

Privacy Notice Housing benefit and council tax reduction

Who we are

London Borough of Newham is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a 'Data Controller' This privacy notice applies to you ('the service user') and the London Borough for Newham ('the Council'). The Council takes the privacy of your information very seriously.

The Benefits department is part of the Council Tax and Benefits Service and is responsible for processing and paying Housing Benefit and Discretionary Housing Payment and for awarding Council Tax Reduction.

Our address is:
Council Tax and Benefits Service
London Borough of Newham
PO Box 23504
E15 4UU

You can send an email to: Benefits@newham.gov.uk

What data do we collect?

In order to calculate HB (Housing Benefit), CTR (Council Tax Reduction) and DHP (Discretionary Housing Payment) we collect information about, you, your partner, your children, and other adults that live in your household.

This information includes; name, address, date of birth, National Insurance Number, earned income, benefits and allowances, bank accounts, savings, investments, property ownership, rent paid, tenancy agreements, landlord details, immigration details, phone numbers, email addresses and any other information deemed necessary such as a statement of accounts for self-employed people.

Why we collect your data

We collect your data so that we can process your application for Housing Benefit and Discretionary Housing Payment and for awarding Council Tax Reduction.

We are required by legislation to process benefits for those who are entitled. The information we collect, and the information provided to us by the Department for Work and Pensions is required for the calculation of your HB or CTR claim.

The lawful basis for processing your data

The lawful basis we use to process your data as set out in UK data protection legislation is:

(c) Legal obligation: the processing is necessary for us to comply with the law (not including contractual obligations).

(e) Public task: the processing is necessary for us to perform a task in the public interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law.

The relevant legislation applicable are as follows:

- Housing Benefit under section 131 (1) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and associated Regulations.
- Council Tax Benefit under Section 139 (1) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and associated Regulations.
- For Council Tax Reduction scheme under S13A and Schedule 1a of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated Regulations.

How we use your data

We will use your information for the purpose of processing and paying your Housing Benefit and Discretionary Housing Payment and for awarding Council Tax Reduction.

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We may also use it for performing any of its statutory enforcement duties and to help collect debts like Council Tax and to assist in the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.

We may also use some of your data to identify and target senior individuals who may benefit from various types of preventative support. Providing access to such support when needed is likely to have a significant positive impact on long-term health and well-being, as well as potentially reducing or delaying the need for ongoing care and support from the local authority.

Who we will share your data with

The information held by the council as part of your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction application can be shared with and used by other council services to:

- help decide whether you qualify for help and how much, if anything, you should pay
- help identify and support people who are at risk of becoming homeless
- help identify and support older people who may be at risk of loneliness and/or isolation
- help people living in a council or Housing Association property and who will be affected by the Benefit Cap and/or Under Occupation in the Social sector (by telling another part of the Council or your landlord, they will be able to advise you what you should do next and provide you with any assistance they can).

We will make any disclosures required by law and may also share this information with other bodies responsible for detecting/preventing fraud or auditing/ administering public funds. We may share the details with other organisations that handle public funds and assist in the processing of other benefits.

We will share information with a third party where you have given us written permission to do so.

Where your housing benefit is paid directly to your landlord, we will share limited information with the landlord about payment dates and the amounts of payment. We will share information with Elected Members of the London Borough of Newham where they are pursuing their legitimate functions and with Members of Parliament for the same reason.

Automated decision making

You have specific rights relating to any automated decision making carried out by LBN (London Borough of Newham). We will tell you if an automated decision has been made at the time of writing to you with an outcome decision notice.

Your rights mean that you can ask us to reconsider the automated decision made (this does not mean we will look at and reconsider the decision but will check the output from the automated decision) or ask us to make a new decision which is not solely automated.

You will have up to one month to ask us to review the automated decision.

Processing revenues and benefits applications using Robotic Processing Automation (RPA)

Personal data will be shared with Delta 4 Services Limited (D4S) for automating revenues and benefits transactions using RPA solutions.

RPA solutions will process each caseload of data through integration with NEC systems administered by D4S. Completed cases will be assessed within NEC applications and notified through a report.

RPA solutions are not always fully automated and do require human intervention.

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Personal data generated throughout the processing will be stored within an encrypted database hosted within the council's infrastructure.

How long we will keep your data

We will keep your data safe and secure for a period of **six** year(s) after the last payment on a benefit claim. If a claim has an outstanding payment, we will retain your information for six years after full repayment of the overpayment.

All personal data is deleted from the RPA runtime solution upon completion of the processing of relevant revenues and benefits transactions.

This is in line with our retention Schedule. After this time, it will be securely destroyed.

How do we protect your data?

We comply with all laws concerning the protection of personal information and have security measures in place to reduce the risk of theft, loss, destruction, misuse, or inappropriate disclosure of information. Staff access to information is provided on a need-to-know basis and we have access controls in place to help with this.

Know your rights

We process your data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Find out more at <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/> If you have any queries or concerns relating to data protection matters, please email: GDPR-dataprotection@onesource.co.uk.

You can view our full Privacy Notice on our website here [Processing personal data privacy notice – Newham Council](#)