

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

General Information Bulletin

Department for Work and Pensions, 1st Floor, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/housingbenefit/>

HB/CTB G3/2010

22 February 2010

Contact	Queries about the <ul style="list-style-type: none">• technical content of this bulletin, contact details are given at the end of each article• distribution of this bulletin, contact Corporate Document Services Ltd Orderline<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Email: orderline@cds.co.uk• bulletin in general, contact Kath Murphy<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Email: Kath.Murphy@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Who should read	All Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) staff
Action	For information

Contents

	page
The maximum HB/CTB period for working age customers	2
Identity card roll-out in London for 16 – 24 year olds	2
The CIS Prompts to LAs Project	3
CTB awareness campaign	3
Local Authority Omnibus Survey, Reports for wave 19.....	4
Statutory Instruments	4
What's new on the web	5
HB/CTB Circulars issued recently	6

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The maximum HB/CTB period for working age customers

- 1 Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) staff will know that the maximum period that HB/CTB could be backdated for working age customers was reduced to six months from October 2008. In making this change, the Government said that it intended ultimately to reduce the limit to three months, but would consider this only after a review of the effect of the initial change had been done at the end of 2009.
- 2 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has now carried out this review. Although evidence was drawn from a number of different sources, the results were inconclusive. On balance, the Government has decided that it would not currently be appropriate to make a further reduction in the maximum backdating period, and that the existing six month limit for claims to HB and CTB from working age customers should continue to apply.
- 3 If you have any queries relating to this item please contact Richard.Grennan@dpw.gsi.gov.uk

Identity card roll-out in London for 16 – 24 year olds

- 4 From 8 February 2010 roll-out of identity cards will be extended to include 16 – 24 year olds living in London. This follows the launch of identity cards in Greater Manchester and the North West of England. As roll-out accelerates there is an increased likelihood of cards being presented to local authorities (LAs).
- 5 LAs will accept the identity cards as primary evidence of identity. Guidance about how to recognise and check them can be found in [HB/CTB G21/2009](#).
- 6 More information on identity cards can be found by accessing the [Identity and Passport Service website](#) or the [Directgov website](#)

The CIS Prompts to LAs Project

- 7 Customer Information System (CIS) Prompts to LAs implementation date is scheduled for week commencing 5 April 2010.
- 8 The electronic prompt accessed via CIS will complement the current Electronic Transfer of Data (ETD) service, ensuring all Tax Credit (TC) awards and changes to benefits administered by DWP are notified to LAs within 24 hours of the DWP decision being made. This will improve data sharing between departments and reduce the possibility of fraud and error.
- 9 Prior to implementation, DWP will be running a scan across CIS to populate a HB/CTB interest indicator for all those cases with a live HB or CTB claim. This will ensure that we only issue notifications on appropriate cases, allowing LAs to take prompt action on all changes.
- 10 Training material and procedural guidance will be issued to LAs by the end of February so preparations can begin in readiness for the implementation date.
- 11 Further information will appear in March's HB Direct and General Information Bulletins, as well as on the Housing Benefit Information Flows Programme internet site.
- 12 If you have any queries about the project please view the [HBIFP - CIS Prompts to LAs Internet Page](#) or contact the CIS Prompts to LA project on QH.HBINFOFLOWSPROGRAMME@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK.

CTB awareness campaign

- 13 Flyers and posters are now available for LAs to use to promote CTB to customers. In previous years, many LAs have included the flyer in council tax bills and displayed the poster in reception areas. These are simple and effective ways to raise awareness of the benefit among customers.
- 14 Details of the campaign will be on the internet at www.dwp.gov.uk/housingbenefit/counciltax

Further information

- 15 If you require any further information, please email Josie Granter in DWP Communications, email josie.granter@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Local Authority Omnibus Survey, Reports for wave 19

16 The summary and final reports for Wave 19 of the Local Authority Survey will be available to download from the website on 23 February. As in previous waves the final report will continue to be published electronically as separate sections, each available as a *.pdf file for download from the website.

17 Please use the following URL address, which points to the location of the wave 19 summary report page.

NB: This link will not be 'live' until 23 February.

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep629.pdf>

18 The contents for wave 19 are

Title and contents

Section A: Information

Section B: Efficiency work programme

Section C: Temporary accommodation

Section D: Benefit fraud

Section E: Public functions and the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act

19 Further information is available from dan.heap@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Statutory Instruments

20 The following Statutory Instruments (SIs) have now been laid

- 2010 No.137, The Social Security (Medical Evidence) and Statutory Sick Pay (Medical Evidence) (Amendment) Regulations 2010, coming into force 6 April 2010
- 2010 No.196, The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2010, coming into force 8 March 2010
- 2010 No.293 (C.22), The Welfare Reform Act 2009 (Commencement No.2 and Transitory Provision) Order 2010, came into force 10 February 2010

21 Copies of SIs can now be downloaded from DWP's own website <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/specialist-guides/law-volumes/the-law-relating-to-social-security/> and the website of the Office of Publication Information <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm>

What's new on the web

22 The following items can be found on the website link shown

Document Type	Subject	Link
HB/CTB Bulletin U1/2010	Uprating of War Pension Rates (April 2010)	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/u1-2010.pdf
HB/CTB Bulletin G1/2010	HB/CTB cases awaiting decision by the Upper Tribunal Identity card roll-out accelerates Using the Department for Children, School's and Families' Free School Meal Eligibility Checking Service Statutory Instruments	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/g1-2010.pdf
HB/CTB Bulletin G2/2010	HB/CTB circular A26/2009 – clarification Right to reside and pregnancy	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/g2-2010.pdf
HB/CTB Circular A2/2010	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit: 2010 Uprating	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/a2-2010.pdf
HB/CTB Circular A3/2010	Permitted work: obtaining details from Jobcentre Plus	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/a3-2010.pdf
HB/CTB Circular S1/2010	Details of the government DHPs contribution for 2010/11 for some local authorities	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/s1-2010.pdf
HB Direct Issue 98 February 2010	Help to remind benefit thieves about the risk of being caught HB/CTB Overpayments Guide IRRV Benefits/Benefits Fraud Conference – We'll be there!!	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/issue-98-feb-2010.pdf
ESA Operational Guidance (October 2009)	Operational Guide for Local Authorities	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/esa-operational-guidance-v5-1e.pdf

HB/CTB Circulars issued recently

23 The following HB/CTB Circulars have been issued recently

HB/CTB Circular A3/2010