

The Benefit Cap

A limit will be put on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can get. This is called a 'benefit cap'. The Government requires that all local councils introduce this from 15 July 2013. If you're affected, your Housing Benefit will go down to make sure that the total amount of benefit you get isn't more than the cap level.

If you're already getting benefits and could be affected by the cap you'll be contacted by the Department for Work and Pensions. They'll let you know what will happen to your benefits. If you're seeing a Jobcentre Plus adviser, Work Programme or Work Choice provider, they'll continue to help you look for work and get skills you may need for a job.

How much is the benefit cap?

The present level of the cap is:

- £384.62 a week for couples (with or without children living with them)
- £384.62 a week for single parents whose children live with them
- £257.69 a week for single adults who don't have children, or whose children don't live with them

What's included?

The cap will apply to the total amount that the people in your household get from the following benefits:

- Bereavement Allowance Carer's Allowance
- Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance (unless you get the support component)
- Guardian's Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Incapacity Benefit, Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance
- Maternity Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Widowed Parent's Allowance

Who won't be affected?

You won't be affected by the benefit cap if anyone in your household qualifies for Working Tax Credit or gets any of the following benefits:

- Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Benefits
- Employment and Support Allowance, if you get the support component
- War Widow's or War Widower's Pension