



WELFARE AWARE

UNDERSTANDING AND PREPARING FOR CHANGE

SHARED ACCOMMODATION RATE

What is the Shared Accommodation Rate?

The Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) is the level of housing benefit that applies to single people in the private rented sector who are aged 34 years and under. Housing benefit for private sector tenancies is called Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

SAR means that housing benefit is limited to a maximum amount based on what the council decides is an appropriate rent for a room in a shared property in your area.

What has changed and what will it mean?

- From January 2012 the age criteria for SAR was extended to people aged 34 years and under. Previously it only applied to people under 25 years and was known as the Shared Room Rate.

What are the exemptions to SAR?

- People who have left local authority care are exempt from SAR and can claim LHA for a “self-contained” property until they are 22 years old.
- People who have lived in a hostel(s) for homeless people for three months or more are exempt from SAR and can claim for a self-contained property if they are aged 25 – 34 years.

They can have lived in the hostel(s) when they were aged under- 25.

- People who are ex-offenders supported under Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) levels 2 and 3 are exempt if they are aged 25 – 34 years.

What can you do?

- Talk to your council’s housing benefit office now about how to apply for an exemption and what they need to prove that you are eligible.
- If you are supported through MAPPA speak to your lead professional – they can apply for an exception for you.
- If you have a rent shortfall because of this change you may be able to get some short- term help from a fund the council has called ‘Discretionary Housing Payments’ – talk to your council about how to apply.

More Information

See Homeless Link’s FAQ on SAR:

<http://homeless.org.uk/shared-accommodation-rate-FAQ>

WHAT?

The Shared Accommodation Rate is the level of housing benefit for a person aged 34 years and under renting from a private landlord.

ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS?

Yes – there are exemptions for people aged 25 – 34 years in specific situations so that they are able to claim at the one bedroom rate.

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