



WELFARE
CHANGES

choice 

Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax)



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positive change

choice-housing.org

Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax)

WHAT IS THE SOCIAL SECTOR SIZE CRITERIA?



Social Sector Size Criteria (sometimes called the 'bedroom tax' by media) is a new criteria to calculate housing benefit payments.

What does the change mean?

The amount of Housing Benefit paid to people of working age will be changed to reflect the size of their family. Tenants of all social landlords will have their Housing Benefit payments reduced if they have more bedrooms in their home than their family needs.

The new rules will allow one bedroom for:

- Each adult couple
- Any other adult aged 16 or over
- Any two children of the same sex aged under 16
- Any two children aged under 10 regardless of gender
- Any other child (other than a foster child or child whose main home is elsewhere)
- A carer (or team of carers) who do not live with the claimant but provide overnight care.

If you are considered to have more bedrooms than you need, your Housing Benefit will be reduced by:

14% for under-occupying
by one bedroom

25% for under-occupying
by two or more
bedrooms

This will affect all claimants of working age. People over pension age will not be affected by the bedroom tax.

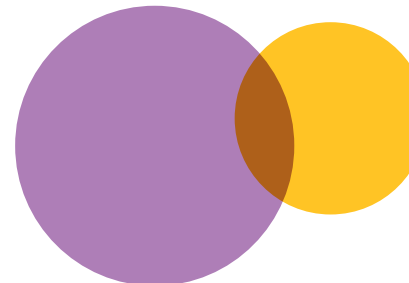
If your Housing Benefit is reduced because of Social Sector Size Criteria, a Welfare Supplementary Payment will be available until 31 March 2020.



WHAT TO DO NEXT

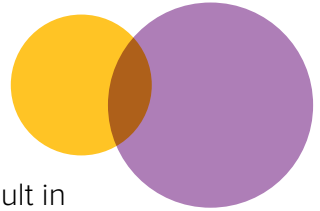
You can find out how Welfare Changes might affect you in a number of ways:

- 1** Phone our Services Centre: **0300 111 2211**
- 2** Email our Services Centre: **enquiries@choice-housing.org**
- 3** Visit Choice's website: **www.choice-housing.org**
- 4** Visit the Government's Welfare Changes website: **https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/welfare-changes**
- 5** Contact the Independent Welfare Changes Helpline on **0808 802 0080**



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WELFARE CHANGES



As you may be aware, Welfare Changes will result in changes to the benefits system in Northern Ireland. Some of the current benefits will cease to exist and new benefits and payment systems will be introduced.

Some of the changes have already taken place and others will follow in forthcoming months.

Choice is advising its customers about the changes introduced as a result of welfare reform. We will be outlining the main changes, what they mean and when they will come into effect and undertaking regular advice clinics to inform tenants of upcoming changes and how they can prepare for them.

MAKE THE CALL



To check if you're getting all the money you're entitled to Make the Call free to the Benefits Advice Line on **0800 232 1271**



or alternatively, text **CHECK to 67300** and an advisor will call you back. All calls are confidential and a friend or relative can even make enquiries on your behalf.

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