

# Independent Advice is available from your local Citizens Advice Bureaux

## **Bishop's Stortford**

74 South Street  
Bishop's Stortford  
CM23 3AZ

## **Buntingford**

Manor House  
High Street  
Buntingford  
SG9 9AB

## **Hertford**

Council Offices  
Wallfields  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
SG13 8EQ

## **Sawbridgeworth**

Town Council Offices  
Sayesbury Manor  
Bell Street  
CM21 9AN

## **Ware Outreach**

20 Tudor Square  
West Street  
Ware SG12 9XF

## **Stevenage**

Swingate House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
SG1 1AF

**Hertfordshire telephone advice line**

**03444 111 444**

**10am-4pm Monday - Friday**  
**[www.ehcas.org.uk](http://www.ehcas.org.uk)**

## Information

If you would like a translation of this document in another language, large print, Braille, audio, or electronic, please contact us:

**For East Herts Council** 01279 655261

Charrington House  
Bishop's Stortford CM23 2EN Mon - Fri 8:30am - 5pm

Council Offices, Wallfields, Tues 8:30am - 4pm  
Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ Weds 8:30am - 12:30pm

**For Stevenage Borough Council** 01438 242440

Customer Services Centre,  
Daneshill House, Stevenage,  
Herts SG1 1HN Mon - Fri 8:30am - 5:30pm

Email: [benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk)

Fax: 01992 531442

[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk) [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk)

We will provide signers, lipspeakers and deaf blind interpreters by appointment.

(We need to see original documents. If you visit our office we will verify and copy your documents for you)

# Underlying Entitlement

or

# How to get Your Housing Benefit Overpayment Reduced

**The Benefits Service,**  
Council Offices, Wallfields, Pegs Lane  
Hertford SG13 8EQ

SBC Tel: 01438 242440

EHC Tel: 01279 655261



# Underlying Entitlement or How to get your Overpayment reduced

If you have been overpaid Housing Benefit there are some circumstances in which this could be reduced by “underlying entitlement”.

## What is underlying entitlement?

This is not an award of benefit, but a calculation of what you would have been entitled to had your benefit been assessed on the correct information. This happens automatically in some cases, but in other situations you have to apply to us.

For example, you receive an increase in your income, but forget to tell us until your claim is next checked.

When we assess your claim, we include the increased income from the date that it changed, and you are notified how much benefit you have been overpaid.

In this example you have already had your underlying entitlement calculated, because we know what your circumstances were for this period and are therefore able to calculate the underlying entitlement automatically. However there are times when we don't know what your circumstances were.

For example, your entitlement to Income Support stops, and the Department for Work & Pensions tell us that you have not been entitled to Income Support for the last two months. We have to stop your Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit and work out how much you have been overpaid since your Income Support stopped.

However, if you had told us that your Income Support was stopping because you were starting work, we could calculate if you were still entitled to some Housing Benefit during this “overpaid period”. This is called your underlying entitlement. This underlying entitlement would then reduce the overpayment.

## How can I claim underlying entitlement?

You have to claim Underlying Entitlement within one calendar month of your overpayment.

You have to provide all the details and proof of your income and circumstances during the overpaid period. We will then be able to calculate if there is any underlying entitlement and then if we can reduce the overpayment.

We can use the same claim form for any entitlement that follows on from this change in circumstances.

## Don't delay - claim today

Visit our website at  
[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk) [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk)

Fax: 01992 531442  
Email us at [benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk)