

Working out your Local Housing Allowance if you are Single aged 25 or over

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 25 or over, single and do not live with any dependants, your benefit will be based on the one bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate if you live in:

- a self-contained property
- shared accommodation but have two or more rooms (bedrooms or living rooms) that no-one else can use

If you are 25 or over, single and do not live with any dependants, your benefit will be based on the Local Housing Allowance shared room rate if you live in shared accommodation unless you have two or more rooms (bedrooms or living rooms) that no-one else can use.

By a self-contained property we mean one where you have your own room plus your own:

- bathroom
- toilet, and
- kitchen (or facilities to cook with)

For example, this could be a one-bedroom flat.

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

There are extra rules if you are severely disabled. For more information about these, please contact us at the address below.

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 below.

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 the 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.