

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE INCOME-RELATED BENEFITS (SUBSIDY TO AUTHORITIES) AMENDMENT
ORDER 2008

2008 No. 196

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by Department for Work and Pensions and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

2. Description

2.1 The income-related Benefits (Subsidy to Authorities) Amendment Order 2008 contains the amendments which are required to meet changes to the calculation and payment of subsidy for local authority expenditure.

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 None

4. Legislative Background

4.1 This order amends the Income-related Benefits (Subsidy to Authorities) Order 1998 which provides for subsidy to be payable to local authorities administering housing benefit and council tax benefit. Regular amendments are made each year to meet changing circumstances and policy.

4.2 The Order is made retrospectively, and enables final payments of subsidy to be paid after the Order is made. Prior to the Order being made, local authorities are paid interim amounts of subsidy.

5. Territorial Extent and Application

5.1 This instrument applies to Great Britain.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

As the instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7. Policy background

- 7.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to administer and pay claims for both housing benefit and council tax benefit. Subsidy is paid to reimburse them for both the actual benefit that they pay, and towards the administration costs involved in processing and maintaining claims. Policies have been set to encourage local authorities to be proactive in reducing fraud and error within such claims.
- 7.2 In advance of the financial year, officials consult with representatives of the local authorities and formally notify them of the arrangements for the forthcoming year. During the year, subsidy is paid by instalments, and final (balancing) payments are made after the year has ended following the laying of the relevant amendment Order which sets out the financial arrangements.

Consultation

- 7.3 This order mainly covers the 2006/07 Subsidy arrangements and it is laid retrospectively, local authorities have been aware of the content for sometime. We have consulted with Local Authority Association during the making of this Order and no adverse comments were received.

Consolidation

- 7.4 Informal consolidation of the instrument will be included in due course in the department's "the Law Relating to Social Security" (the Blue Volume) which are available at no cost to the public on the internet at:
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/docs/lawvols/bluevol/>

Guidance

- 7.5 Guidance was issued by the agreed procedure in the HB/CTB Subsidy Arrangement Circular S2-2006 in March 2006.

8. Impact

- 8.1 A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as it has no impact on the private or voluntary sectors.
- 8.2 The impact on the public sector is negligible.

9. Contact

Tara Taggart at the Department for Work and Pensions (Tel: 0207 712 2312 or e-mail: Tara.Taggart@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) can answer any queries regarding the instrument.