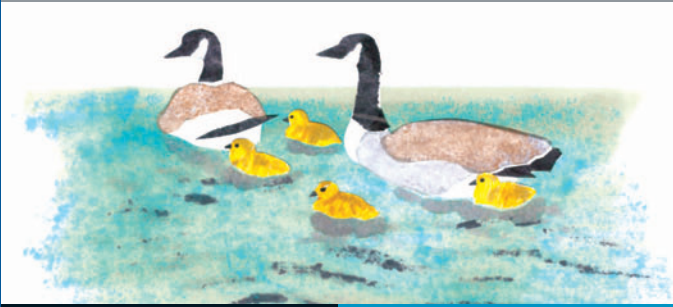


Help with child-care costs



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Number 5 in a series of benefit information leaflets.

Help with child-care costs

Claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit include help for parents with child-care costs. The cost of child care, up to the limits shown in this leaflet, may be taken off your earnings, working tax credit or child tax credit when we calculate your overall benefit. This may increase the total benefit that you are entitled to.

This leaflet is part of a series (illustrated opposite) produced by a group of local authorities to help make Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit easier to understand.

- 1 How to claim benefit
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Who can claim child-care costs?

Single parents can claim if:

- you work 16 hours or more a week; or
- you are on maternity leave and receiving Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance.

Couples can claim if:

- both of you work 16 hours or more a week; or
- one of you works 16 hours or more a week and the other is disabled or blind and receiving other benefits; or
- one of you works 16 hours or more a week and the other is on maternity leave and receiving Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance.

What child-care costs qualify?

The child must be under 15 years old, or under 16 if they are disabled.

Their care must be provided by one of the following:

- a registered child-minder;
- a registered nursery or play scheme;
- an out-of-hours scheme run by an approved provider. The out-of-hours scheme will be able to tell you whether or not they are approved;
- an out-of-hours club or scheme provided by a school on school premises or by a local authority. This usually only applies if the child is aged 8 or over;
- a child-care scheme on Crown property (property owned by Her Majesty or a government department) where registration is not required;

- an organisation accredited by the Secretary of State under the Tax Credit regulations.

We will need proof of the child-care payments you make and a copy of the child-minder's registration certificate.

How much can be allowed?

The maximum costs for child-care that can be allowed are:

- £175 a week for one child;
- £300 a week for two or more children.

How and when should I claim?

If you have not already made a claim for child-care costs on the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claim form, and you think you may qualify, you should contact us at the Benefits Office as soon as possible.

If you have not claimed benefit, but feel you may qualify because of your child-care costs, contact us as soon as possible.

Our address and contact details are on the back page of this leaflet.

Other formats

This leaflet is also available in large print, Braille, on audio cassette and in other languages. Please contact us if you need this leaflet in one of these formats.

This leaflet gives basic advice and is a general guide. If you have a question that is not answered in this leaflet, or if you want more advice, please contact us.

Participating authorities: Broxbourne, Dacorum, Hertsmeire, Ipswich, Lincoln City, North Herts, St Albans, Stevenage, Three Rivers and Welwyn Hatfield.



Where to get help and advice

To get more information you can visit us at:

Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway, Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL

Offices are open: Mon to Thu 8.30am – 5.30pm
Fri 8.30am – 5pm

Telephone: 01923 773138 (*benefits section*)

Email: benefits@threerivers.gov.uk

Fax: 01923 727181

Website: www.threerivers.gov.uk

South Oxhey Area Office
37 Oxhey Drive
South Oxhey
Herts WD19 7SD

Benefits officer

available: Mon and Thu 9am – 4.30pm
Fri 9am – 4pm

Other organisations that provide help and advice

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Watford 01923 234949

Rickmansworth 01923 720424

Abbots Langley 01923 267949

Oxhey & District 020 8421 0911