

## Eligibility for housing support

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### Eligibility

Claimants can get help with housing costs when they are renting from a landlord in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) or Social Rented Sector (SRS). Boarders and lodgers are always treated as PRS tenants. Care leavers with Staying Put agreements are treated as boarders and lodgers. See Care leavers.

To be eligible for support with housing costs claimants must:

- be liable for making payment of rent or service charges
- live in the rented property

The following accommodation payments are not treated as rent payments in Universal Credit:

- payments of ground rent
- payments in respect of a tent or the site on which a tent stands
- payments in respect of approved premises
- payments in respect of a care home
- payments which are owner-occupier payments
- payments which are service charge payments
- payments in respect of Specified Accommodation (Supported Housing)
- payments in respect of Temporary Accommodation

A claimant cannot receive support with housing costs where the:

- tenancy is contrived
- claimant has a non-commercial agreement with their landlord
- liability is owed to:
  - a member of the benefit unit
  - a company owned by a member of the benefit unit or a close relative of a member of the benefit unit who lives in the same property
  - a company of which a member of the benefit unit, or a close relative of a member of the benefit unit living in the same property, is a director
  - a trust of which a member of the benefit unit, or a close relative of the benefit unit who lives in the same property, is a trustee or a beneficiary

- a close relative of a member of the benefit unit and that relative lives in the same property.

A close relative is defined as a:

- parent
- parent-in-law
- son
- son-in-law
- daughter
- daughter-in-law
- step-parent
- step-son
- step-daughter
- brother or sister

and the partners of any of these. This includes a half brother and sister.

### **Claimant not a tenant**

A claimant may be liable for paying housing costs at a property where their name is not on the tenancy agreement. See Claimants who must pay housing costs without having a tenancy.

### **Start date of eligibility**

The date of eligibility for housing costs will be the latest date of the following two conditions being both satisfied:

- the date the tenancy agreement started
- the date the claimant actually moved into the property