

OUR SERVICE CHARTER FOR HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS

This is our promise of what you can expect from the Benefit Service in Tendring.

Our aim is to pay the right benefit to those who should receive it, make decisions and payments without delay and strive to meet the needs of our customers.

What can you expect from us?

We aim to;

- provide a friendly service that meets your needs where possible
- reply to your letters within 10 working days
- respond to emails on the day of receipt
- answer the telephone within five rings
- see you within 5 minutes if you visit us
- see you in a private interview room if you wish
- always give our name or job title if you ask for it
- provide guidance notes on how to complete the benefit claim form
- write to you regarding your claim if we need more information
- make a decision about your entitlement to benefit within 14 days from the time we get all the information we need
- tell you if you are entitled to Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance
- pay benefit promptly and accurately
- ensure that appeals are looked at by an officer who did not make the original decision
- recover benefit overpayments
- use our resources responsibly
- employ helpful and polite staff and train them to be competent at their jobs
- respect your privacy and dignity
- keep your details confidential
- listen to any complaints you might have
- correct any errors - quickly

How can you help?

You can help by;

- providing information quickly. For instance, proof of your identification, proof of your income, National Insurance Number, savings and rent
- giving your full name, address and reference number each time you contact us to help speed things up
- letting us know your telephone number if you have one
- treating our staff politely and with respect
- letting us know if your circumstances change

These are some of the changes, which should be reported

- a change in type or amount of income for you, your partner or anyone else living with you.
- a change of address
- someone leaves or comes to live with you
- you have a child that leaves school
- you stop getting child benefit for someone
- you stop getting Income Support or income based Job Seeker's Allowance