

## **Additional information Benefit Officer Job Description Level 2 and Level 3**

The Local Council Tax Scheme for working age may differ from Housing Benefit and the Council Tax Support prescribed Pensioner Scheme. The Local Council Tax Support Scheme is reviewed annually. Manual calculation skills are required to ensure the outcome calculations are correct, to identify system calculation errors and discrepancies if they occur.

Verification of national insurance number, identity and other supporting evidence. Obtaining and analytically crosschecking a range of data to support a claim. (Includes: - Income, capital, household, rent etc.)

The use of secure Department of Work and Pensions/Her Majesty's Customer and Revenues data to validate/support claims and to identify and administer changes as a result of discrepancies.

Housing Benefit includes the use of 9 different rent schemes. Council Tax Support is a local scheme and is reviewed annually for changes. Changes are often required within short deadlines and result in revised procedures, new decision making and new system functionality.

Knowledge of other Welfare Benefits/Pensions/Allowances to maximise the customer's income. The impact of the receipt of other Welfare Benefits on Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support and Alternative Maximum Benefit. This includes disregarded incomes, awarding Premiums and Allowances and the application of non dependant deductions. Other Welfare Benefits include:-

Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance Income Related, Employment and Support Allowance Contribution Based together with the different components, Disability Living Allowance Mobility and Care, Attendance Allowance, State Retirement Pension, New State Pension, Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Child Benefit, Carer's Allowance and Underlying Entitlement to Carer's Allowance, Personal Independence Payments Mobility and Living, Bereavement Support Payment, Bereavement Benefit, Widowed Parent's Allowance, Widowed Mother's Allowance, Widow's Benefit, Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based and Income Based, Statutory Sick/Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Pay.

To protect the public purse by reducing fraud and error. To refer cases to the Department of Work and Pensions Fraud investigation team, to provide supporting evidence and information as required.

To assist the customer service team when dealing with difficult or complicated enquiries. To explain changes to legislation and the impacts of this. Changes that result in reductions of entitlement have financial impact to customers, who experience increased shortfalls in the amount of Housing Benefit to help with their rent and less Council Tax Support to assist with their Council Tax. Reduction in Housing Benefit impacts upon homelessness and reduced Council Tax Support increases the amount of Council Tax to be collected and revenue for the Authority.

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Prioritising work to avoid delay and financial hardship, whilst maintaining a high level of accuracy. Maximising subsidy received by the Council.

To ensure that the Authority legitimately claims correct subsidy and provides accurate statistical information to the Department of work and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs office. Ensuring evidence and supporting information is provided to meet auditor requirements.

Once evidence, from various sources, has been verified and cross checked, the data to be input is not routine. Fields, dates, codes, amounts etc must all be entered correctly to ensure that the claim type, rent classification, income type, household details, capital details, Council Tax liability, subsidy classification and the HB/CTS arrears/award/adjustment/underlying entitlement/overpayment/offset calculations for each period being administered met the required legislation criteria and are accurate. The notification letters must also be checked and amended to ensure they are correct.

Applying all the principles of proper decision making. This includes, identifying the relevant facts and considering the evidence, interpreting legislation and case law. To ensure decisions are documented and supported.

Complex decisions are made routinely every day. These have significant impact on the lives of North Norfolk people and landlords. Decisions are not routine.

An understanding of the importance of service targets and meeting set performance targets. Adopting corporate values and awareness of the corporate plan and vision.

Assisting the Customer Service team with complex cases/customers and providing feedback for development and quality assurance purposes.

### **Duties may include**

Awarding or refusing backdate requests

Administration of Real Time Information (RTI) Automated Transfers to Local Authority Systems (ATLAS), Verify Earnings and Pensions (VEP).

Specialist duties:-

- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Homeless cases/ Homeless liaison officers (Level 3)
- Supported accommodation cases / Supported accommodation liaison officers
- Staying put cases / Staying put liaison officer
- Fraud Single point of contact officers (Single point of contact)
- National Fraud Initiative (NFI)
- Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS)

Software testing / changes to procedures

Deprivation of capital cases (Level 3)

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Tenancy fraud, contrived, non-commercial and living together cases (Level 3)

Reconsiderations of decisions (Level 3)

Claims from Persons from Abroad (Level 3)

Claims from Students (Level 3)

Claims from Self-employed (Level 3)

Mentoring / training and support (Level 3)

### **Level 2 to Level 3**

The following criteria must be achieved for movement from level 2 to level 3

Have a good understanding of all necessary systems/processes/ legislation in order to process new claims, change of circumstances, and level 3 cases as shown above.

Meet agreed targets – productivity and accuracy. Including a consistent target of 98% average accuracy for change of circumstances and new claims administration.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of other Welfare Benefits/ Allowances/ Universal Credit and Council Tax. The impact on HB/CTS.

To be able to signpost customers to maximise their income and obtain debt advice.

To be competent in dealing with difficult and vulnerable customers with empathy, internally and external on the phones/face to face/ electronically and in writing.

To resolve the majority of queries with the minimum of supervision.

Take responsibility and ownership of cases and decisions– researching information, legislation and case law.

Demonstrate a good understanding of Corporate plan, service targets, performance standards and own role in achieving these.

Have a positive approach to individuals and contribute to team working. Take responsibility for action and results.

To advise, mentor and support others as necessary.

To understand the importance of subsidy and the financial impacts of this.