

## Landlord/Agent Declaration

I agree to accept any Housing Benefit payments due for any of my tenants for whom payment is made directly to me by Middlesbrough Council, and understand that:

- This benefit may not necessarily cover the full rent charged and that my tenant is responsible for the balance of rent due.
- I must tell the Housing Benefit Office of any changes in the rent and service charges.
- I must tell the Housing Benefit Office if the tenant moves out, changes room or any change in circumstance I am aware of that may affect my tenant's benefit entitlement.
- I understand that Middlesbrough Council does not assume any responsibilities for the tenant by paying Housing Benefit.

**I AGREE TO REPAY ANY HOUSING BENEFIT THAT IS OVERPAID TO ME IF THE TENANT IS NOT ENTITLED TO IT, UNLESS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TRUE:**

- I did not receive the housing benefit payment,
- I did not cause the overpayment and,
- I could not (in the case of an official error overpayment) reasonably have been expected to realise that there was an overpayment.

I understand that any overpayment will be taken in full by deduction directly from my next payment(s) after the sum becomes due.

If I am no longer receiving Housing Benefit from the Council, I understand I will be invoiced for any overpayment, and I agree to pay any such invoice within 14 days.

If an invoice is outstanding and Housing Benefit becomes payable any debt will be taken in full by deduction directly from the payment(s) otherwise due.

Sections 75(5) – (7) of the Social Security Administration Act of 1992 and 16 of the Fraud Act 1997 give Middlesbrough Council the power to recover Housing Benefit overpayments paid to me by:

- Deductions from Housing Benefit paid on behalf of the tenant to whom the overpayment relates.
- Deductions from Housing Benefit paid on behalf of other tenants to whom the overpayment does not relate. Section 16 states that where recovery is made from another tenant's benefit, that tenant will be deemed to have paid rent to the value of that recovery.

<b>Signature:</b>	
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<b>Date:</b>	
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### **When can Housing benefit be paid direct to a private landlord?**

Where the council considers a tenant is vulnerable or is unlikely to pay their rent, the council can decide to make payment direct to a landlord. However, the payments will only be made for a short period of time until the tenant is able to manage their own finances. This happens in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy. If you think that your tenant is vulnerable or unlikely to pay their rent to you then please contact the Office.

If a tenant is 8 weeks (or the equivalent of 8 weeks) in arrears, then Housing Benefit must be paid direct to the landlord. If you think that you should receive direct payment for your tenant due to arrears then please submit a Statement or the rent book showing amounts of rent due and paid and the arrears that have accrued.

### **PROOF OF OWNERSHIP**

Before Housing benefit can be paid we will need to see proof of ownership for the property you are renting out. Please send in a copy of this when you have signed and returned this declaration. Acceptable proofs of ownership are Land Registry documents, a completion statement or solicitor's letter from the time of purchase.

If you are an agent then we will need a letter from the owner of the property to show you have authorisation to act on the owner's behalf.

**PLEASE NOTE** HOUSING BENEFIT IS ONLY PAID VIA BACS (Bank Automated Credit System). IF YOU CANNOT PROVIDE DETAILS FOR A SUITABLE BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY ACCOUNT THEN PAYMENT MAY BE MADE TO THE TENANT.

**A DELAY IN PAYMENT COULD OCCUR IF THE FOLLOWING DETAILS ARE NOT COMPLETED AND RETURNED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

**PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW OF ALL PROPERTIES THAT YOU OWN OR MANAGE IN THE MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL AREA.**

<b>OWNER (Please Tick)</b>	<b>AGENT (Please Tick)</b>	<b>FULL ADDRESS</b>	<b>NAME AND FULL ADDRESS OF OWNER (If you are an agent)</b>

**FURTHER SHEETS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

**FULL name and/or Business Name:**

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**FULL Residential address:**

<b>POST CODE</b>

**Tel: No:**

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**Mobile No:**

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**Email Address:**

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**PAYMENTS**

Payments to landlords are made 4 weekly in arrears by BACS (Bank Automated Credit System). Please now provide the following:

**Full name of account holder:**

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**Type of account:  
e.g. current or deposit**

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**Name and address of your Bank/Building Society:**

<b>POST CODE:</b>

**Sort Code:**

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**Account Number:**

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**Roll Number: (Building Society only)**

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Please return this form, once completed, to:

Housing Benefit Office, PO BOX 98, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Middlesbrough House,  
50 Corporation Road, MIDDLESBROUGH, TS1 2YQ

Telephone 01642 726005