



# Problems paying your rates?

Housing Benefit can help!



An Agency within the Department of

**Finance and  
Personnel**

[www.dfpni.gov.uk](http://www.dfpni.gov.uk)



**RCA**  
Rate Collection Agency

## What is Housing Benefit?

Housing Benefit is a means tested benefit to help you pay your rates if you are on a low income or receive Income Support/Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.

Housing Benefit is also called Rate Rebate.

## Who can apply?

If you own and occupy your own home you may apply to the Rate Collection Agency.

If you do not own your home or are buying it through the Co-Ownership Scheme please contact the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

## How much help will I get?

This depends on:

- How much rates you pay;
- Your total income; and
- Other people who live with you.

## How do I apply?

You need to complete an application form and return it to us.

Forms are available from any Rate Collection Agency office or call and request one on our free phone number.

Forms may also be requested via the Agency's web site at: [www.ratecollectionagency.ni.gov.uk](http://www.ratecollectionagency.ni.gov.uk)

If it is the first time you have applied for Housing Benefit, from your current address, you will need to provide:

- Proof of ownership of the property, and
- Proof of both, your, and your partner's (where appropriate) identity.

*Proof of identity must be brought, in person, to one of our offices.*

We can deal with your application more quickly if you can supply the necessary information/evidence when you make your claim.

### What do I do if I have a change in my circumstances?

When you have made your claim for Housing Benefit and provided all of the information/evidence we have requested, you must inform us of any change in your circumstances within one calendar month as this may affect the amount of benefit you receive.

### Payments while awaiting a decision

We advise you to continue to pay your rate account while awaiting notification of the outcome of your claim for Housing Benefit. This will enable you to reduce the amount owing particularly if your application results in only partial or no Housing Benefit being awarded.

If as a result of the Housing Benefit decision you are entitled to a refund the Agency will aim to issue this within 14 days of the refund being identified.

### North Eastern

#### **Ballymena Office**

Academy House  
121a Broughshane St.  
Ballymena  
BT43 6HY  
Tel: 028 25664700

### North Western

#### **Londonderry Office**

Orchard House  
40 Foyle Street  
Londonderry  
BT48 6AT  
Tel: 028 71319900

### Eastern

#### **Belfast Office**

Londonderry House  
21-27 Chichester Street  
Belfast, BT1 4JJ  
Tel: 028 90252525

### Southern

#### **Craigavon Office**

16 West Street  
Portadown  
BT62 3PD  
Tel: 028 38396200

### South Western

#### **Omagh Office**

Boaz House  
15 Scarffe's Entry  
Omagh, BT78 1JE  
Tel: 028 82254777

### Housing Benefit

#### **Central Unit**

Londonderry House  
21-27 Chichester Street  
Belfast, BT1 4JJ  
Freephone: 0800 5877 477