

Housing and Council Tax Benefits Service Standards 2010/11

We will:

- Process new claims for Housing and Council Tax Benefit within 20 working days
- Process a reported change of circumstances within 9 working days
- We will report monthly on how we are doing against the above processing standards and where we do not meet these we will provide an explanation.
- We will provide an interpretation and translation service to ensure that all of our services are accessible

On telephone contact:

- We will treat you politely, courteously and respectfully and be ready to help you with your enquiry or problem
- We will guarantee confidentiality and equality
- 80% of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds
- We will give our name and service area

Written contact (including emails):

- We will reply to all correspondence within 10 days
- 100% of e mails to be acknowledged within 1 working day
- We will provide a contact name, office address, email address and direct dial number in the letter
- Appeals /reconsiderations will be dealt with as a priority

At the Council's Information and Advice Centre, Guildhall 2:

- We will wear name badges so that you know who you are dealing with
- We will keep the appointment that you have made and will inform you in advance if we have to cancel it

Home visits:

- If we make an appointment to meet you in your home we will inform you in advance if we have to cancel it
- We will wear Council identification and ensure that you are shown this before entering your home.

Customer Satisfaction

We will regularly conduct customer surveys to ensure that we are meeting the expectation of our customers. We will provide the outcomes of these surveys on the website together with the action plan showing how we intend to change the service to meet expectation.

Benefit Fraud

We are committed to tackling benefit fraud and will investigate cases where potential irregularities have been identified.

In return we expect our customers to:

- Provide all relevant information as requested
- Promptly report any changes in their circumstances
- Be on time for appointments or let us know if you are not attending
- Treat staff and other customers politely and with the same courtesy that you expect from us
- To refrain from using abusive language or threatening behaviour. Verbal, physical, racial or sexual abuse towards our staff or customers is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Your comments are important to us

We are committed to delivering a good quality Benefit Service. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our service or access to the service. If you would like to suggest ways to improve our service or improve the access to our service please email the Benefits Manager - Corinne.Singleton@rbk.kingston.gov.uk.

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