

Where to get more information

If you want to know more about the changes and how they affect you:

- phone the benefits team on **01237 428700**
- visit the benefits team at **Riverbank House, Bideford**
- look on our website **www.torridge.gov.uk**
- email us at **benefits@torridge.gov.uk**
- visit **www.gov.uk**

Riverbank House, Bideford, EX39 2QG

Monday to Friday **9.00am to 4.30pm**

Phone **01237 428700**
Monday to Thursday **08.45am to 5.00pm**
Friday **08.45am to 4.45pm**

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in large print, tape or other format, please contact the Council

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 as at February 2021, it is possible that there may be incorrect information or some ideas 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.

Housing benefit changed from 1 January 2012 for single people aged 25 to 34 who rent from a private landlord

Find out how the changes affect you.

The Government made changes to the way housing benefit is calculated for those who are single and aged 25 to 34 and rent from a private landlord.

Feb 2021

What do the changes mean?

From 1 January 2012 single people aged from 25 to 34 are only entitled to the housing benefit shared accommodation rate. By single people we mean someone who is **not** living:

- as a couple
- with dependent children.

The shared accommodation rate is based on the level of local rents for properties that are not self contained. This usually means that there is a shared

- Kitchen,
- Bathroom,
- Toilet or
- Living room

If you already get housing benefit at the one bedroom rate your housing benefit may reduce if you move to the shared accommodation rate.

If your housing benefit is paid directly to your landlord, the amount your landlord gets for your rent could go down.

If you are receiving housing benefit, you need to consider this change before you renew or take a new tenancy agreement with a private landlord.

Who do the changes affect?

These changes **will** affect you if you:

- rent accommodation from a private landlord
- already get housing benefit
- are single
- do not normally have children living with you
- are under 35 years old
- live in a self contained property

These changes **will not** affect you if you:

- rent from a local authority or housing association
- are aged under 22 and have been in care
- live in supported housing provided by a housing association, registered charity, voluntary organisation or a county council (in England)

- get the severe disability premium in your benefit because you are entitled to the middle or higher rate care component of the Disability Living Allowance or Enhanced rate of PIP.
- need an extra bedroom for a carer who provides you with the overnight care you need but who doesn't normally live with you
- have spent at least three months in a
 - ∞ homeless hostel or
 - ∞ hostel specialising in rehabilitating and resettling within the community. To benefit from this exemption you need to have been offered and accepted support services to enable you to be rehabilitated or resettled in the community
- are managed under active multi agency management under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements.

Shared accommodation rates

You can find out your local shared accommodation rate using the website below. You can also compare the shared accommodation rate with the one bedroom rate:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-housing-allowance>

What should I do now?

You can get more information at www.gov.uk –this website provides information on public services in one place including up to date information on benefit changes.

Speak to Torridge District Council—we can help you to find out exactly how these changes affect you and talk to you about what your options may be if you are looking for accommodation.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) is an executive agency of HM Revenue and Customs and holds information on Local Housing Allowance, fair rents and Council Tax—visit their website at www.voa.gov.uk

Citizens Advice provides a wide range of advice. To find your local Citizens Advice, look in the phone book or yellow pages, or visit their website at www.citizensadvice.org.uk.