

Council Tax COVID-19 hardship fund Q&A

Q. Who qualifies for a discount?

Anyone entitled to working-age Council Tax Support (CTS) for any part of the 2020-21 council tax liability will receive a further discount of up to £150.

The reduction will be made using our powers under section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and is referred to in this document as a council tax hardship fund discount.

Q. How do I claim this additional support?

You do not need to claim it. It will be applied to your council tax account automatically and issue a new bill and change your instalments.

If we know that your total council tax liability for 2020/21 is £150.00 or less, we will have already written to you to ask you to stop making payments. If you pay us by Direct Debit, we have suspended taking your payments. **There is no need to cancel your Direct Debit.**

Q. What if I have overpaid?

Once we have applied the council tax hardship fund discount, any credits caused by payments that you have already made will be refunded to you. You do not need to apply for these refunds as we'll issue them automatically as quickly as we can.

If you have paid us by cash or through Pay Point / Post Office, we will contact you to ask for your bank details.

Q. Should the hardship fund discount be applied pro-rata based on length of CTS eligibility?

The hardship fund discount will be applied in full at the point you become entitled to working-age CTS in 2020/21.

It will be applied against your council tax liability for the remainder of the financial year, after we've applied any other relevant discounts, exemptions and council tax support. Where the liability for the remainder of the financial year is less than £150, the discount value that's applied will bring the liability down to nil.

Q. What happens if my council tax bill changes mid-year?

If your liability increases, and you had not previously been entitled to a full hardship fund discount because your bill was less than £150, you will receive a further reduction to take your total hardship fund discount to £150, even if your CTS eligibility has ended.

If your bill decreases mid-year (as a result of increased eligibility for CTS or discounts and exemptions), we may reassess the level of hardship fund discount, noting that the level of discounts we award cannot exceed the total of your total council tax liability.

Q. What happens if I move address?

If you move address within our area, we will ensure that you still receive the discount up to £150 against your total council tax liability from the point that you first became entitled to CTS.

If you move into another council area, you are only able to claim this reduction once. This will be applied either to the property you leave or the property you move in to. We will work with your new council to ensure that an appropriate level of assistance is provided.