

Privacy Notice for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and Hardship Fund

Purpose for processing your information

To quickly and accurately assess you for entitlement to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund.

Your information may also be used to prevent or detect fraud or where we think there may be a risk of serious harm or threat to life.

Where the law allows us to we may also use your information to inform you of other services that may be of benefit to you, such as if there are benefits you may be entitled to.

Information is usually required about other people in your household to enable us to work out how much benefit you are entitled to. You should advise them that their information will also be processed. We collect the following information:

Details about you, people in your household and possibly third parties such as your landlord or joint tenants is required. The information needed includes:

- Name
- Address
- Date of Birth
- National Insurance Number
- Income including earnings, self-employed accounts, benefits received/claimed, loans, student income, pensions
- Expenditure such as child care costs
- Capital including bank/building society accounts, shares
- Rent details
- Contact details including telephone number and email
- Landlord name and address and possibly bank account
- Details of who else lives in your household and the above details for them as well as for yourself

This information is only used for the intended purpose but if we intend to use it for any other purpose; we will normally ask you first. In some cases, the Council may use your information for another purpose if it has a legal duty to do so, to provide a complete service to you, to prevent and detect fraud, or if there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life.

How we collect your information

Information could be collected from:

- You
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC)
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Cabinet Office
- Other local authorities
- Other Council Services
- Third parties such as your employer. We will normally ask for your consent before doing this.

Information will be collected using different methods including by letter, email, face-to-face, online forms, electronic transfer of information from central government departments mainly DWP, HMRC and Cabinet Office

Who the information is shared with

The information may be shared with the following:

- You
- Council staff employed to administer Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund.
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Cabinet Office
- An external company who are paid to administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support on behalf of the local authority
- Any external company who are appointed to audit the Council's accounts including Housing Benefit subsidy
- External companies who deliver services to enable your Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund claim to be processed, for example by supplying an online claim form service
- External companies who support the Council in delivering services, such as printing, posting or analysing data for the Council to enable us to advise you of services that you may be interested in
- Other Council Services
- Other local authorities

Third parties where there is a legal gateway that permits it and it is deemed to be in your interest, for example as part of a benefit take-up campaign.

Information will usually only be shared to enable quick and accurate assessment of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment, Local Welfare Provision and/or recovery of overpaid benefit, or to identify services that may be benefit to you. If we intend to use it for any other purpose; we will normally ask you first. In some cases, the Council may use your information for another purpose if it has a legal duty to do so, to provide a complete service to you, to prevent and detect fraud, or if there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life.

How long do we keep your information?

Your information will be held for up to 6 years after your claim for one of the services was closed

Your rights and access to your information

You have the right to request a copy of the information that we hold about you.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) also give you additional rights about the information we hold about you and how we use it, including the right to:

- Withdraw consent and the right to object and restrict further processing of your data; however, this may affect service delivery to you.
- Request to have your data deleted where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing and provided that there are no legitimate grounds for retaining it
- Request your data to be rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- Have your data transferred or copied should you move to another authority
- Not to be subject to automated decision-making including profiling

To submit a Subject Access Request visit our [request page](#)

If you have any concerns

Please contact us if you would like to know more about the information we hold about you and how we use it www.harrow.gov.uk/benefitsenquiryform

You have a right to complain to us if you think we have not complied with our obligation for handling your personal information; please visit our [Complaints and Compliments page](#)

If you are not satisfied with the Council's response you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). You can report a concern by visiting the [ICO website](#)

Automated Decision Making

We may sometimes make an automatic decision on your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support claim. You will be sent a decision notice if this changes how much benefit you are entitled to. You can request that this decision is reviewed by a member of staff if you would like to do so. Details of how to make this request will be given on the letter telling you about the decision.

Changes in your circumstances

You must notify us immediately if there are any changes in your circumstances and personal details so we can maintain an accurate and up to date record of your information. Changes that may affect your entitlement to benefit can be made online at www.harrow.gov.uk/hbenchangeofcircs