

Working out your Local Housing Allowance if you are a care leaver under 22

Local Housing Allowance is the way of working out new claims for Housing Benefit from 7 April 2008, for tenants renting accommodation from a private landlord. It also affects tenants already getting Housing Benefit who move into accommodation rented from a private landlord. If you live in council accommodation or other social housing, Local Housing Allowance will not affect you.

To work out how much benefit you might get you need to find out what Local Housing Allowance rate your benefit will be based on.

If you are a care leaver under 22, or live with a care leaver under 22 who is your partner, and have no dependent children your benefit will be based on the one bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate.

By care leaver we mean someone who was in council care after the age of 15. For more information about what we mean by care leavers, please get in touch with us at the address overleaf.

You can find out what the Local Housing Allowance room rates are by checking leaflet **SHBC(LHA)5**. You can get this from the Council Offices or from the Council's web-site on www.surreyheath.gov.uk.

You also need to find out if you can get the full amount of benefit. The amount of benefit you can get may be affected by:

- any money you have coming in
- any savings you have
- how much your rent is
- if you share paying the rent with someone else

Non-dependants

If you claim benefit you can only get it for yourself and your family. If you share a property with someone who is not part of your family, your benefit may be reduced. This is because we may expect them to pay towards your rent.

Joint tenants

If you are a joint tenant this might affect the benefit you can get. For more information about joint tenants, please get in touch with us at the address overleaf.

What if my rent is less than the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to me?

If your rent is up to £15 less than the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to you, any benefit you might get will still be based on the Local Housing Allowance rate. For example, if your rent is £90 and the Local Housing Allowance is £100, the maximum amount of benefit we could pay you would be £100.

If your rent is over £15 less than the Local Housing Allowance rate that applies to you, any benefit you might get will be based on the amount of your rent plus a maximum of £15. For example, if your rent is £60 and the Local Housing Allowance is £100 the maximum amount of benefit we could pay you would be £75.

For details about this, please see **SHBC(LHA)6** *Local Housing Allowance: rights and responsibilities*.

Further information

For more information about anything included in this leaflet, please get in touch with us as follows:

- phone the Housing Benefit department on 01276 707121
- visit your Housing Benefit department at:
Surrey Heath Borough Council
Surrey Heath House
Knoll Road, Camberley,
Surrey GU15 3HD
- look on our website at www.surreyheath.gov.uk
- email us: benefits@surreyheath.gov.uk

Remember that this leaflet is a guide only. It is not meant to say exactly what your legal rights are. While we have tried to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct at the date shown on the cover, we cannot cover all circumstances and some of the contents may be oversimplified. Also, please remember that the information in this leaflet is likely to become less accurate over time because of changes to the law.