

“Bedroom Tax” Fact Sheet

17th May 2013

When: from April 2013

Who: working age tenants in social-rented sector

What: reduction in Housing Benefit for tenants with spare bedrooms popularly known as the bedroom tax

This reform reflects the space standards applied to Housing Benefit in the private rented sector, where entitlement is based on the number of bedrooms a household requires, rather than the bedrooms they actually have.

Households where the claimant or their partner (or both) is over pension age are not affected. In the future, where households get Universal Credit, both members of a couple will have to be over pension age to be exempt from the bedroom tax.

Shared ownership schemes, where the claimant owns a percentage of the property and pays an occupancy charge for the remainder, are not affected.

Supported exempt accommodation is not affected by the bedroom tax. This is defined as accommodation where the support is provided by (or on behalf of) the landlord, and the landlord is a housing association, registered charity or non-profit making voluntary organisation. Local authority supported housing is not exempt from the bedroom tax.

One bedroom is allowed for each person or couple in the household except:

- a child aged under 16 is expected to share with another child of the same gender
- any two children aged under 10 are expected to share

In addition, one bedroom is allowed for:

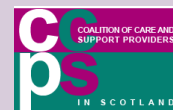
- a non-resident carer where the tenant or their partner requires overnight care
- a son or daughter in the armed forces who normally lives there when not on deployment
- a foster child, provided the tenant has become a registered foster parent, or has fostered a child within the last 52 weeks

Bedroom tax does not apply where someone is temporarily absent (for up to 13 weeks) but intends to return home, for example in hospital. Neither does it apply where students are away at college or university (for up to 52 weeks) but intend to return home in the vacations.

No allowance is made for people who normally live elsewhere, such as children whose parents are separated and who visit the claimant at weekends.

No allowance is made for rooms used to store equipment such as wheelchairs and hoists.

No allowance is made for couples or young children who have to sleep in separate rooms because of health or disability issues. A legal challenge means that local authorities now have discretion to allow an extra bedroom where there is a disabled child and the claimant can demonstrate that it is unreasonable for the child to share a bedroom. A group of adult disabled claimants are currently challenging the rule that says they must share a bedroom with their partner, on the grounds that it is discriminatory. No decision has yet been reached.



About HSEU

The Housing Support Enabling Unit helps providers to demonstrate the impact of housing support and to raise awareness about the role housing support plays in helping people to secure and maintain appropriate housing.

The HSEU works with and assists providers of housing support across the independent and third sectors.

HSEU
Norton Park
57 Albion Road
Edinburgh EH7 5QY
T: 0131 475 2676
www.ccpsscotland.org



© This document is copyright protected and may not be reproduced, in part or in whole, without the permission of the HSEU. The Housing Support Enabling Unit is a partnership initiative between Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA), funded by the Scottish Government.

CCPS is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland No. 279913, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator as Charity No.SCO29199. The company's registered office is at Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh. EH7 5QY.