

What should I do after my claim has been assessed?

*Due to the different criteria used to assess UC/Rate Rebate claims there is not an automatic entitlement to Rate Rebate if you receive UC.

- Contact your Housing Officer immediately to confirm that your claim has been processed and it has been successful.
- Check the amount of Rate Rebate you receive towards your rates.
- Confirm with your Housing Officer if the full rates charge is being covered. If there is a shortfall in the Rate Rebate payment or there are arrears on your account, you will need to make an agreement to pay any amount due.

Notifying Changes

You must notify LPS of any changes relevant to your claim immediately, by logging onto your online account.

Failure to notify a change of circumstance may result in an overpayment which will need to be repaid. Information on changes that need to be reported can be found at:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/rate-rebate-scheme

Help and Support

Getting Online

Help and assistance to get online is available at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/go-on-ni

If you would like further information or advice regarding the Rate Rebate application process, please contact your Housing Officer or our Welfare Advice Service on Tel 0330 123 0888.

Alternatively further information can be found on our website
www.radiushousing.org or
www.nidirect.gov.uk/rate-rebate-scheme



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Radius
HOUSING

Rate Rebate Scheme



Everyone
has a place

What is the Rate Rebate Scheme?

A Rate Rebate Scheme administered by the Department of Finance replaces Housing Benefit for rates only, for tenants of working age who are entitled to Universal Credit.

Find out more about Universal Credit at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/universalcredit

Who is eligible?

The Rate Rebate Scheme will only apply to working-age tenants.

Eligibility to claim

- You must be entitled to Universal Credit.
- You or your landlord must be liable for payment of rates to Land & Property Services.
- You must occupy the property as your home.

Those eligible to claim will not be entitled to Housing Benefit for rates or Low Income Rate Relief.*

Who is not eligible?

- People who aren't entitled to Universal Credit.
- Pensioners are excluded and will remain on Housing Benefit and/or Low Income Rate Relief.
- People living in supported accommodation or temporary accommodation provided in relation to homelessness are excluded and will remain on Housing Benefit and/or Low Income Rate Relief.*

Preparation for applying for a Rate Rebate

Once you receive notification on your Universal Credit journal that you are entitled to UC you should immediately make a claim for a Rate Rebate. Failure to do so **within three months** may mean you lose some of your Rate Rebate award.

The Rate Rebate application process is a **digital only application**. If you do not have access to the internet, you could consider accessing the internet via a local library.

Libraries NI Tel 0345 4504 580.



You will also need:

- your full address and postcode;
- your National Insurance number;
- your date of birth;
- an email address;
- Tenancy Reference. If you are not sure what this is, contact your Housing Officer at Radius.
- details of current weekly rates charge; if you are not sure what this is, contact your Housing Officer.
- details of the income you are receiving.

Completing the online application

You will first need to use your email address to register for a Rate Rebate account online at: **www.nidirect.gov.uk/rate-rebate-scheme**

You will be prompted to create a password.

Please make a note of this password as you will need it each time you wish to access the online account to view your claim.

A verification email will be sent to you and once registered, you will then be invited to complete the online application.

During the application process, you will be prompted to select Radius Housing Association from a drop down menu.

What is Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC)?

Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC), commonly known as 'Bedroom Tax', has changed how Housing Benefit and housing costs are calculated for tenants in social housing.

Since February 2017, assistance with housing costs is based on the amount of rooms your household actually needs.

If you currently live in a house deemed too large for your needs, the amount of Housing Benefit or housing costs (under Universal Credit) you receive may have reduced.

Under the new criteria, help with your housing costs is calculated on the number of bedrooms that your household needs.

A bedroom is allocated as follows:

- Each adult couple
- Each person over 16
- Any two children of the same sex under 16
- Any two children under 10, regardless of their sex
- Any other child
- A carer who provides overnight care but does not live with you.

How does it work?

If you are deemed to have more bedrooms than required, then the amount of help you receive for your housing costs will reduce by 14% or 25% as follows:



-14%

for **one** extra bedroom



-25%

for **two or more** extra bedrooms

Circumstances that allow for an extra bedroom

If you require an extra bedroom you should request consideration for this room. An extra bedroom may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Foster care provision
- If you require an extra bedroom because you have a disability or caring needs
- If a student or member of the armed forces is away from home but will return.

Who is not affected?

A person who has reached state pension age is not affected by the SSSC / 'Bedroom tax'.

Others not affected by the SSSC include those living in:

- supported accommodation
- a houseboat, caravan or mobile home
- shared co-ownership scheme
- temporary accommodation