

This leaflet is a guide only. While we have tried to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct at the date shown on the cover, it is possible that there may be incorrect information or some ideas may be oversimplified.

For further details please contact the Revenues and Benefits Department directly or visit our website www.portsmouth.gov.uk

You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 9284 1042



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign.
Committed to clearer communication.

264

Local Housing Allowance – An introduction to tenants

Revenues & Benefits Service

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Enquiries

Contact the designated Housing & Council Tax Benefit offices, telephone or email.

Buckland office

57-61 Kingston Road, Portsmouth, PO2 7DP

City South office (Southsea & Somerstown areas)

Ground floor, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square,
Portsmouth PO1 2BE

Landport office

24 Commercial Place, Portsmouth, PO1 4DT

Paulsgrove office

195 Allaway Avenue, Portsmouth PO6 4GH

Leigh Park office (including Wecock Farm area)

56 Stockheath Road, Havant PO9 5HQ

Telephone enquiries

023 9283 4556

Email hbsupportteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

What is Local Housing Allowance?

Local Housing Allowance was introduced nationally from 7 April 2008.

It is a new way of working out new claims for Housing Benefit for tenants renting accommodation from a private landlord.

If you live in council accommodation or other social housing, Local Housing Allowance will not affect you.

If you are already getting Housing Benefit you will not be affected unless:

- you move address to accommodation rented from a private landlord or:
- have a break in your claim of one week or more or.

With Local Housing Allowance, your benefit is based upon the number of bedrooms you are entitled to and is affected by:

- who lives with you
- which area you live in
- how much money you have coming in
- what savings you have.
- how much your rent is
- your age, if you are single
- whether anyone living with you is expected to contribute to your rent.

How many bedrooms am I entitled to?

The number of people who live with you is used to work out how many bedrooms you are entitled to. This is then used to work out which Local Housing Allowance rate applies to you.

We do not count other rooms such as a living room, kitchen or bathroom.

You are entitled to one bedroom for:

- every adult couple (married or unmarried)
- any other adult aged 16 or over
- any two children of the same sex aged under 16
- any two children aged under 10
- any other child.

Other factors may affect the Local Housing Allowance that you are eligible for:

- if you are aged 25 or over, single and do not live with any dependents
- if you are aged under 25, single and do not live with any dependents
- if you are a couple and do not live with any dependents
- if you are a care leaver aged under 22
- if you are severely disabled
- if you are a joint tenant

The Local Housing Allowance rates will be published monthly.

What if my rent is not the same as the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to me?

If your rent is lower than the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to you, any benefit you might get will still be based on this rate and we will pay you up to £15 above you rent.

For example, if your rent is £90 and the Local Housing Allowance applicable is £100, the maximum amount of benefit we could pay you would be £100.

If your rent is higher than the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to you, it will be your responsibility to make up any shortfall between the Local Housing Allowance rate and your rent.

How will my benefit be paid?

With Local Housing Allowance, benefit is paid to you and not to your landlord. You cannot choose to have your benefit paid direct to your landlord.

Your benefit will be paid to you directly into your bank or building society account.

If you do not already have a bank or building society account, you may want to set one up. That way you can arrange to pay the rent to your landlord automatically, using a standing order.

You can get advice about opening and running a bank account from any bank or building society. You can also get advice from your Local Housing Benefit Office or a welfare organisation such as Community Legal Advice Centre.