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| **Understanding your housing benefit** | |
| This information aims to help you understand how we calculate your housing benefit. If you would like further help or information please contact the benefits section (details below). | |
| **What do I need to do?** | |
| * You should check the details overleaf to make sure everything is correct. * If you think that something is wrong contact us straightaway. | |
| **What if my circumstances change?** | |
| You must inform us in writing of any changes in circumstance which may affect your claim. It is your responsibility to do this. Do not rely on anyone else, such as the Department for Work and Pensions or your landlord. Example changes include:   * Any change in your income or savings * Any changes to your household   If you fail to tell us of a change and we later decide that you have been overpaid housing benefit, you will be invoiced and required to repay the overpayment. Failure to make payment may result in further action, which may include criminal proceedings. | |
| **Manage your housing benefit on-line** | |
| You can use this on-line service to make a claim, up-date your details, tell us about a change in circumstances and submit evidence for your claim. To access this service and for more information go to [www.chichester.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/myaccount) and select ‘My benefits'. | |
| **Your payments** | |
| You are responsible for paying the difference between the benefit awarded and your full housing costs. Housing benefit is usually paid four weekly in arrears directly into your chosen bank account, however you may decide that you would prefer your Landlord to be paid direct, please contact us to discuss this further. If you pay rent to Chichester District Council your benefit will be paid directly to your rent account. | |
| **Explaining the terms we use** | |
| We realise that some of the terms we use can be confusing. Please contact the benefits section if you require any explanation of the terms used overleaf. | |
| **Extra help** | |
| We may be able to offer you further help if your housing benefit has been restricted. This is called a discretionary housing payment (DHP). For further information and details of how to apply online please go to [www.chichester.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/myaccount) | |
| **Help us stop fraud** | |
| If you know someone who is claiming housing benefit fraudulently please contact the National Benefit Fraud Hotline 0800 854 440 or online at [www.gov.uk/report-benefit-fraud](http://www.gov.uk/report-benefit-fraud) | |
| **Contact Details** | |
| Telephone: 01243 534509  E-mail: [Benefits@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:Benefits@chichester.gov.uk) | Office opening times:  Monday – Thursday: 8.45am – 5.10pm Friday: 8.45am – 5pm |