

Job description

Job title:	Benefits Officer
Grade:	Grade 8
Job evaluation reference:	BA6054
Job family:	Business, Policy & Administration

Purpose and impact

To assess and process applications for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, and to ensure that customers are aware of and are able to apply for all other welfare benefits that they may be entitled to.

Key responsibilities

1. To assess and process applications for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, and Crisis Resilience Fund.
2. To help maintain entitlement accuracy with and for the customer using data matching, real time information, bespoke checks and all review and check processes.
3. When required, reassess entitlement implementing any required under or overpayments, providing any advice or support if required.
4. Ensure that performance targets set for speed of processing new claims and changes in circumstances are met whilst maintaining high levels of accuracy.
5. To liaise and communicate with customers, including landlords, via various methods including e-mail, telephone, in writing and in person, to assist with their queries and to obtain the information necessary to ensure customers receive the benefits they are entitled to.
6. To liaise with internal and external teams/organisations to enable customers to claim all the benefits they may be entitled to, maximising access.
7. To undertake due care and diligence to reduce the risk of fraud and error entering the system.
8. Have an up to date knowledge of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support legislation, regulations and policy.
9. To be able to develop and maintain knowledge through training with the pace of change in this area of administration.
10. To develop and maintain a service knowledge of Council Tax legislation and internal procedures where overlap occurs with Benefit customers requiring multiple services.
11. Maintaining appropriate security and privacy of information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the Freedom of Information Act and Data Subject Access Requests, and internal data policies.
12. To promote the activities of Dorset Council, liaise with other authorities and bodies to promote good working practices. Carry out constant appraisals of the effectiveness of systems, making recommendations for improvement as part of the process of the setting and achievement of targets that will help the service meet its overall objectives.
13. Observe equality and diversity practices and procedures and promote equal opportunities at all times.
14. Such other duties appropriate to the appointment and grading of the post which may be assigned from time to time.



NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive, and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and management

Reporting to: The Senior Benefits Officer

Responsibility for: Not applicable

Other factors

15. Be able to work additional hours including weekends if and when appropriate at peak operating times such as the reassessment of Benefits. (Annual billing)
16. A BPSS check will be required

Our values

Our values act as guiding principles, defining what we believe is important in the ways we work together. Our values are Respect, Together, Accountability, Openness and Curiosity. You will need to be able to demonstrate these values in action through the way you work, regardless of your role within the organisation. Information about our values can be found on our website.



Person specification

Your application will be assessed based on your demonstration of how you fulfil the following criteria; you should include clear examples of how you meet these criteria within your application form and during the assessment process.

Essential

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the above post and will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment and interview (as specified below). We'll also use references to confirm that you meet the criteria for this role. We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations Required by law or essential to the performance of the role or both	Assessed through:
1. A benchmark of 3 GCSE's (or equivalent) including Maths and English, at Grade C or above, or able to demonstrate relevant experience	Application form
2. Up to date knowledge and understanding of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support legislation and policy which you are able to interpret and apply	Application form
Experience	
3. Able to demonstrate experience in a range of IT systems including Word, Excel, Outlook and Teams	Application form Interview Assessment
4. Knowledge of Housing Benefit Local Council Tax Support and other welfare benefit legislation	Application form Interview Assessment
5. Experience of dealing with and resolving complex enquiries	Application form Interview Assessment
Skills and abilities	
6. Good communication skills, both written and verbal	Interview Assessment
7. Able to work unsupervised and under pressure	Interview Assessment
8. Excellent interpersonal skills	Interview Assessment
9. Excellent IT skills in particular use of Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook	Interview Assessment
Our values	
10. Respect	Interview Assessment
11. Together	Interview Assessment
12. Accountability	Interview Assessment
13. Openness	Interview Assessment
14. Curiosity	Interview Assessment
Other	
15. A BPSS check will be required	Application form



Desirable

Desirable criteria will be used in the event of multiple applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements and if applicable, will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment and interview (as specified below). We'll also use references to confirm that you meet the criteria for this role. We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations	Assessed through:
16. Hold IRRV Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation, Benefits and Advice	Application form
Knowledge	
17. A basic knowledge and understanding of Council Tax and Business Rates	Application form Interview Assessment

Approval

Manager's job title: Katie Hale
Date: 12 January 2022

