

Thinking of renting private accommodation? Likely to need help with the rent?

CENTRAL SERVICES

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Before you take on a tenancy and claim Housing Benefit, you may apply for a Pre-Tenancy Determination

If you are thinking of renting accommodation from a private landlord (not the council or a Housing Association) and you are likely to need help from Housing Benefit to pay your rent, you can now find out how much of that rent will be used to work out your Housing Benefit before you decide to rent the property.

A Pre-Tenancy Determination is a rental valuation by the Independent Rent Office Service. This valuation gives you the rent figure which will be used by the Housing Benefit office to work out your Housing Benefit.

Remember that when your Housing Benefit is worked out it will take account of your income and other circumstances. **The Pre-Tenancy Determination does not guarantee that you will get Housing Benefit or tell you the amount you will get.**

HOW TO APPLY

To use this free service please fill in and sign the attached form, which asks you for details about the property you are thinking of renting. You will need information from the landlord to fill in the form and they must sign the form as well. Once the form is filled in and signed, send it or take it to the Housing Benefit office in the area where the property is located.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Housing Benefit office will ask the Rent Officer Service to value the property and to decide how much rent it would be reasonable to pay for it. You will normally get your decision within seven days. If they have made a valuation on that property on the same tenancy terms within the last 12 months that valuation will stand and the Housing Benefit office will send you a copy of this decision. Page 2 of this leaflet explains the Rent Officer's decision and how it will affect your Housing Benefit. **Keep this part of the leaflet in a safe place and read it again when you get the Rent Officer's decision.**

The Rent Officer will send you, the landlord, and the Housing Benefit office copies of this decision. The information he gives you will help you decide whether you can afford the rent that is being asked. If you decide to take the accommodation you should claim Housing Benefit at once. You can get a Housing Benefit claim form from your local Housing Benefit office.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Changes have been made to the way Housing Benefit is worked out for tenants of private landlords. Housing Benefit will now normally only meet in full rents which are around the general level for properties in the area where you have chosen to live. If the rent for your home is above this level you are unlikely to get all your rent from Housing Benefit. Details of these changes are in leaflet RR 3 available from your local Social Security office.

The Rent Officer's decision and your Housing Benefit

WHAT WILL THE RENT OFFICER DO?

The Housing Benefit office will send your application for a Pre-Tenancy Determination to the Rent Officer. You will normally get your decision within seven days. The Rent Officer may need to look at the property you are thinking of renting, and if so, will make arrangements with the landlord to visit it.

The Rent Officer will consider things such as the rent charged, what services are included in the rent, the number of rooms in the property, the size of your household, the length and terms of the tenancy and the general level of rents for property in the area.

From this information the Rent Officer will decide how much the property is worth in the rental market and how much is generally paid in the area for a property of a suitable size for your circumstances. This decision stands for 12 months from the date it was made.

WHAT WILL THE DECISION TELL ME?

The decision notice that the Rent Officer sends you will tell you the maximum rent figure that will generally be used in working out your Housing Benefit. It will also give you other information including details of any services (such as laundry or room cleaning) paid for in your rent which Housing Benefit cannot help with. The maximum rent figure will go down if your rent includes charges for other items. The maximum rent figure can be further reduced by the Housing Benefit office when they come to work out your benefit if the figure seems to them to be unreasonably high for your particular accommodation needs.

WILL THE MAXIMUM RENT FIGURE BE THE AMOUNT OF HOUSING BENEFIT I GET?

Not necessarily. Your Housing Benefit will generally be worked out using this amount but remember that the Rent Officer's decision does not guarantee that you will get Housing Benefit or tell you the amount you will get. This will be worked out by the Housing Benefit office and will depend on your income and other circumstances. You may be able to get some additional help with your rent if your circumstances are exceptional. If you get Housing Benefit it will be paid from the date of your Housing Benefit claim and not from the date of your Pre-Tenancy Determination application. If you want to claim Housing Benefit or need further information contact your local Housing Benefit office and they will tell you what to do next.

APPROVED APPLICATION FOR A PRE-TENANCY DETERMINATION

Local Authority Stamp and Date	<i>For completion by Local Authority</i> A. Young individual: single room rent required Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> B. Local Reference Rent: 50% "top-up" required Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> C. Date of application to Benefit Authority D. Local Authority Reference.
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Please answer all the questions and give as much information as you can. You will need to ask the Landlord or Property Agent to provide some of the information and to sign the form.

1. Please give your details
 Title Surname
 Other names
2. Please give the address including any flat or room number of the property you want a Pre-Tenancy Determination for

 Postcode
3. Your present address (if different from above)

 Post code Telephone
4. Please give details of the proposed tenancy. You may need to ask your Landlord for this information.
 - (a) How much is the total rent? £
 - (b)(i) How often will you pay this amount? Once a week/once every two weeks/once a month/other
 (please give details)
 - (ii) if weekly, number of weeks (do not include rent free weeks)
 - (c) What sort of tenancy will it be? (Shorthold/Assured/Other)
 (please give details if other)
 - (d) How long will the tenancy last?
 - (e) Are any services or amenities provided? Yes No
 If Yes, please give details below

Services/Amenities	Included in Rent	
	Yes	No
Cleaning of common areas		
Lighting of common parts		
Lift		
Porter or estate staff/gardening		
Laundry equipment		
Laundering by landlord		
Heating		
Cleaning of accommodation		
Lighting of accommodation		
Hot water		
Water Charges		
Gas/Electricity for Cooking		
Counselling and support		

 - (f) Is the accommodation furnished Yes No
 If Yes, is it fully furnished Partly furnished
 - (g) Does the rent include any money for meals Yes No
 If Yes, please give details below

Meal	Yes	No
Breakfast		
Lunch		
Evening Meal		
5. Who is the Landlord or Agent for the property?
 Name
 Address
 Postcode

- Telephone number
 (during normal office hours only)
You will need to get the Landlord or Property Agent to sign the declaration over the page
6. (a) Type of property

<input type="checkbox"/> detached house <input type="checkbox"/> detached bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> flat in block <input type="checkbox"/> semi-detached house <input type="checkbox"/> semi-detached bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> flat over shop(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> bedsit <input type="checkbox"/> terraced house <input type="checkbox"/> terraced bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> flat in house <input type="checkbox"/> hostel <input type="checkbox"/> maisonette <input type="checkbox"/> room or rooms
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 Other Number of floors in whole building
 - (b)(i) If it is a room(s) how many
 - (b)(ii) If more than one room how many are:
 bedrooms living rooms
 (excluding bathrooms and kitchens)
 - (b)(iii) Give location: front centre rear
 - (c) On which floor is your private accommodation?
 all floors basement ground
 first second third
 - (d) Please indicate the number of rooms in the property by putting a number in the appropriate box. DO NOT TICK
- | | Whole House | Sole use included in tenancy | Shared Use included in tenancy |
|--------------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Living rooms | | | |
| Bedrooms | | | |
| Kitchens | | | |
| Bathrooms | | | |
| Toilets | | | |
| Bedsits | | | |
| Other | | | |
| Total | | | |
- (e) Does the accommodation have central heating
 Yes No
 - (f) Does the rent include the use of a garage Yes No
 7. Please give details of any other people who will be living with you if you take on this new tenancy?
- | Name | Relationship to you | Sex M/F | Age |
|------|---------------------|---------|-----|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
8. Will the new tenancy be a joint tenancy with any other person?
 Yes No
 If Yes, please give their name(s) below
- | |
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| |
9. Are you getting Housing Benefit at the moment? Yes No
 10. Are you single and under 25 years of age? Yes No

11. Ask the landlord or property agent to sign here

I am considering granting a tenancy of the above dwelling and give my consent for an inspection of the premises to be carried out by the rent officer.

Landlord's signature Date

Data Protection

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk will use your information in respect of tenancy/benefit/rent issues. We may share the information you have provided with the government departments or agencies and local authorities to check the accuracy of the information, as permitted by law. You have a right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, which is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998 (for which we may make a small charge) and to correct any inaccuracies.

12. Please sign this declaration yourself

I am considering renting the property described above and I intend to apply for Housing Benefit.

Your signature Date

When you have completed all the questions on this form, take or send it to the local Housing Benefit office in the area in which the accommodation is situated. You will find their address in the local telephone directory.

NOTES

1. A Pre-Tenancy Determination will tell you the maximum rent which Housing Benefit could meet for the property. *It does not tell you how much Housing Benefit you will get.* This will depend on your circumstances (for example, your income and the size of your family).
2. If you are single and under 25 years of age it is more than likely that your maximum rent will be restricted to the average cost of non self contained accommodation in the area to which you are thinking of moving. This restriction will apply from 7 October 1996. If you get a pre-tenancy determination before that date but take up the tenancy on or after that date, the pre-tenancy determination may not be valid.
3. You will need to claim Housing Benefit separately, once you have received the Pre-Tenancy Determination and have decided that you want to take up the tenancy. You can get a Housing Benefit claim form from your local Housing Benefit office.