

From claimant to council

Formal complaint to Council about housing benefit issue

[Your address]

[Your telephone number]

[Your email address]

[Date]

[Address of the Council's corporate complaints department]

By [first class post / email to: *[insert email address]*]

Dear Sir/Madam

Formal complaint against Housing Benefit Department

Housing Benefit reference: *[Insert your benefit reference number]*

I wish to complain about how my housing benefit claim has been dealt with. Please treat this as a formal complaint under the Council's complaints policy.

My reasons for complaining are:

[Explain why you think the council hasn't acted properly; cover all the relevant points but be as brief as you can. You do NOT have to identify or quote the relevant benefit regulations. The following are examples]

- *[eg The Council has unreasonably delayed in making a decision on whether my benefit is to be paid directly to my landlord, after I asked the Council to do this on *[insert date]*. The Council should have made this decision without delay or as soon as reasonably practicable, and notified me and my landlord in writing of all prescribed matters within 14 days of the decision (HB Regulations 2006 No. 213, Reg.90(1), Schedule 9.);*
- *[eg The Council has unreasonably delayed in arranging for my appeal to be forwarded to the independent tribunal, after I submitted my appeal request on *[insert date]*].*

[Enclose copies of any relevant documents – but only if this will help the complaint officer understand your complaint. For example, you may want to include a note you or your advisor made of a previous visit or telephone call with the benefits department. Make sure you keep copies of documents you send with the letter] I enclose the following in support of my complaint:

- *[Describe the document].*



The Council's delay has caused me the following problems: *[Explain what problems or hardship you have suffered as a result of the delay. The following are examples]*

- *[eg My landlord is growing impatient with me as a tenant because of the problems I am experiencing with getting my benefit paid directly to him. I am concerned that he is likely to end my tenancy.*
- *[eg. My landlord has served me a Notice Requiring Possession because I haven't paid rent. This was caused by me not receiving housing benefit. I am therefore at risk of losing my tenancy].*

I would like the Council to: *[Explain what you would like the council to do, bearing in mind what you ask for should be reasonable. The following are examples]*

- *[eg Make a decision on whether my benefit can be paid directly to my landlord and notify my landlord, so we know the decision, and can exercise our right to appeal if it is an adverse decision];*
- *[eg Forward my appeal immediately to the independent tribunal, and confirm in writing by return this has been done].*

Please forward me a copy of the Council's complaints policy and procedures, and confirm the name of the officer who is dealing with my complaint.

Please note that if I do not receive a satisfactory response to this letter within the timescale prescribed by your complaints policy I may submit a formal complaint to the Ombudsman, without further reference to you.

Yours faithfully

[Your name]

Copy: *[Insert name & job title of anyone you want to forward a copy of this letter to eg support worker, homelessness officer, legal advisor, landlord, councillor etc.]*

