

**2015 No. 1753**

**HOUSING**

**The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Functions) (Local Housing Allowance Amendments) Order 2015**

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	<i>7th October 2015</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		<i>12th October 2015</i>
<i>Coming into force</i>	- -	<i>2nd November 2015</i>

The Secretary of State makes the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by section 122(1) and (6) of the Housing Act 1996(a):

**Citation and Commencement**

1. This Order may be cited as the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Functions) (Local Housing Allowance Amendments) Order 2015 and comes into force on 2nd November 2015.

**Amendments to the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Order 1997**

2.—(1) The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Order 1997(b) is amended as follows.

(2) In Schedule 3B (broad rental market area determinations and local housing allowance determinations)(c)—

- (a) omit paragraph 2(2) and (9);
- (b) for paragraph 2(3) substitute—

“(3) For all broad rental market areas the local housing allowance for a category of dwelling is—

- (a) the local housing allowance determined for that category of dwelling on 30th January 2015 (or, where the determination is amended under article 7A(4) (errors), the allowance provided for in the amended determination(d)); or
- (b) the rent at the 30th percentile determined in accordance with sub-paragraphs (4) to (8), where that rent is lower than the allowance referred to in paragraph (a).”; and
- (c) omit paragraph 6.

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(a) 1996 c. 52. Section 122(1) was amended by paragraph 36 of Schedule 2 to the Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5).  
(b) S.I. 1997/1984.  
(c) Schedule 3B was inserted by S.I. 2007/2871 and amended by S.I. 2013/2978 and 2014/3126. There are other amendments that are not relevant to this Order.  
(d) Article 7A was inserted by S.I. 2000/1 and amended by S.I. 2003/2398 and 2007/2871.

### **Amendments to the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) (Scotland) Order 1997**

**3.**—(1) The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) (Scotland) Order 1997(a) is amended as follows.

(2) In Schedule 3B (broad rental market area determinations and local housing allowance determinations)(b)—

- (a) omit paragraph 2(2) and (9);
- (b) for paragraph 2(3) substitute—

“(3) For all broad rental market areas the local housing allowance for a category of dwelling is—

  - (a) the local housing allowance determined for that category of dwelling on 30th January 2015 (or, where the determination is amended under article 7A(4) (errors), the allowance provided for in the amended determination(c)); or
  - (b) the rent at the 30th percentile determined in accordance with sub-paragraphs (4) to (8), where that rent is lower than the allowance referred to in paragraph (a).”; and
- (c) omit paragraph 6.

### **Amendments to the Rent Officers (Universal Credit Functions) Order 2013**

**4.**—(1) The Rent Officers (Universal Credit Functions) Order 2013(d) is amended as follows.

(2) In article 4 (local housing allowance determinations)(e)—

- (a) paragraph (1) is omitted and paragraphs (2) and (2A) are re-numbered as paragraphs (1) and (2) respectively;
- (b) in paragraph (1) (as re-numbered), for “(2A)” substitute “(2)” and in paragraph (2) (as re-numbered), for “(2)” substitute “(1)”;
- (c) for paragraphs (3) and (4) substitute—

“(3) Any local housing allowance determination made in accordance with paragraph (1) is to take effect—

- (a) in the case of a person with an existing UC entitlement—
  - (i) on the relevant Monday where that is the first day of an assessment period for the person in question; or
  - (ii) where the relevant Monday is not the first day of an assessment period for that person, on the first day of the next assessment period following that; or
- (b) in any other case, on the relevant Monday.

(4) For the purposes of this article—

“a person with an existing UC entitlement” means a person who is entitled to universal credit on the relevant Monday;

“relevant Monday” means the first Monday in the first tax year that commences following the day on which the determination is made;

“tax year” means a period beginning with 6th April in one year and ending with 5th April in the next.”.

(3) In Schedule 1 (local housing allowance determinations)(f)—

- (a) omit paragraph 2(2);

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(a) S.I. 1997/1995.

(b) Schedule 3B was inserted by S.I. 2007/2871 and amended by S.I. 2013/2978 and 2014/3126. There are other amendments that are not relevant to this Order.

(c) Article 7A was inserted by S.I. 2000/3 and amended by S.I. 2003/2398 and 2007/2871.

(d) S.I. 2013/382.

(e) Article 4 was amended by S.I. 2013/1544 and 2978 and 2014/3126.

(f) Schedule 1 was amended by S.I. 2013/1544 and 2978 and 2014/3126.

(b) for paragraph 2(3) substitute—

“(3) For all broad rental market areas the local housing allowance for a category of accommodation is—

(a) the local housing allowance determined for that category of accommodation on 30th January 2015 (or, where the allowance is redetermined under article 6 (redeterminations), the allowance as so redetermined); or

(b) the rent at the 30th percentile determined in accordance with paragraph 3, where that rent is lower than the allowance referred to in paragraph (a).”;

(c) omit paragraphs 4 and 6.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

*Freud*

Minister of State,

Department for Work and Pensions

7th October 2015

### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

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

This Order amends the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) Order 1997 (S.I. 1997/1984), the Rent Officers (Housing Benefit Functions) (Scotland) Order 1997 (S.I. 1997/1995) and the Rent Officers (Universal Credit Functions) Order 2013 (S.I. 2013/382) to make changes to the manner in which the local housing allowance is determined.

Articles 2, 3 and 4(3) amend the above Orders in order to provide that, for all broad rental market areas, the local housing allowance for a category of dwelling or accommodation is either the local housing allowance determined for that category of dwelling or accommodation on 30th January 2015 (or, where the allowance is later amended or redetermined, the allowance as so amended or redetermined), or the rent at the 30th percentile determined in accordance with the above Orders where that rent is lower than that allowance.

In consequence of that change this Order omits the provisions in the above Orders that provided for the local housing allowance to be calculated in a particular way for certain listed broad rental market areas.

Article 4(2) amends article 4 of the Rent Officers (Universal Credit Functions) Order 2013 (local housing allowance determinations) to clarify the meaning of a person with an “existing” entitlement to universal credit and to provide that, in relation to such a person, a determination of a local housing allowance takes effect on the first Monday in the first tax year that occurs following the day on which the determination is made, where that is the first day of an assessment period for the person in question, or, where that first Monday is not the first day of such an assessment period, on the first day of the next assessment period for that person following that first Monday.

An impact assessment has not been provided for this instrument as it has no impact on business or civil society organisations.

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£4.25

UK201510075 10/2015 19585

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/uksi/2015/1753>

ISBN 978-0-11-113962-2



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