


Backdated Benefit Do I qualify?



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This Leaflet explains what to do if you think your Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or both, should be backdated.

What is backdated benefit?

When you apply for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or both, your claim will usually start from the Monday after the date the Council receives your form. We may be able to backdate your claim if you had continuous good cause for your delay. Your claim can be backdated up to a maximum of 52 weeks.

Do I qualify for backdated benefit?

Anyone can qualify for backdated benefit as long as you are entitled to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or both, and you have shown continuous good cause for your delay.

What is good cause?

The benefit regulations do not explain what is meant by continuous good cause so we must treat each request individually. We must be satisfied that anyone else in similar circumstances, would also not have been able to claim earlier. Some examples of good cause may be

- bereavement
- that you or a member of your household were in hospital
- that you have difficulty communicating or understanding others and there is no one to help you.

Remember, the reason for your delay must be continuous. If there has been a break you may not get backdated benefit. For example, if you are in hospital and then go home to recover, we would treat this as continuous good cause.

However, if you were to recover but delay claiming for a further three weeks, this would be a break in continuous good cause and you may not get backdated benefit. Not knowing the law, or that you could claim, is not an example of continuous good cause.

What if I am over 60?

If you are over the age of 60, you do not have to apply for backdated benefit. As long as you are entitled to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or both, we can consider awarding your benefit up to 52 weeks before you applied. This is known as a “take-on period” and you do not have to explain why you did not claim earlier.

Independent advice

If you need free and independent advice, you can contact one of the following agents:

Citizens Advice Bureau

Rayleigh

Rayleigh Civic Suite, Hockley Road, Rayleigh
Open Monday 10am–2pm and 7.30am–9pm
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am–2pm
Phone: 01268 770782

Rochford

Back Lane, Rochford
Open Tuesday–Friday 10am–3pm
Phone: 01702 545552

Southend

1 Church Road, Southend
Open Monday–Friday 10am–4pm
Phone: 01702 610610

Tribunals Services

www.appeals-service.gov.uk

How to contact us

Phone us on 01702 318197 or 01702 318198 between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday, and between 9am and 12 noon on Saturday.

You can come to our offices between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Thursday and between 8.30am and 4.30pm on Friday. We are closed at the weekend. Our address is below.

You can also e-mail us at revenues&benefits@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this information in large print, Braille or any of the following languages, please phone 01702 546 366.



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Telephone: 01702 546366

Facsimile: 01702 545737

Website: <http://www.rochford.gov.uk>