Herts SG1 1HN

Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

Email: [benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk)

[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk) [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk)

We will provide signers, lipspeakers and deaf blind interpreters by appointment.

(We need to see original documents. If you visit our office we will verify and copy your documents for you)

# How to appeal Housing Benefit

**The Benefits Service,**  
Council Offices, Wallfields, Pegs Lane  
Hertford SG13 8EQ

SBC Tel: 01438 242440

EHC Tel: 01279 655261



# Getting your Benefit right

Housing Benefit is to help you pay your rent.

We want to be sure that you are getting all the Benefit that you are entitled to. You may have extra information that we did not take into account when we worked out your Benefit. We may have made a mistake. We want to know and make sure your Benefit is right.

## How is Benefit calculated?

The rules are complicated and cannot be explained here, but you are entitled to a detailed explanation, in writing, of how we worked out your Benefit. Even if you did not qualify for any Benefit, you can still ask for a detailed explanation of why not. You can ask for an explanation at any time. We should provide the answer within 14 days.  
Unhappy?

## For example:

- Do you disagree with the information we have used?
- Do you think we were wrong to say that you did not qualify for any Benefit?
- Do you think that we have used the incorrect local Housing Allowance?
- Do you disagree with the amount of the “Non Dependant Deduction”?
- Do you think we should backdate your claim?
- Do you believe we should not ask you to pay back an “overpayment”?

If any of the above apply, or you think there is something else wrong, you should write to us and ask us to look at it again. Please give your reasons as fully as possible.

If you want to know more about a decision or if you think it is wrong, you should get in touch with us within **one month** of the date of your notification letter or we may not be able to consider any dispute.

Please get in touch with us by phone or in writing. Our address and phone number are on the back of this leaflet. You can either:

- ask for an explanation
- ask us to look again at the decision
- appeal against the decision - this can only be in writing. If you appeal against the decision your appeal will be heard by an independent tribunal administered by the Tribunal Service.

## What happens after the decision is looked at again?

If the decision can be changed we will send you a new decision. If we cannot change the decision we will tell you why. If you still disagree, you have **one more month** to appeal, from the date of the new decision.

## How should I appeal?

An appeal can be made at any time within one month of the date of the notification letter or the date of the new decision. If you have already asked for an explanation or for us to look at the decision again you can still appeal.

## What happens when I appeal?

If you appeal, we will look at the decision again to check that it is correct. If we do not change the decision we will tell you and then prepare the case for the Tribunal Service.

We will send our appeal response to the Tribunal Service. We will also send you a copy of the appeal papers.

The Tribunal Service will then contact you to explain what happens next with your appeal.

If you would like independent advice to help you with your appeal you can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau. Their addresses are on the back of this leaflet.

## It is your right!

Benefit is a legal right. If you think we have got it wrong, do not be afraid to challenge our decision. The appeal process will not cost you anything. If you want to study the law dealing with Benefits, please feel free to do so at The Council offices. It is often best if you make an appointment first, or we could send you a copy of the relevant sections by post.

## In brief ...

1. You can ask for a detailed statement of how any Benefit decision affecting you was made.
2. If you are unhappy with any Benefit decision affecting you, you have to appeal.

Visit our website at

[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk)

[www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk)

Email us at [benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk)