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A company with a passion for communities

# Housing Benefits Overpayments



**Here to help... 0800 915 1600**

## Other

If you would like this document in another format or language, please tick as required and return to East North East Homes Leeds, Freeport

RRJX-YRTK-TACE, Leeds, LS7 3YY.

Your name:

Your address:

Telephone

## Formats



CD print



Large



Braille



Text

أود أن يكون هذا المستند باللغة العربية.

ARABIC

لطفاً اكتب لي ما به زبان فارسی در اختیار من قرار دهید.

FARSI

ئەم وەرەقیەم بە کوردی دەریئت

KURDISH

Chciał(a)bym otrzymać ten dokument w języku polskim.

POLISH

ከዚ ትኩረት ለዚ ግብዓት ንግድ ለዚ ለዚ.

TIGRINI

ئەم وەرەقیەم بە کوردی دەریئت

URDU

Another language (write in the box)

For more information call us on 0800 915 1600.



# Important Changes

Leeds Benefit Service has introduced a new scheme to help customers repay debt when they've been paid too much Housing Benefit. It means anyone who has been overpaid will have their future Housing Benefit entitlement reduced to take back the amount that has been overpaid.

## What is an overpayment?

How much Housing Benefit you get depends on the information you give to Leeds Benefit Service. If any of your circumstances change, this can mean you're entitled to less Housing Benefit. If you don't tell Leeds Benefit Service about the changes straight away, they may pay you too much Housing Benefit. This is called an overpayment.

## What changes can cause an overpayment?

- An increase in your wages or savings.
- Moving home.
- Starting a new job.
- Children moving in or out of your home.
- Children reaching the age of 16 or 18 and leaving school.
- Children reaching the age of 25 (even if they're on benefit).
- Other adults moving in or out of your home.
- Switching from one type of benefit to another (eg Job Seekers Allowance to Incapacity Benefit)
- Marriage, separation, divorce, moving in with a new partner.

If you fail to tell Leeds Benefit Service straight away of any change that would affect your Housing Benefit claim, you'll have to pay back the overpayment in full.

## **How can I prevent this from happening?**

If you know your circumstances are going to change, tell Leeds Benefit Service in advance or when this happens. You must tell them in writing. Your local Housing Office has a Benefit Adviser who can help you with all aspects of this and any benefit claim. You can have an appointment to see them at the office, phone them for advice or arrange for them to visit your home.

## **How will they tell you about an overpayment?**

If you've been overpaid, Leeds Benefit Service must write to you and tell you how much housing benefit they think you have been overpaid, why it was overpaid and how they decided this.

## **What you should do next?**

Come and see us as soon as possible. We can help you check the decision was correct and try to get the overpayment reduced.

To do this you must contact us within 1 month of getting your letter.

## **How do you pay it back?**

If you still have something to pay and are still getting Housing benefit, the benefits service will reduce the benefit you receive to recover the overpayment. Before they start, they'll write and tell you how much this will be.

It means the Benefit Service will pay less rent for you, so you'll have to pay more. If you don't, you'll be in arrears with your rent and your Housing Office will recover them in the same way as any other unpaid rent.

If you can't afford the new amount of rent you have to pay, you may be able to have this reduced. Staff at your local Housing Office can help you or ask Leeds Benefit Service about this.

If you no longer get any Housing Benefit, Leeds Benefit Service will send you an invoice for the amount of the overpayment and tell you how much to pay them each week. At the same time, you'll need to pay your full rent to your Housing Office.

### **East North East Homes Leeds Debt and Benefit Advisers**

#### **Burmantofts, Chapeltown & Meanwood:**

Gordon Crowe on 0113 214 3448 or Chris Ash on 0113 214 3438

#### **Halton Moor Osmondthorpe & Gipton:**

Jackie Wardle on 0113 214 1433 or Sandra Pickles on 2141352

#### **Moortown & Wetherby:**

Brona Werrit on 0113 247 7240 or

Yvonne Craggs on 0113 214 5640

#### **Seacroft North & Seacroft South:**

Caron Lee on 0113 214 3144

You can also call into your local Housing Office to speak to someone, phone Leeds Benefit Service direct on 2477247 or contact the Welfare Rights Department on 2149006.

Remember: it's up to you to keep Leeds Benefit Service up to date with any changes in your circumstances, but we can help. Tell them or us straight away.

This includes switching from one benefit to another.

## Other Useful Contact Numbers

- Leeds Benefit Service tel: 0113 2477247
- Citizens Advice Bureau tel: 0113 2457679
- Ebor Gardens Advice Centre tel: 0113 2350276
- Welfare Rights Unit tel: 0113 2149006
- St Vincents tel: 0113 2484126
- Leeds City Credit Union tel: 0113 2145252



# Are we getting it right?

We're always trying to improve the quality of our information.

You can help us by filling in this form and:

- ✓ hand it in at any East North East Homes Leeds Housing Office
- ✓ send it to us at East North East Homes Leeds Freepost RRJX-YRTK-TACE, Leeds LS7 3YY

Thank you for your help

What do you think about this booklet overall?

***Please tick whichever applies.***

Good  Average  Poor

What part(s) of it should we improve?

Did you understand the information?

Yes  No

If not, please say what you didn't understand

Do you think the layout is

Good  Average  Poor

How could we improve it?

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone no. \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_



## Housing Benefits Overpayment

Designed by Communications and Information Team

April 2007

Updated April 2008

Updated May 2009

Updated August 2009