

## **Under Occupancy FAQs**

### **Will these changes affect me?**

The changes only apply if you are of working age and receive housing benefit

### **What is working age?**

Anyone under state pension credit age.

### **What if my partner is over state pension credit age?**

If you are a couple and one of you is of working age and the other is not you will not be affected

### **I am a joint tenant, how is my room allowance worked out?**

If you are a joint tenant the room allowance is worked out in the normal way. If the household is deemed to be under occupying and you are responsible for half the rent the appropriate reduction (14% or 25%) in housing benefit will be taken from your share of the rent.

### **I share care of my children with my former partner; are we both allowed a room/rooms for the children?**

Where parents who don't live together share care of their children the parent who receives the child benefit will be considered to be providing the main home and will be allowed the appropriate number of bedrooms. The parent who does not receive child benefit will not be entitled to receive housing benefit for rooms used for the child/children even if the children spend an equal amount of time with them.

### **My partner needs to sleep in a separate room due to medical reasons/disability; will we be allowed an extra room?**

No. As the rules stand at the moment a room will not be allowed in this situation. It may be possible to apply for help to the Discretionary Housing Payment fund but this is not guaranteed.

### **My child has a disability will I be allowed a room for him/her?**

If you need a room for a child with a disability seek advice as the situation is unclear.

### **Are you allowed a room for a foster child?**

A foster child is not considered to be part of your family unit and you will not be allowed a room for him/her. If you are currently fostering or are planning to become a foster parent you will need to apply to the Housing Benefit department for a Discretionary Housing Payment to meet the shortfall.

### **My house has been adapted to cater for my disability; will the rules still apply to me?**

If you have had major adaptations carried out to your property you will still be deemed to be under occupying but will be eligible to apply to the Housing Benefit department for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

**This information is correct at November 2012. New details are being released all the time so please keep checking here for updates.**