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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations amend the [Housing Benefit \(General\) Regulations 1987 \(No. 1971\)](#) and the [Council Tax Benefit \(General\) Regulations 1992 \(No. 1814\)](#).

In the case of housing benefit, they—

- require local authorities to inform landlords to whom direct payments of benefit are made of their duty to report changes of circumstances which might affect the claimant's entitlement to benefit (regulation 4);
- introduce a requirement that direct payments may be made to landlords only where the landlord is a fit and proper person to be the recipient of such payments or a local authority is nonetheless satisfied that it is in the claimant's interest to do so, (regulation 2).

The Regulations also introduce provisions enabling local authorities to suspend housing benefit and council tax benefit where a question arises as to whether the conditions of entitlement are or were satisfied and further enable local authorities to require the claimant to provide them with information or evidence in connection with that question. A failure to provide the information or evidence within a period of 4 weeks is a ground for review of the award (regulations 3 and 5).

These Regulations do not impose a charge on businesses.