

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

General Information Bulletin

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<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/housingbenefit/>

HB/CTB G13/2008

7 July 2008

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

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HBMS national scans

- 1 *HB/CTB Circular A17/2006* informed local authorities (LAs) about new Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) products including national scans. Several national scans have been issued since that time. HBMS intend to issue a national scan to all LAs each month. The schedule below is to assist LAs in planning their workload around HBMS national scans.

ISSUE FROM	SCAN TYPE
01/07/2008	Unchanged earnings
04/08/2008	Unchanged tax credits
01/09/2008	Unchanged IB
06/10/2008	LRRD
03/11/2008	Unchanged earnings
01/12/2008	Unchanged tax credits
05/01/2009	Unchanged IB
02/02/2009	Unchanged earnings
02/03/2009	Unchanged tax credits
06/04/2009	Unchanged IB
04/05/2009	LRRD
01/06/2009	Unchanged earnings

- 2 Further details regarding the composition of each scan will be sent at the time of issue.
- 3 Now HBMS data collection has re-commenced, LAs are invited to request scans on an ad hoc basis. A BAP1 should be completed and returned to request a scan. As personal details verification reports are being issued to LAs each month, NINO scans will no longer be approved for issue under categories 1, 2, 5, 7 & 8.
- 4 If you would like to request a scan or have any queries please contact
Stuart Sayer
Email: Stuart.sayer@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01253 688497

Julie Graves
Email: Julie.graves@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01253 688495

Rent form guidance

- 5 The Pension Service (TPS) recently ran a series of events for LAs about the changes to HB/CTB telephone claims from this October. A question was raised at one of these events about the procedures for gathering rent information when an LA has a local arrangement with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) whereby the RSL provides the LA with rent details for their properties for HB purposes.
- 6 From October, TPS will send the HB/CTB claim information direct to the relevant LA, instead of the customer having to return a claim form. However, customers claiming HB who rent from a private landlord (ie not the LA) will still be sent a blank supplementary rent form to complete and return to their LA (as happens now), as rent details will not be collected in the phone call.
- 7 LAs have asked whether they can assess the HB claim without the rent form being returned, if they have local arrangements to obtain the relevant information about rent from the RSL.
- 8 The purpose of the rent form is to collect information from the customer about the property they rent and the rental liability to allow HB entitlement to be determined. However, it is up to the LA to decide in each case whether they have enough information to assess the claim without the rent form being returned. If a LA has current information about the rent and is satisfied that the information is correct they can process the claim without waiting for the rent form.
- 9 Please contact bernard.mitton@dwp.gsi.gov.uk if you require further advice or information.

Single HB Extract – collection begins

- 10 Transfer of the Single HB Extract between LAs and DWP started last week.
- 11 In a letter emailed to Benefit Managers on 1 July 2008, LAs were informed of the solution and implementation plan to enable transfer of this data extract to go ahead from week beginning 30 June 2008.
- 12 In brief, the solution requires that data being transferred to DWP is no bigger than 3MB. If greater than 3MB then LAs will need to split the file before transfer can take place. HBDS Newcastle will be contacting LAs individually to discuss this process in detail.
- 13 *HB/CTB Circular A9/2008*, and the accompanying timetable, details the process and timetable for transfer. Collection will commence with Month 3 data – the extract due for transfer in Week 1 beginning 30 June 2008, followed then by Week 2 beginning 7 July 2008, and so on through the timetable.

- 14 Historical data that LAs will have extracted since the introduction of the Single HB Extract in April 2008 should continue to be kept in secure storage – we will contact you with our plans for this at a later date.
- 15 Before transfer of this data can commence HBDS Newcastle will
- contact the Responsible Encryptor (RE) in each LA by telephone to confirm correct contact details for the RE
 - walkthrough the process (including file splitting where appropriate), and
 - agree a transfer date
- 16 **No action should be taken to transfer your Single HB Extract to DWP until your RE has received this initial telephone call from HBDS Newcastle.**
- 17 HBDS Newcastle will start by calling Week 1, Day 1 LAs and so on through the timetable ending with Week 4, Day 4. However, LAs should be aware that these calls won't necessarily be made on your designated transfer day.
- 18 LAs should be aware that this collection of the Single HB Extract in no way affects your requirement to return your HBMS Extract. You should continue to provide your monthly HBMS data extract to **EDS** as per *HB/CTB Circular A7/2008*.
- 19 If you have any queries please contact
- Jan Ripley
Housing Benefit Database & Matching Service
Newcastle
- Email: hbsdiad-scan@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Statutory Instruments

- 20 The following Statutory Instruments (SIs) have now been laid
- 2008 No 1552, The Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) Amendment (No 2) Regulations 2008, coming into force 12 July 2008
 - 2008 No 1554, The Employment and Support Allowance (Consequential Provisions) (No 2) Regulations 2008, coming into force 27 October 2008
 - 2008 No 1595, The Mesothelioma Lump Sum Payments (Claims and Reconsiderations) Regulations 2008, coming into force 1 October 2008
 - 2008 No 1596, The Social Security (Recovery of Benefits) (Lump Sum Payments) Regulations 2008, coming into force 1 October 2008
 - 2008 No 1599, The Social Security (Students and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008, sections of the regulations come into force from 1 August 2008
 - 2008 No 1649 The Income-related Benefits (Subsidy to Authorities) Amendment (No. 3) Order 2008, coming into force 25 July 2008

21 Copies of SIs can now be downloaded from

- DWP's own website
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/docs/lawvols/bluevol/> and
- the website of the Office of Publication Information
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm>