

Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Alternative Maximum Reduction Guidance Notes

Please remove and keep section A to D in case you have any questions about your claim.

A About filling in this claim form

Please read all these notes carefully before you fill in the rest of this claim form. The notes will help you to fill in the form.

- Please use black ink to fill in the form.
- Make sure you answer every question on the form. You must tick the 'No' box if a question does not apply to you. If you do not, we will have to write to you and your claim will be delayed. **If you are not sure about what you need to tell us, please phone Customer Services on 01484 414950.**
- Do not delay sending this form back to us. Your benefit is likely to start from the Monday after we receive your claim form. If you delay sending in your form you could lose benefit. If you don't have some proof that we are asking for then send it in later. Don't delay sending in this form, but write a letter to us to tell us that you are going to send the proof later.
- You must let us have the proof we need to support your claim. Please make sure you read section B as this tells you what you must let us see to support your claim.
- If you give us all the information and proof we need **with** your claim form, we will aim to pay your benefit within 14 days.
- If you do not fill in all the form, or do not let us have all the proof we need to make a decision, we will write to you. If we write to ask for more information from you, **you must** let us have this information within **1 calendar month** of the date on our letter. If you do not give the information in this time we **may not** deal with your claim and you **may lose benefit**.
- Alternative Maximum Reduction is available for people of pension age. It is designed to help you with your Council Tax bill if you have another adult living with you (but not your partner or someone who pays rent to you) who is on a low income. If you want to claim this reduction, you do not need to fill in sections 4 to 12.
- You must make sure that you read the declaration at section 15 and that you sign and date the form.
- If you have any problems filling in the form please see section C which tells you where you can go to get help and advice.

If you hand your claim form in at a council office you can get a receipt.

Please ask for a date stamp here.

Your name

Address

Stamped by

Office stamp

B Proofs checklist

This section explains what you must show us to support your claim. We must see original documents, not copies, but please do not send valuable items to us in the post. Section C tells you where you can go to have your documents checked and copied.

- ☐ **Proof of your identity**
You must let us have something such as: a benefit book from the Department of Work and Pensions; a travel passport (up to date and valid); a driving licence, a birth certificate, a marriage certificate, a medical card; a utility bill (paid for in your name in the last quarter); a bank statement (dated within the last 4 weeks); or a letter from a solicitor, the Inland Revenue, a doctor or a social worker.
- ☐ **Proof of your National Insurance number**
You must let us have something such as: a P45; a P60; a National Insurance Card; a wage or salary statement; a tax letter from the Inland Revenue; a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions; or a benefit book from the Department of Work and Pensions.
You must also let us have proof of the identity and National Insurance number for any partner you may have.
 - ☐ Partner's identity
 - ☐ Partner's National Insurance number
- ☐ **State benefits (for example state retirement pension, incapacity benefit, Tax credits)**
We need to see the order book or a notification letter from the Department of Work and Pensions. We always need to see your award letter as evidence of your working or child tax credit.
- ☐ **Earnings**
We need to see the most recent wage slips. The last five if you are paid weekly, or the last two if you are paid monthly. Or you can ask your employer to fill in the Earnings Certificate (HB2A) on the next page. If you or your partner are self-employed please ask for the self-employed Earnings Certificate (HB2C), fill it in and send it back to us. We need to see your last tax assessment by the Inland Revenue and up-to-date accounts prepared by an accountant.
- ☐ **Private pension from a past employer**
We need to see the latest payment advice from your past employer.
- ☐ **Maintenance received**
We will need to see the court order and bank statement showing the money being paid, or a letter from the person making the payment.
- ☐ **Money paid for childcare**
We need to see a letter from the playgroup, nursery or after-school club (on their headed paper). Or we can accept a letter from the childminder saying which child is at the nursery, play group, after-school club or childminder's and how much the charges are. The letter should include their registration number.
- ☐ **Rent charged**
We need to see proof of your rent. This could be your tenancy agreement or a letter from your landlord saying when your tenancy started and giving full details of the charges. The letter should include your landlord's address and be signed by them. You could also show us your rent book if it is up to date.
- ☐ **Savings and bank accounts**
We need to see the last 2 statements from the bank or building society, or the savings book for each account you have.
- ☐ **National Savings Certificates**
We need to see the National Savings Certificate issue showing the date the certificates were issued.
- ☐ **Stocks and shares**
We need to see the stocks or shares certificates held and the number of each.
- ☐ **Premium Bonds**
We need to see the Premium Bonds themselves.

C Where to go for advice and help

Contact our customer services on:

Tel: 01484 414950

Fax: 01484 221123

Email: council.benefits@kirklees.gov.uk

Web: www.kirklees.gov.uk/benefits

You can also visit us at any

- Customer Service Centre
- Kirklees Library and Information Centre or
- Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing Office.

These offices can accept your claim form and your supporting proof.

Alternatively, your local Benefits Advice Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau or Fusion Housing Service can give you independent advice and help you complete this form.

D What happens next?

We will check your claim form to make sure you have given us all the information we need to make a decision. If you have given us all the information we need, we will work out your claim as soon as possible. If you have not given us all the information, we will write to you asking you for the information we need. You must let us have this information within 1 calendar month of our letter.

Once we have all the information we need to make a decision, we will write to you telling you about our decision. The 'notification letter' we send will show you:

- how much benefit or reduction you are entitled to.
- when your benefit or reduction will start and when it will end.
- how your benefit or reduction has been worked out.
- what non-dependant deductions we have made from your benefit or reduction.
- how much rent we have used when making our decision.
- what you need to do if you do not agree with our decision.

What happens if you do not agree with our decision

If you want to know more about our decision, or if you think your benefit or reduction is wrong, please get in touch with us. You can either:

- ask for an explanation - by phone, in person or in writing.
- ask us to look again at the decision - you can only do this in writing.
- appeal against the decision - you can only do this in writing.

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.

Housing Benefits Appeals

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

If you appeal against a decision, your appeal will be heard by an independent tribunal arranged by the Appeals Service. More information is available online.

Council Tax Reduction Appeals

If you think your reduction is wrong you must write to us explaining why you think the reduction is wrong. We will respond to your notice setting out the steps you can take if you remain unhappy with our decision. You can only appeal if you think we have not followed the rules set out in the authority's reduction scheme. You cannot appeal against the authority's decision to adopt the scheme it has adopted.

Private and Confidential

Certificate of earned income (employer's certificate)

To be filled in by the employee

Name:	
Claim Ref - this will be on any letter we send you:	
Address:	
Post code:	
Employee or works number:	National Insurance Number:
Job title:	
Signature:	

To be filled in by the employer

I would be grateful if you could help your employee by checking the details above, giving the information below and returning this form to the address at the top of the page. If you hold a National Insurance number (NINO) which is **different** to that shown above please write it here:

Please say how often the employee is paid. If 'other' applies please give the period.

☐ weekly
 ☐ fortnightly
 ☐ 4 weekly
 ☐ calendar monthly
 ☐ other

How are they paid? (for example, cash, cheque, direct to bank account)

Normal basic pay £ Normal hours worked

Pay details for the last 5 weekly, 3 fortnightly or 2 monthly/4 -weekly periods (including overtime, bonus, SSP, SMP and so on)

Pay period ending	Number of hours worked	Gross pay	National Insurance Contributions		Occupational or personal pension contribution	Tax paid by employee	
			Pay period	Year to Date		Pay period	Year to Date

If Statutory Sick Pay or Maternity Pay is included in the gross pay please show this clearly and say how much.

Name (of employer or representative)

Name of business

Business Address

Business telephone number

I confirm that the information given is true and complete

Signature

Position in business

Please endorse with your business’s authorisation stamp

Changes in circumstances

Please save this page to tell us about any changes in your circumstances. To tell us about a change, fill in both sides and send the page back to the council. If you lose this form or have already used it to tell us about a change, you must still tell the Council immediately in writing if you have a change in your circumstances.

Section 1 - Your name and address

Name
Reference number - this will be on any letter we send you
Address
Postcode
Phone number

Changes of circumstances you must tell us about

If you have a change in your circumstances you must tell the council immediately about the change and let us have the proof. The types of changes you should report are:

- a change in your income, if it goes up or down;
- a change in your income for anyone else in your household, if it goes up or down;
- a change in your capital, savings or investments;
- a change in capital, savings or investments for anyone else in your household;
- a change in the number of people living in your house, if anyone moves in or out;
- a change in the amount of rent you pay (unless you are a council tenant);
- a change in the income you receive, if you start or stop work, or start or stop receiving a state benefit;
- a change in your address, when you move in or out of a property, even if it is a room in the same property;
- if you leave the country for more than 13 weeks and are intending to return;
- any other changes that you think might affect your benefit.

If you are not sure about the need to tell us about a change, please contact Customer Services using details below.

For some changes we will work out your benefit again. Over the page you can tell us if you want to withdraw or cancel your claim. Withdrawing your claim will mean that it will not be dealt with. Cancelling your claim will mean that it will stop from when you are no longer entitled.

Send this page to:

Kirklees Council
Customer & Exchequer Service
Civic Centre 1
Huddersfield
HD1 2NF

Enquiries:

Phone: 01484 414950
Fax: 01484 221123
Email: council.benefits@kirklees.gov.uk

Date(s) of change _____

I want to withdraw or cancel my claim for benefit from: _____

The reasons I want to withdraw or cancel my claim are: _____

NB. When you send us this form we may have to ask you for more information. Please attach proof of the change or tell us you will be sending us the proof later.

Do not delay in sending this form as you could lose benefit.

Section 3 - Declaration

Please read this declaration carefully before you sign and date it.

I understand that:

- If I give information that is incorrect or incomplete, you may take action against me.
- You will use the information I have given to deal with my claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction, or both. You may check some of the information with other sources within the council, rent offices, and other councils.
- You may use any information I have given for this and any other claim for social security benefits that I have made or may make. You may give some information to other government organisations, if the law allows this.

I know I must let the council know in writing about any changes in my circumstances which might affect my claim.

I declare the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

Signature of person claiming:

Date: