



DIRECTION OF BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL UNDER THE HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT (ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS) (MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS) ORDER 2006 AND THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (PRESCRIBED REQUIREMENTS) (ENGLAND) 2012

Barrow Borough Council ('the Authority') in accordance with the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006, the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006, the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006, the Council Tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 ('the 2006 Regulations') and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 ('the 2012 Regulations'), hereby makes the following directions—

1. An individual who, in accordance with the 2006 Regulations makes a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit or in accordance with the 2012 regulations makes a claim for Council Tax Reduction or reports a change of circumstances, under the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 or the Prescribed Requirement Regulations, is authorised to do so by an electronic communication, provided that the individual uses the method approved by the Authority in relation to the claim.
2. The methods and form set out, at the time of, and for the purposes of, the delivery of such a claim as referred to in paragraph 1 are respectively—

New Claims

- By the authority's approved electronic form;
- By completion of a claim by a visiting officer of the Council using the authority's approved electronic form;
- By an assisted e-benefits phone or face to face interview with an officer of the Council

Change in Circumstances

- By completion of the authority's approved electronic changes of circumstances form;
- By completion of a changes of circumstances form by a visiting officer of the Council using the authority's approved electronic form;
- By issuing an email with all details required by the authority;
- By an assisted e-benefits phone or face to face interview with an officer of the Council



In order to ensure the authenticity of the identity of the sender, the electronic communication must include the following:

- The claimant's name and *any two* of the following:
 - The reference number generated by the council's electronic benefit service application process
 - The address of the benefit claim
 - The claimant's date of birth
 - The claimant's National Insurance Number
 - The claimant's Benefit reference number

The Authority may require further information or supporting evidence, including original supporting evidence, before the claim for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit/Council Tax Reduction can be assessed or revised.

Any claim or notification received that:

- does not conform to any of the above standards will be invalid
- does conform to the above standards but which is not, for whatever reason, accepted by the Authority's computer system, is not regarded as having been delivered.

The Authority will not be held responsible for non receipt of any claim.

Claimants are advised to keep records of any electronic communications submitted in case of query or appeal.

It should be noted that where a claim is made or changes notified, using the claimant's details, the claimant will be responsible for the validity and accuracy of any statements made.

3. In addition, the Authority may, in accordance with the 2006 and 2012 Regulations, notify any person affected by a decision made by it under these Regulations in the manner set out in paragraph 4.
4. Subject to paragraph 5, the method for the purposes of the delivery of such a notification as referred to in paragraph 1 is via electronic communication ("email" or self-service via the Authority's third party supplier)



5. This paragraph is satisfied if the person referred to in paragraph 3 has consented, in writing, to accepting notifications in the manner prescribed in paragraph 4.
6. The Authority will keep full records of all such notifications issued in an electronic format for as long as required. Such records would be accessed via Liberata Systems Administration.

This direction may be withdrawn or amended at any time by the issue of a further direction.

Signed by

P Huck
Executive Director

Data Protection

Personal details will be used in accordance with our privacy policy. Data and identifiers such as contact details may be given to bodies that audit and administer public funds to prevent and detect fraud. See www.barrowbc.gov.uk/datamatching or contact the Data Protection Officer.