



REQUEST 19184

Please could you supply the following information requested under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

1. The policy or procedure for checking the legitimacy of service charges where a resident is claiming benefits to cover them.

2. The number of housing benefit or universal credit claimants whose service charges are paid directly to their landlord, including where this is a single payment incorporating rents plus service charges.
3. The proportion of the above whose landlords are housing associations, if recorded.

RESPONSE

1. Supported accommodation schemes requesting rental support via Housing Benefit, (including service charges) are reviewed via a stringent internal verification process, in line with the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and DWP guidance.

As part of this process, charges are considered against alternative providers, providing a similar level of care, support or supervision, with the same vulnerability category and comparable occupancy levels.

Where deemed necessary further evidence or documentation, such as invoices or proof of service, are requested.

Claims are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel of colleagues before being accepted/refused for payment.

2. 1497 Housing Benefit claimants.
3. Data not recorded.