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for Work &  
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[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## Your Housing Benefit payments may change

### What you need to know about changes to the benefit cap

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09 September 2016

Dear

The amount of the benefit cap is changing. It will change even if your benefit is capped already. We expect this will happen in November 2016, but it may be slightly later. The benefit cap is the total amount your household can get in benefits. By household we mean you, your partner and any dependent children that live with you.

#### What this means for you

The new amount of the benefit cap may apply to you. This means that the total amount of your household benefits cannot be more than the new amount of the benefit cap and your Housing Benefit may go down. This may mean you have to use money from your income or other benefits to pay towards the rent for your home. There is a table later in this letter that will help you work this out.

We know this can be difficult and we want to make sure you are ready for this change. We can give you help and support. This could help you know what you can do to stop the benefit cap applying to you.

If your circumstances do not change, we will write to you by the end of September to remind you that your Housing Benefit may go down.

**Finding work could mean that the benefit cap won't apply to you if you are able to get Working Tax Credit.** You can find out

Go to  
[www.gov.uk/benefit-cap](http://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap) to find out more information about **how your benefit payments may change** and to use the online calculator.

or, you can call the helpline on:

Telephone: **0345 605 7064**

Textphone: **0345 608 8551**

Our opening hours are 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

more about Working Tax Credit at [www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit](http://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit) including how many hours you need to work to get it.

**The new amounts of the benefit cap will be:**

About your household	Where you live	Each year	Approximately each month**	Approximately each week**
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your household is made up of a couple (with or without children), or</li> <li>• If you are a lone parent (and the children you look after live with you)</li> </ul>	Great Britain, but not Greater London	£20,000	£1,667	£385
	Greater London*	£23,000	£1,917	£442
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are a single person and:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ you have no children, or</li> <li>➢ the children you look after don't live with you</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Great Britain, but not Greater London	£13,400	£1,117	£258
	Greater London*	£15,410	£1,284	£296
*By Greater London we mean the city of London and the 32 London boroughs. You can find out more at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap">www.gov.uk/benefit-cap</a>				
**By approximately, we mean that the monthly and weekly figures are not yet decided and may be slightly different to the figures shown above. We will write to you again in September to tell you the exact figures.				

**How you can find out more**

We've given information at the end of this letter about which benefits will count towards the benefit cap, and who the benefit cap won't apply to.

- You can find out more information and use our online calculator to see how much your Housing Benefit may go down by going to [www.gov.uk/benefit-cap](http://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap)
- You can call our helpline to find out general information about the changes, and about the help we can give you. The telephone number is on the first page of this letter

**How we can help you**

We can help you to look for work and help you get the skills you need to find a job.

You may already meet with one of our work coaches. If so, we will continue to help you.

If you don't have a work coach we will contact you and ask you to come in and see us. We can help you find work, learn new skills, support you to manage your money better and with

options for child care. If you call our helpline, we can arrange an appointment for you more quickly.

### **More help and information**

If you want to ask about any other changes to your Housing Benefit or housing arrangements, you can contact your local authority. They may be able to give you a Discretionary Housing Payment. By Discretionary Housing Payment, we mean money which might help you to pay your rent. They may be able to help you if you want to find somewhere cheaper to live. To contact your local authority visit **[www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council)** or look in your local phone book.

You can also get help and advice from:

- The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). They provide free and confidential advice. Find your local CAB in the phone book or Yellow Pages, or go to **[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)** for England and Wales or **[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)** for Scotland
- If you need help managing your money please contact the Money Advice Service as soon as you can. They offer free independent advice about how to make the best of your money, including budgeting, savings and dealing with debt. To find out more, go to **[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)**
- Shelter offers confidential advice on housing, benefits and debt. Call the Freephone Housing Advice Helpline on 0808 800 4444. Lines are open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, and Saturday to Sunday 8am to 5pm. Or you can go to **[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)** in Scotland and England or **[www.sheltercymru.org.uk](http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk)** in Wales

Yours sincerely

Office Manager

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### **Equality and Diversity**

We are committed to treating people fairly, regardless of their disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or civil partnership status, age, religion or beliefs. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

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### **Call charges**

Calls to 0345 numbers cost no more than a standard geographic call, and count towards any free or inclusive minutes in your landline or mobile phone contract.

## Benefit Cap - who the benefit cap will and won't apply to

### Benefits that will count towards the cap

These benefits all count when working out how much you can get a week:

- Bereavement Allowance
- Child Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance (except where it is paid with the support group amount)
- Housing Benefit, paid direct to you or to your landlord. (Some housing benefit does not count. Please see the note below\*)
- Incapacity Benefit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Maternity Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Widowed Parent's Allowance
- Widowed Mother's Allowance
- Widow's Pension, including the age-related component

\* Some housing benefit does not count. This might be if you live somewhere that provides you with care, support or supervision. Contact your local authority if you think this applies to you.

### Who the benefit cap won't apply to

The benefit cap won't apply to you if you, your partner or any children living with you can get any of the following benefits. It won't apply, even if you are getting one of the benefits listed in the above table:

- Working Tax Credit
- Attendance Allowance
- Carer's Allowance\*
- Disability Living Allowance
- Guardian's Allowance\*
- Industrial Injuries Benefits (and the equivalent payments as part of a war disablement pension or the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme)
- Personal Independence Payment
- The support group amount of Employment and Support Allowance
- War Widow's or War Widower's Pension

If you think you may be able to get one of these benefits, you can find out more at [www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser)

Please note that any adult children living with you would not normally count as part of your household. So, if they are claiming one of these benefits, the benefit cap may still change your own amount of payment

**\*Carer's Allowance and Guardian's Allowance currently count towards the benefit cap, but will not count towards the benefit cap once the new changes happen.**

