

What happens if I decide not to return home?

Let us know immediately by phoning our council tax and benefits helpline **01395 517446**. We will stop paying you benefit from the Monday following the date you decide not to return.

For example, if you decide on a Tuesday that you do not want to return to your home, we have to stop your benefit from the following Monday.

Do you need help with this leaflet?

Maybe English is not your first language, you have difficulty reading it because the print is too small, or you are not sure what it means.

Please phone
01395 517446.

Contact us



Phone:

Our Benefits and Council Tax Helpline **01395 517446** between 8.30am and 5.00pm



Visit us at:

- **The Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth**
daily between 8.30am and 5.00pm
- **Exmouth Town Hall**
daily except Wednesday
from 9.00am to 1.00pm
and 2.00pm to 4.30pm
- **One of our regular surgeries**
in Axminster, Seaton or Honiton
(phone **01395 517446** for
dates and times)



Write to us:

Housing Benefits
East Devon District Council
Knowle, Sidmouth EX10 8HL



Email us:

benefits@eastdevon.gov.uk

Visit our website:

www.eastdevon.gov.uk



Temporary Absence from Home

Housing and Council Tax Benefit



Can I get housing benefit for my home if I am not living there?

You can sometimes get housing benefit if you are away from home on a temporary basis.

How long can I get benefit for if I am away from home?

This depends on the reason you are away from home. You can get benefit for up to 13 weeks or sometimes for up to 52 weeks.

Some examples of when you can get benefit for up to **13 weeks** are:

- holidays
- trial periods in residential accommodation (you can have as many trial periods as you need – see below)
- if you go to look after a sick relative/friend
- if you are a convicted prisoner.

but you must intend to return to your home within 13 weeks and you must not sublet it.

Some examples of when you can get benefit for up to **52 weeks** are if you are:

- in hospital
- on remand (as soon as you are sentenced you will be assessed under the 13 week rules)
- in fear of violence
- undergoing medical treatment/medically approved convalescence or care, but not in residential accommodation.

but you must intend to return to your home within 52 weeks and you must not sublet it.

These are only a few examples of the circumstances in which you can continue to get benefit for up to 13 or 52 weeks. They are not full lists. If you need more information, you can call us on **01395 517446**.

What happens if I am in residential care on a trial basis?

If you are in residential care to see if it is the right accommodation for you, your benefit can continue for up to 13 weeks, so long as you intend to return to your normal home if the accommodation proves not to be suitable for you.

If I know that I am going to be away from home, what should I do?

Telephone us on **01395 517446** or come to see us at the Council Offices in Sidmouth or at Exmouth Town Hall. You can also come to one of our Benefit Surgeries (see back page). We will ask you confirm the details in writing.

What do I need to tell you?

You must tell us, in writing:

- the reason why you are away
- how long you will be away for
- if you intend to return to your home.

You must also let us know if:

- you sublet your property
- your income or capital is going to change while you are away from home.

We will then be able to tell you if you are entitled to get benefit while you are away from home.

What should I do if my circumstances change when I am away from home?

You should always tell us about any change in your circumstances, whether you are away from home or not. The sort of changes you need to tell us about include:

- if the income or savings of anyone in your home changes
- if you or anyone in your home moves away, temporarily or for good
- if you or anyone in your home go into hospital
- if anyone moves into your home.

These are only examples. **You should tell us about all changes.** Please write or phone to let us know the details as soon as possible but within **one month**.