

# Council Tax

## What is Council Tax?

Council Tax funds local services including:

- Police
- Fire and Rescue
- Transport
- Rubbish collection
- Street lighting

Most domestic properties are subject to Council Tax. There is one bill for each dwelling whether it's owned or rented. This applies to houses, bungalows, flats, mobile homes and houseboats.

Each property is placed in one of eight bands based on the property's estimated purchase value in 1991.

## How much do I have to pay?

The amount of Council Tax you have to pay is dependent on three main factors:

- The tax set by the council
- The valuation band that your home has been placed in
- Whether you are entitled to any help towards your bill

## Change in circumstances

If you are a Council Tax payer or receive benefits you need to report any change in circumstances to the council tax dept. These changes include:

- Changing your name
- Moving house or billing address
- Changes to your household
- Property ownership
- Changes in benefit

Your entitlement to an exemption, discount or benefit may change and if you withhold any of the information above you may be committing an offence, which could result in a notice being issued and a penalty of £70.

## EXEMPTIONS AND DISCOUNTS

### Single person discount

If you are the only adult (aged 18 or over) living in your home, you can claim a single person discount of 25%.

If you are claiming a discount because someone has moved out of your home leaving you as the only adult, you will need to let them know your new address, so they can check your claim. You will not be entitled to a discount if someone has left for a short period and intends to return in the future.

You can apply for your single person discount to start from a past date (called backdating). You may be asked for proof of entitlement for this period and if over 12 months the reason you haven't applied before.

### Council Tax Support

You may be entitled to up to 100% Council Tax Support if you or your partner is:

- A pensioner
- Entitled to a disability premium or disabled child premium
- Entitled to Employment Support Allowance and who also receives a qualifying disability related benefit
- Receiving a carer's premium
- Receiving a war disablement pension, war widows pension or war widower's pension
- Caring for a child dependent under 6

If you are of working age (other than those listed above) you will now have to make a contribution towards their Council Tax bill.

As Council Tax Support will be calculated as a means tested discount, the amount each household will have to pay towards the Council Tax will depend on their individual circumstances.

If you are claiming Universal credit you will need to apply for Council Tax Support using the online form and state on your form that you 'only wish to claim Council Tax Support'

### **Extra help with your Council Tax bill**

If you are experiencing extreme financial difficulty there is a Council Tax Support Discretionary Hardship Payment scheme to help claimants who are struggling to pay their Council Tax bill.

Hardship is determined on the applicants' individual circumstances and financial ability to make payments.

Applications can be printed from Birmingham City Council website.

You must continue to pay your Council Tax bill by the due dates while your claim is being processed.

### **People with dementia and others who are severely mentally impaired**

Households containing people suffering from severe mental impairment, including (but not limited to) those with Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, those who have suffered a stroke, those with severe learning difficulties and those who have suffered such impairment as a result of injury, may be entitled to a reduction in their council tax.

Sever mental impairment may be progressive, and many people (or their carers) may not realise that they are now entitled to a reduction.

To qualify, someone must be medically certified as having a condition that affects their intelligence and social functioning that appears to be permanent and be entitled to at least one of a number of qualifying benefits.