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Guidance

# LA Welfare Direct 11/2022

Updated 8 November 2022

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# Contact

If you have queries about the:

- technical content of this bulletin then contact details are given at the end of each article
- general content and distribution of this bulletin, contact [lawelfare.correspondence@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.correspondence@dwp.gov.uk)

# Who should read

All Housing Benefit staff

# Action

For information

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# Editorial

Some might say this is quite a brief edition this month. That said, there are nevertheless some important issues within for you to consider. Of particular note, the changes to the Department for Work and Pensions' fast-tracking rules for our disability benefits and two gentle reminders. Firstly, for some authorities to provide a single point of contact for the Payment Deduction Programme full reconciliation exercise we are conducting with colleagues in Debt Management. Secondly, on the supported housing and temporary accommodation Single Housing Benefit Extract management information (MI) topic, we need authorities to implement the IT changes we communicated in [HB A3/2022 \(revised\)](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-adjudication-circulars-2022/a32022-changes-to-supported-housing-and-temporary-accommodation-single-housing-benefit-extract-management-information>). This is important as we try to gather more meaningful MI to support investment decisions.

Finally, may I thank very many of you who continue to work collaboratively with us here in the Local Authority Partnership, Engagement and Delivery division. In particular to those local authority colleagues who provide information and evidence to the Performance Relationship Managers who work as part of my Performance Development Team. This continuous dialogue provides an excellent source of intelligence which we use on an almost daily basis to inform decisions about Housing Benefit performance. Thank you!

Until the next time, take care.

**Jonathan Bottomer**, Head of the Performance Development Team

## **Special Rules for End-of-Life extension from 6 to 12 months for disability benefits**

1. On 1 November 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced that [fast-tracked access to Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-in-last-year-of-life-to-have-disability-benefits-fast-tracked) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-in-last-year-of-life-to-have-disability-benefits-fast-tracked>) will be extended to people who are in the final year of life. This is called Special Rules for End of Life, formerly named Special Rules for Terminal Illness.
2. Eligible claimants will not be required to attend a medical assessment and the majority will receive the highest rate of benefit.
3. Previously, these special rules only applied to claimants who were in the final 6 months of life. This has now been extended to 12 months.
4. These rules will come into force as soon as practical and follow similar changes to Universal Credit and Employment and Support Allowance earlier this year.

### **Impact on local authorities**

5. There have been no changes to HB regulations but local authorities (LAs) may notice an increase in Automate Transfer to Local Authority Systems notifications as a result of the extended eligibility.
6. If you have any questions about this change, email [lawelfare.laliaisonteam@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.laliaisonteam@dwp.gov.uk)

## **Reminder: Single point of contact for the Payment Deduction Programme full reconciliation exercise**

7. During the all-LA conference call held on 28 September 2022, all authorities were asked to provide a single point of contact (SPOC) for the Payment Deduction Programme full reconciliation exercise.
8. This is a reminder to all those LAs in tranches 2-8 who have yet to do so, to provide one as soon as possible by emailing [caxtonhouse.lapedpdpsupport@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:caxtonhouse.lapedpdpsupport@dwp.gov.uk). If an LA is unsure which tranche they fall under, a list is available on Glasscubes.

# Housing Benefit circular A3/2022 (revised) - Changes to supported housing and temporary accommodation Single Housing Benefit Extract management information

9. As LAs are aware, we issued circular [HB A3/2022 \(revised\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-adjudication-circulars-2022/a32022-changes-to-supported-housing-and-temporary-accommodation-single-housing-benefit-extract-management-information) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-adjudication-circulars-2022/a32022-changes-to-supported-housing-and-temporary-accommodation-single-housing-benefit-extract-management-information>) on 21 September 2022. The revisions address some of the questions received since the release of the new IT changes.

10. Main changes include:

- an example of where care, support and supervision costs are not available
- further information on LAs use of the property register
- links to the new HB guidance on supported housing claims
- further lines on standard deduction rates for ineligible meals
- clarity on local authorities actioning exception files
- clarity on where accommodation meets the criteria for both specified accommodation and temporary accommodation and how this should be recorded
- new frequently asked questions: Specific issues raised since the release of the IT changes at a new Annex C

11. It is crucial that LAs continue to implement the new IT changes as communicated in this circular to allow for future policy improvements in the delivery of HB for supported housing and temporary accommodation. The data is vital in ensuring better outcomes for citizens and to support future investment decisions in the sector.

## Next steps

12. The Local Authority Partnership, Engagement and Delivery division will be contacting LAs shortly to seek assurance that the IT releases issued between April 2022 and June 2022 have been downloaded, tested and deployed and that the 'exceptions files' detailing live HB claims with contradictory markers have been assessed and corrected; in line with 'New Burdens' funding issued to LAs to support this activity.

13. If you have any questions about the content of this article, email [housing.policyenquiries@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:housing.policyenquiries@dwp.gov.uk)

# Household Support Fund extension 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 (England only)

14. On 26 May 2022 the government announced a further extension to the Household Support Fund. The fund has been extended to 31 March 2023 with an additional £500 million of funding which will be used by LAs to support vulnerable households.

15. In line with previous grants the Barnett formula will apply in the usual way to additional funding in England, the devolved administrations will receive up to £79 million of the £500 million (£41 million for the Scottish Government, £25 million for the Welsh Government and £14 million for the Northern Ireland Executive). It will be for the devolved administrations to decide how to allocate this additional funding.

16. You can find more information on the [Household Support Fund, including final documentation \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils), on [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

## Practitioners' Operational Group and LA Welfare Steering Group

17. The last Practitioners' Operational Group (POG) meeting took place on 13 October 2022. Agenda items included LA Welfare issues Highlight Report, Move to UC, Update: Cost of Living, Long Term Planning and Local Housing Allowance rates.

18. Both groups' meetings are held bi-monthly (and alternately) so the next LA Welfare Steering Group meeting is scheduled to take place on 17 November 2022.

19. If you have any questions regarding topics raised at these consultation groups, you can email [lawelfare.correspondence@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.correspondence@dwp.gov.uk)

## HB decisions by the Upper Tribunal

20. Decision Making and Appeals (DMA) Leeds is not aware of any HB cases that have been decided by the Upper Tribunal (UT) since October's edition of this bulletin.

21. A selection of [decisions of the UT \(https://www.gov.uk/administrative-appeals-tribunal-decisions\)](https://www.gov.uk/administrative-appeals-tribunal-decisions) are published on their website. Do be aware that there is an undefined time lapse between decisions being issued and their appearance on the website.

22. If you have any queries about cases before the UT Judges or courts, please contact us by email at

[quarryhouse.dmaleedscustomersupportservices@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:quarryhouse.dmaleedscustomersupportservices@dwp.gov.uk)

## New Legislation

23. The following Statutory Instruments (SIs) have been laid:

- Bereavement Benefits (Remedial) Order 2022 SI 2022, laid on 11 October 2022 and coming into force in accordance with article 1(2)
- Pensions Dashboards Regulations 2022 SI 2022, laid on 17 October 2022
- Biocidal Products (Health and Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 SI 2022, laid on 18 October 2022 and coming into force 31 December 2022
- Cessation of EU Law Relating to Prohibitions on Grounds of Nationality and Free Movement of Persons Regulations 2022 SI 2022, laid on 20 October 2022

24. Copies of SIs can now be downloaded from [legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>)

## What's new on our HB pages on www.gov.uk

25. The following items can be found on the website link shown:

Document Type	Subject	Link
LAWD10/2022 bulletin	Editorial Infected Blood Interim Compensation Scheme Self-isolation Support Payment Scheme in Wales Change to the LASST contact number New Verify Earnings and Pensions User Interface information Performance	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2022/la-welfare-direct-102022">LAWD10/2022</a> ( <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2022/la-welfare-direct-102022">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2022/la-welfare-direct-102022</a> )



Document Type	Subject	Link
	<p>Measurement Housing Benefit annual work programme due to commence</p> <p>Case transfers to Adult Disability Payment: 28-day period after hospital admissions</p> <p>HB Cost Refresh exercise</p> <p>LA HB Subsidy workshops in early 2023</p> <p>Invitation to the next Data sharing and IT consultation and engagement forum</p> <p>Plans to issue LA-PED division's bulletin to county councils</p> <p>Practitioners' Operational Group and LA Welfare Steering Group</p> <p>Secondment opportunities in LA-PED division</p> <p>HB Decisions by the Upper Tribunal</p> <p>New Legislation</p> <p>What's new on our HB pages on <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a></p>	

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