Backdating Benefit and Support

When are Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support awarded from?

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support are normally awarded from the Monday after the date you claim.

What if I want them awarding from an earlier date?

This is called backdating and we can only backdate your claim for a maximum:

- 1 month for Housing Benefit and 6 months for Council Tax Support if you are under the qualifying age for Pension Credit (before 01/04/16 it was 6 months for both), or
- 3 months for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support if you are the qualifying age for Pension Credit*

*The qualifying age for Pension Credit was 60 years until 5 April 2010, from 6 April 2010 it is gradually increasing to 65 years.

If you are the qualifying age for Pension Credit or more we will automatically consider backdating your claim for the 3 months prior to the date you made your claim.

If you are under the qualifying age for Pension Credit, for your claim to be backdated we must be satisfied that:

- you have shown good cause for failing to claim earlier and
- that good cause existed continuously during the period for which backdating is being requested.

What is a good cause?

We look at things like your health, any family problems you have had and language problems. We may also think you have a good reason for not claiming earlier if you have been given wrong advice by someone who should have known better. This would include staff from the Citizens’ Advice Bureau, the Department of Work and Pensions or our office.

If you forgot to claim, or didn’t realise you could claim, this would not be a good reason. We can only backdate your benefit or support if your reasons for not claiming earlier lasted until you did claim.

Information can be made available in other languages, or other formats such as Braille or Audio Tape, on request. Please ask a member of our staff for more information, or if you need any other help or advice. They can arrange to speak to you in your own language if you need them to.

www.doncaster.gov.uk
How do I claim backdated benefit and/or support?

A request must be in writing. You can attach a letter to your claim form, or send it separately. If you prefer, you can call into one of our offices and make a statement to ask for a backdate. Do this as soon as you realise you want to claim a backdate, as we can only go back the maximum period from when we receive your backdate request. You should include your reasons for claiming late.

What happens then?

We will decide whether your reasons are good enough to backdate your claim. We may ask you for more information (by letter or telephone) or ask you to come into the office for an informal interview. We will write to you and tell you our decision. If we decide not to backdate your claim, we will tell you why.

Can I appeal?

We may feel your reasons are not good enough to backdate your claim. If you are not satisfied with our decision, you can ask us to look at it again or you can appeal against it. You must write to us within one month of getting our decision. Your letter should say why you are not satisfied. Our fact sheet, *What to do if you think your benefit decision is wrong*, gives you more information about appealing.

More help and advice

This fact sheet is a guide only. We have tried to make sure that the information in this fact sheet is correct at the date published (12 April 2016). If you need more help and advice about Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, please see our other fact sheets or get in touch with us.

**Phone us:** 01302 735336

**Write to us:** Doncaster Council, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Section, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

**In person:** Our counter at the Civic Office is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm.

**Fax:** 01302 735134

**Email:** housing.benefits@doncaster.gov.uk (For general enquiries)

You can get independent advice about your Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

---

Information can be made available in other languages, or other formats such as Braille or Audio Tape, on request. Please ask a member of our staff for more information, or if you need any other help or advice. They can arrange to speak to you in your own language if you need them to.

[www.doncaster.gov.uk](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk)