

## What is not 'Good Cause'?

Some things that **may not** be considered as 'good cause' for a late claim:

- If you did not know that you could claim benefit and/or support;
- If you knew that you could claim benefit and/or support but decided not to;
- If you had a claim form but lost it;
- If you had a claim form but did not complete it or bring it in straight away

## How far can benefit and/or support be backdated?

Backdated benefit/support can be considered for a maximum period of:

- ♦ up to 6 months for council tax support if you are of working age
- ♦ up to 1 month for housing benefit if you are of working age
- ♦ up to 3 months if you have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit

but only from the date the Council receives your request.

## What to do if your claim is unsuccessful.

We will write to you and tell you if your claim for backdating has been successful or not. If your claim has been unsuccessful and you disagree please refer to the 'Appeal leaflet' for further information.



Please contact the benefits team for further information.

Riverbank House,  
Bideford, Devon  
EX39 2QG  
Phone: 01237 428700

Telephone enquiries:  
Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.00pm  
Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm

E-mail [benefits@torridge.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@torridge.gov.uk)  
Website [www.torridge.gov.uk](http://www.torridge.gov.uk)

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in large print, tape or other format, please contact the Council



## Backdating benefit and/or support



## When does my benefit / support start?

The date housing benefit and/or council tax support begins depends on the following:

- The date you first contact the Council for a claim form, **and**
- What type of income you have

It may also depend on the date you have moved into a new property.

If you claim housing benefit/council tax support within one calendar month of claiming Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (Income based) or Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related), the date of claim will be the same as the date on which your Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Job Seekers Allowance starts.

Housing benefit and/or council tax support is awarded from the Monday following your Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Job Seekers Allowance award.

If you are not in receipt of Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Job Seekers Allowance benefit/support is normally awarded from the Monday following your first contact.

If you are in receipt of Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Job Seekers Allowance when you first move into a new property, and you claim housing benefit and/or council tax support within one calendar month, both your housing benefit and/or council tax support will start from the date you moved into the property.

In order for the above to apply if you are not in receipt of Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Job Seekers Allowance we will need to receive your application form in the same week as you move into the property. If we do not receive your application form in the same week in which you move in, benefit/support will only be awarded from the Monday following the date we receive your application form.

It is very important to get your claim form to the Council as soon as possible, and remember that you can submit your application up to 13 weeks before you move in.



## What does 'backdating' mean?

If you have claimed benefit and/or support and it is awarded from a later date than you would like, you can ask the Council to consider backdating your claim. This means that the Council could treat your claim as having been received on an earlier date than it was.

If you would like your claim to be considered for backdating, you need to ask for this in writing, explaining the reasons why you delayed claiming and state the date you would like your benefit/support to be paid from.

In order for the Council to consider backdating you need to be able to show that you had **'good cause'** throughout the whole of the backdated period, as to why you were unable to claim during that time.

## What is good cause?

There is no list of circumstances that are considered to be 'good cause'. Each claim for backdated benefit/support is considered on its individual circumstances.

An example of 'good cause' could be the death of a close relative or being very ill.

The Council will also look at other things that may have affected your ability to claim earlier, such as age and health. It is therefore very important that you give the Council as much information as you can in support of your backdating request.