
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2006 No. 213

The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006

PART 6

Income and capital

SECTION 5

Other income

Notional income

42.—(1) A claimant shall be treated as possessing income of which he has deprived himself for the purpose of securing entitlement to housing benefit or increasing the amount of that benefit.

(2) Except in the case of—

- (a) a discretionary trust;
- (b) a trust derived from a payment made in consequence of a personal injury;
- (c) a personal pension scheme or retirement annuity contract where the claimant is aged under 60;
- (d) any sum to which paragraph 45(a) and 46(a) of Schedule 6 (disregard of compensation for personal injuries which is administered by the Court) refers;
- (e) rehabilitation allowance made under section 2 of the 1973 Act;
- (f) child tax credit; or
- (g) working tax credit,

any income which would become available to the claimant upon application being made, but which has not been acquired by him, shall be treated as possessed by the claimant but only from the date on which it could be expected to be acquired were an application made.

(3) Where a person, aged not less than 60, is a member of, or a person deriving entitlement to a pension under, a personal pension scheme, or is a party to, or a person deriving entitlement to a pension under, a retirement annuity contract, and—

- (a) in the case of a personal pension scheme, he fails to purchase an annuity with the funds available in that scheme where—
 - (i) he defers, in whole or in part, the payment of any income which would have been payable to him by his pension fund holder;
 - (ii) he fails to take any necessary action to secure that the whole of any income which would be payable to him by his pension fund holder upon his applying for it, is so paid; or
 - (iii) income withdrawal is not available to him under that scheme; or
- (b) in the case of a retirement annuity contract, he fails to purchase an annuity with the funds available under that contract,

the amount of any income foregone shall be treated as possessed by him, but only from the date on which it could be expected to be acquired were an application for it to be made.

(4) The amount of any income foregone in a case to which either head (3)(a)(i) or (ii) applies shall be the maximum amount of income which may be withdrawn from the fund and shall be determined by the relevant authority which shall take account of information provided by the pension fund holder in accordance with regulation 86(6) (evidence and information).

(5) The amount of any income foregone in a case to which either paragraph (3)(a)(iii) or paragraph (3)(b) applies shall be the income that the claimant could have received without purchasing an annuity had the funds held under the relevant personal pension scheme or retirement annuity contract been held under a personal pension scheme where income withdrawal was available and shall be determined in the manner specified in paragraph (4).

(6) Any payment of income, other than a payment of income specified in paragraph (7), made—

- (a) to a third party in respect of a single claimant or a member of the family (but not a member of the third party's family) shall, where that payment is a payment of an occupational pension or is a pension or other periodical payment made under a personal pension scheme, be treated as possessed by that single claimant or, as the case may be, by that member;
- (b) to a third party in respect of a single claimant or in respect of a member of the family (but not a member of the third party's family) shall, where it is not a payment referred to in sub-paragraph (a), be treated as possessed by that single claimant or by that member to the extent that it is used for the food, household fuel or, subject to paragraph (13), rent or ordinary clothing or footwear, of that single claimant or, as the case may be, of any member of that family or is used for any council tax or water charges for which that claimant or member is liable;
- (c) to a single claimant or a member of the family in respect of a third party (but not in respect of another member of that family) shall be treated as possessed by that single claimant or, as the case may be, that member of the family to the extent that it is kept or used by him or used by or on behalf of any member of the family.

(7) Paragraph (6) shall not apply in respect of a payment of income made—

- (a) under the Macfarlane Trust, the Macfarlane (Special Payments) Trust, the Macfarlane (Special Payments) (No. 2) Trust, the Fund, the Eileen Trust or the Independent Living Funds;
- (b) pursuant to section 19(1)(a) of the Coal Industry Act 1994⁽¹⁾ (concessionary coal);
- (c) pursuant to section 2 of the 1973 Act in respect of a person's participation—
 - (i) in an employment programme specified in regulation 75(1)(a)(ii) of the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations;
 - (ii) in a training scheme specified in regulation 75(1)(b)(ii) of those Regulations;
 - (iii) in the Intensive Activity Period specified in regulation 75(1)(a)(iv) of those Regulations or in the Intensive Activity Period for 50 plus; or
 - (iv) in a qualifying course within the meaning specified in regulation 17A(7) of those Regulations;
- (d) under an occupational pension scheme or in respect of a pension or other periodical payment made under a personal pension scheme where—
 - (i) a bankruptcy order has been made in respect of the person in respect of whom the payment has been made or, in Scotland, the estate of that person is subject to

⁽¹⁾ 1994 c. 21.

sequestration or a judicial factor has been appointed on that person's estate under section 41 of the Solicitors (Scotland) Act 1980(2);

- (ii) the payment is made to the trustee in bankruptcy or any other person acting on behalf of the creditors; and
- (iii) the person referred to in (i) and any member of his family does not possess, or is not treated as possessing, any other income apart from that payment.

(8) Where a claimant is in receipt of any benefit (other than housing benefit) under the benefit Acts and the rate of that benefit is altered with effect from a date on or after 1st April in any year but not more than 14 days thereafter, the relevant authority shall treat the claimant as possessing such benefit at the altered rate—

- (a) in a case in which the claimant's weekly amount of eligible rent falls to be calculated in accordance with regulation 80(2)(b) (calculation of weekly amounts), from 1st April in that year;
- (b) in any other case, from the first Monday in April in that year,

to the date on which the altered rate is to take effect.

(9) Subject to paragraph (10), where—

- (a) a claimant performs a service for another person; and
- (b) that person makes no payment of earnings or pays less than that paid for a comparable employment in the area,

the relevant authority shall treat the claimant as possessing such earnings (if any) as is reasonable for that employment unless the claimant satisfies the authority that the means of that person are insufficient for him to pay or to pay more for the service.

(10) Paragraph (9) shall not apply—

- (a) to a claimant who is engaged by a charitable or voluntary organisation or who is a volunteer if the relevant authority is satisfied in any of those cases that it is reasonable for him to provide those services free of charge; or
- (b) in a case where the service is performed in connection with—
 - (i) the claimant's participation in an employment or training programme in accordance with regulation 19(1)(q) of the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations, other than where the service is performed in connection with the claimant's participation in the Intense Activity Period specified in regulation 75(1)(a)(iv) of those Regulations or in the Intensive Activity Period for 50 plus; or
 - (ii) the claimant's or the claimant's partner's participation in an employment or training programme as defined in regulation 19(3) of those Regulations for which a training allowance is not payable or, where such an allowance is payable, it is payable for the sole purpose of reimbursement of travelling or meal expenses to the person participating in that programme.

(11) Where a claimant is treated as possessing any income under any of paragraphs (1) to (8), the foregoing provisions of this Part shall apply for the purposes of calculating the amount of that income as if a payment had actually been made and as if it were actual income which he does possess.

(12) Where a claimant is treated as possessing any earnings under paragraph (9) the foregoing provisions of this Part shall apply for the purposes of calculating the amount of those earnings as if a payment had actually been made and as if they were actual earnings which he does possess except that paragraph (3) of regulation 36 (calculation of net earnings of employed earners) shall not apply

and his net earnings shall be calculated by taking into account those earnings which he is treated as possessing, less—

- (a) an amount in respect of income tax equivalent to an amount calculated by applying to those earnings the lower rate or, as the case may be, the lower rate and the basic rate of tax applicable to the assessment period less only the personal relief to which the claimant is entitled under sections 257(1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 (personal allowances) as is appropriate to his circumstances; but, if the assessment period is less than a year, the earnings to which the lower rate of tax is to be applied and the amount of the personal relief deductible under this sub-paragraph shall be calculated on a pro rata basis;
- (b) an amount equivalent to the amount of the primary Class 1 contributions that would be payable by him under the Act in respect of those earnings if such contributions were payable; and
- (c) one-half of any sum payable by the claimant by way of a contribution towards an occupational or personal pension scheme.

(13) In paragraph (6) “rent” means eligible rent less any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made under regulation 74 (non-dependant deductions).