



# Job Description

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St. Helens Council

**Post:** Overpayments Officer  
**Department:** Corporate Services  
**Grade:** SCP 18 to SCP 21  
**Responsible to:** Manager / Local Taxation Manager

**Purpose of the Post:** To Assist the Manager / Local Taxation Manager with the prevention, control, recovery and monitoring of housing benefit overpayments.

## Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Identify over payments of housing benefits in conjunction with other staff on the Benefits Section.
2. Verify and input information onto the overpayments computer system.
3. Recover housing benefits overpayment in accordance with the Council's Debt Recovery Policy, including making repayment arrangements with customers, landlords and third parties.
4. Deal with telephone enquiries and correspondents.
5. Interview customers, landlords and others, when necessary in matters relating to housing benefits overpayment recovery.
6. Monitor housing benefits overpayment accounts to ensure repayments are being adhered to, and take further action as necessary as detailed in the Council's debt Recovery Policy.
7. Monitor the recovery of legal costs using Ash Debtors System.
8. Amend overpayment account details including refunding credits, updating recovery actions and issuing revised invoices.
9. Prepare and issue manual invoices in cases where an Administrative Penalty has been issued to the debtor by Counter Fraud Team.
10. Take debit / credit card payments
11. Prepare accounts for recovery by debt collection agencies and update relevant systems.
12. Trace absconding debtors using the Department of Working Pensions Customer information System (CSI) and Experian.



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13. Liaise with the Department for Work and Pensions Debt Management Service to arrange the recovery of housing benefit overpayments and deduction from other social security benefits.
14. Assist the Compliance Manager with compilation of statistics.
15. Assist the Compliance Manager with training other members of staff.
16. Prepare cases for recovery action in the County Court.
17. As directed by the Benefits Manager, assist with the testing amendments to the sections computer systems.
18. Liaise with other sections and Council departments in order to assist with monitoring and recovering housing benefit overpayments.
19. Liaise with outside bodies and organizations, including Housing Associations, Landlords, Solicitor and Advice Agencies in matters relating to overpayments recovery.
20. Attend overpayments best practice and benchmarking meetings.
21. To comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and associated safe working procedures and guidelines.
22. To comply with the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy and to ensure that it is implemented within the service area of the post.
23. To comply with the Council's Information Management Framework (including the Data Protection Policy, Code of Practice and Social Media Policy).
24. To comply with the Council's Code of Conduct a fundamental aspect of which are "the Seven Principles of Public Life", and to conduct oneself with the highest standards of conduct that they require

**This post is not subject to Disclosure.**

**This post is not Politically Restricted in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended).**



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**The details contained within this job description reflect the content of the job at the date it was prepared. However, it is inevitable that over time, the nature of the job may change. Existing duties may no longer be required and other duties may be gained without changing the general nature of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Consequently, the Council will expect to revise this job description from time to time and will consult the post holder/s at the appropriate time.**

**Date Prepared:**

**Date Reviewed: February 2018**

**Date Updated: March 2019**