

The benefit cap is changing

There's a limit on the total amount of benefits that most people aged 16 to 64 can get. This is called the benefit cap. The cap has been lower since Autumn 2016.

In Birmingham, the new benefit cap amounts from 23rd January are:

£384.62 a week for couples or lone parents

£257.69 a week for a single person

If you get more in benefits than these amounts, the total you will get for some benefits may go down. This usually means **housing benefit is reduced**. This could make it harder to pay your rent.

Am I capped?

If you are being capped, you should get a letter about it from DWP.

Some people will not be capped

Some households are "exempt" from the cap, so it won't apply to them. Not all benefits are counted.

You're not affected by the cap if anyone in your household qualifies for **Working Tax Credit** or gets any of the following benefits:

- Armed Forces Compensation Scheme
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Carers Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Employment and Support Allowance (if you get the support component)
- Guardians Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Benefits (and equivalent payments as part of a War Disablement Pension or the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Universal Credit payment for 'limited capability for work and work-related activity'
- War pensions
- War Widow's or War Widower's Pension

You will also be exempt from the cap if a child or young person you are responsible for gets DLA, PIP or AFIP.

A full list of the benefits counted and the household exemptions can be found on the government website: www.gov.uk/benefit-cap

I'm being capped - what should I do?

Birmingham City Council may be able to help you with benefit cap, money and debt advice.

Birmingham City Council benefits Customer Service Centre: 0121 464 7000

Birmingham council website: www.birmingham.gov.uk/benefit-cap

Contacting the DWP

You can also contact the government's Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for help, through your online Universal Credit journal, or:

If you get Universal Credit

Telephone: 0345 600 0723

Telephone (Welsh): 0345 600 3018

Textphone: 0345 600 0743

(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

If you get any other benefits

Telephone: 0345 605 7064

Telephone (Welsh): 0345 605 7066

Textphone: 0345 608 8551

(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

Government website: www.gov.uk/benefit-cap

Government calculator to estimate how much your benefit might be capped:

www.gov.uk/benefit-cap-calculator

Contact your landlord

Get in touch with your landlord directly, to discuss your rent.

You may need to agree how to pay the amount that housing benefit does not cover.

Can you increase your hours?

If you find a job or can work more hours than you do now, you may be able to qualify for Working Tax Credits.

Do you get the right benefits?

If you think you should get one of the benefits that would "exempt" you from the cap, we recommend that you apply for those benefits as soon as possible. Advice on benefits:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits

If you're at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old and you or your family get certain benefits, see if you qualify for Healthy Start free food vouchers.

www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/do-i-qualify/

Could you apply for help with your rent?

You may be able to apply to Birmingham City Council for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to help cover your rent.

www.birmingham.gov.uk - search for "DHP" or click on this [link](#)

Money advice

Help to manage your budget, bills and debts: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money

Money Advice Service: 0800 138 7777 - www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk