

Guidance

# LA Welfare Direct lite 5/2023

Updated 18 May 2023

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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

## Update: Extension granted to LAs for the return of the revised Memorandum of Understanding

1. As advised in April's [LAWD4/2023 \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2023/la-welfare-direct-42023\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2023/la-welfare-direct-42023), on 25 April 2023, the Local Authority Partnership, Engagement and Delivery division directly re-issued the revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and local authorities (LAs), along with a letter outlining the key changes to all LAs.
2. DWP originally requested each LA must fully review the MOU, sign and return the necessary declarations by the close of business on 12 June 2023.
3. Having taken into consideration LA feedback, DWP is granting all LAs an extension of four weeks, to fully review the MOU, sign and return the necessary declarations to [lawelfare.lasecurity@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.lasecurity@dwp.gov.uk) by the close of business on 10 July 2023.
4. If you need to contact us or have any queries about the content of this article you can email the address given above.

## Update: Extension granted to LAs for the return of the LA MOU compliance audit template

5. As advised in April's [LAWD4/2023 \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2023/la-welfare-direct-42023\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2023/la-welfare-direct-42023), on 17 April 2023, DWP sent a letter to LAs providing the high-level findings from the LA MOU Compliance Audit pilot. We also advised that, following this pilot, the audit is extending to all LAs.

6. DWP originally requested each LA to impact the audit pilot findings within their LA by completing and returning an audit template (Annex B of the letter) by the close of business on 12 June 2023.

7. Having taken into consideration LA feedback, DWP is granting all LAs a further extension of four weeks, to fully impact the audit pilot findings and return the audit template (Annex B) to [lawelfare.lacompliance@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.lacompliance@dwp.gov.uk) by the close of business on 10 July 2023.

## Questions and answers following the all-LA call

8. DWP held an all LA question and answer session on the MOU compliance requirements on 11 May 2023. If you were unable to attend or wanted to listen to the call again, LAs can find the link to the recording of the session on Glasscubes. We will also be providing a document covering some of the questions and answers in the near future.

9. If you need to contact us or have any queries about the content of this article you can email the address given above.

## Circular HB A6/2023 about persons arriving from Sudan with effect from 15 May 2023

10. Circular HB A6/2023 was issued directly to LAs on Monday 15 April 2023. It provides guidance about the Social Security (Habitual Residence and Past Presence) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 (SI 2023/532), which came into force on 15 May 2023, and exempts certain persons arriving from Sudan in connection with the violence which escalated on 15 April 2023, from the factual habitual residence test for Housing Benefit.

11. The circular should be published on our [HB pages](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-benefit-information-guidance-and-good-practice-for-local-authority-staff>) in the next few days.

## Fraud and Error National Statistics (estimates) for the financial year ending March 2023

12. DWP [published](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fraud-and-error-in-the-benefit-system>) the statistics for Fraud and Error in the Benefit System for the financial year ending March 2023 at 9.30am on Thursday 11 May 2023.

13. The Fraud and Error in the benefit system statistics are badged as National Statistics. They estimate how much money the department incorrectly pays, either by paying people too much benefit (overpayments) or by not paying enough benefit (underpayments).

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