Please note: if you claim Universal Credit you still need to separately and promptly claim Council Tax Support - this is not included as part of a Universal Credit claim.

Changes to council tax support

From April 2016, for working age claims, the maximum amount of time you can backdate your entitlement to a discount was reduced from up to six months down to one month. Please ensure you make a claim as soon as you may become entitled, as any delay without ‘continuous good cause’ could result in loss of entitlement.

From May 2016, the family premium was removed. This is an amount included in the benefit calculation where you have at least one dependent child. Anyone receiving the premium on 1 May 2016 was protected from the change and will continue to receive it
until they no longer meet the criteria for this, at which point it will cease.

To assist with the above changes and to help with any other individual circumstances that may cause significant financial hardship there is a discretionary scheme available.

Further information, including how to apply, is available from the Citizens Advice Bureau website (http://www.citapeterborough.org.uk) or by calling 0344 499 4120.

Protection for pensioners

The Government stated that pensioners (persons who are of an age where they can claim Pension Credit (https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/overview)) are protected from this change, so if a pensioner is claiming council tax benefit under the existing scheme, they will continue to get the same level of help on the current scheme. The people protected from this scheme are:

- single people who reached the qualifying age for state pension credit, so long as they are not claiming Income Support, income based Jobseekers Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance
- couples where at least one member has reached the qualifying age for state pension credit and neither are claiming Income Support, income based Jobseekers Allowance, income related Employment and Support Allowance.

Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy

A person who is liable to pay council tax on a property has the right to apply to the local council for a reduction in the amount of council tax due to be paid.

The council has the power to award a discount for a period of time it thinks is reasonable and it can choose to reduce the amount of council tax payable.

Discount for sole occupant

A fixed discount, currently set at 25%, is available when there are fewer than two liable persons. Some people may be (upon application) disregarded when counting the number of residents for this purpose, such as full-time students.

A single person discount will be awarded if you are the sole adult occupier over the age of 18. If you have a partner or other person who normally lives with you and they are living away or temporarily absent, you will not be entitled to a discount.

Discount for carers and care workers

A person can be disregarded from Council Tax if they are providing care and/or support to one or more people. You must satisfy one of the two categories shown below in order to qualify.

Care worker
They are providing care or support on behalf of a Local Authority, the Common Council for the City of London, the Crown or a body established for charitable purposes, or,
Are employed by the person they are caring for, but were introduced by a relevant body, and,
Care or support is provided for at least 24 hours per week, and
They receive less than £36.00 per week in payment, and,
They live in premises provided either by, or on behalf of the relevant body or the employer for the “better performance of their duties”

Carer

They provide care to a person entitled to one of the specified benefits
  Attendance Allowance
  Disability Living Allowance (Highest or Middle Rate)
  An increase in Disablement Pension
  An increase in constant Attendance Allowance
  The standard or enhanced rate of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment
They live in the same property as the person they are caring for, and,
They provide care for at least 35 HOURS a week, and,
They are not the spouse or partner of the person being cared for,
They are not the parent of the person being cared for where the person requiring care is under 18 years of age

Discount for students and young people

Please read these notes carefully before completing section B of the online form.

1. All applications submitted must have section A, completed in full.
2. Only one of the other sections (B to D) should apply to the individual (see notes below).

Section B to D

B - To be completed in respect of persons who currently attend school or college and for which child benefit is still being claimed.
C - To be completed in respect of persons under 20 years of age who no longer are entitled to child benefit but were attending a course of full time further education* on the 30 April of the year in which child benefit ceased.
D - To be completed by those undertaking full time higher education** at a College or a University and meeting the requirements to qualify for Student Status. Therefore able to obtain a Student Certificate from the Educational Establishment at which they are placed.

* Full time further education is a period of at least 12 hours tuition/study a week, 13 weeks a years for people aged 18 or 19. For people aged 20 and over, 21 hours a week, 24 weeks a years and includes A levels, BTEC(first and Nationalf, NNEB Foundation Arts, City and Guilds, RSA (Diploma, Advanced and Higher)

** Full time further education is a period of at least 21 hours a week, 24 weeks a year and includes Degrees and BTEC (Higher)

Disabled relief on council tax

If a property has been adapted to meet the needs of a disabled occupant, then, after making an application, and provided the adaptations are of a certain extent, the property will be rebanded to the band immediately below the property’s normal council tax band. In effect, the home is treated as if its market value has been lowered by the adaptations.
Please be aware that residents of properties in the lowest council tax band can receive this reduction.

A person may submit an application for Disabled Relief provided they are an ‘eligible person’ or by someone on their behalf.

An ‘eligible person’ is the person who is liable to pay the Council Tax for the property and it is the sole and main residence of at least one qualifying individual.

Where more than one person is jointly liable to pay the Council Tax, either party may claim disabled relief on the other person’s behalf.

**Terms and phrases used**

A ‘qualifying individual’ is a person who has their sole and main residence in the property concerned and who is substantially and permanently disabled whether by illness, injury, congenital deformity or otherwise.

‘Required for meeting the needs’ - with regard to the qualifying conditions; this is a facility which is required for meeting the needs of a qualifying individual and which is essential or of major importance to the wellbeing of the disabled person by reason of the nature and extent of that person’s disability. For the purposes of this form a wheelchair is not required for meeting an individual’s needs if it is not used by that person within the property.

**Provision of information**

We may ask you to supply further information in support of your claim.

**Changes of circumstances**

If circumstances change and you believe that you are no longer eligible for disabled relief, you must notify Peterborough City Council immediately.

**Council tax exemptions**

These are organised into a different classes (B,D,E etc), most of the exemptions only apply when the property is unoccupied. However, some exemptions apply not only when the property is occupied and where but also when certain categories of people live there.

- **B** - Unoccupied dwellings owned by a charity (up to six months). It can be furnished or unfurnished.

- **D** - Where the liable person(s) have been imprisoned, except where they are imprisoned for non-payment of Council Tax. This also applies where the liable person is detained (either in prison, under the Immigration Act or in hospital under the Mental Health act).

- **E** - Where the liable person(s) have moved into a hospital or care home on a permanent basis and have no intention to return, and the dwelling had been their sole or main residence.

- **F** - Where the liable person(s) is deceased and the property has remained unoccupied since their death. This exemption expires 6

- **M** - A hall of residence provided predominantly for the accommodation of students.

- **N** - A dwelling which is occupied only by students, the foreign spouses of students, or school and college leavers. You can apply online for this discount.

- **O** - Armed forces’ accommodation.

- **P** - A “property, within which at least one person who would otherwise be liable has a relevant association with a visiting force.

- **Q** - Where the person who would ordinarily be liable is prevented from making use of the property, because it is with a trustee in
months after the grant of probate.

G - A dwelling where occupation is prohibited by law (note that the exemption will cease if squatters occupy the property).

H - Where the future occupant would be a minister(s) of any religion.

I - Where the liable person(s) has moved elsewhere in order to receive personal care, and the dwelling had been their sole or main residence.

J - Where the liable person(s) has moved elsewhere in order to provide personal care to a 3rd party, and the dwelling had been their sole or main residence.

K - Where the owner is a student, who last lived in the dwelling as their main home. You can apply online for student discount.

L - Where the dwelling has been repossessed by a mortgage lender.

bankruptcy.

R - An empty caravan pitch, or a boat mooring not in use.

S - A dwelling where all occupants are aged under 18.

T - An "Annexe" which, due to planning restrictions, cannot be let separately from other parts of the same single overall property.

U - A dwelling occupied only by a person, or persons, who is or are severely mentally impaired and who would otherwise be liable to pay council tax.


V - A dwelling in which at least one person who would otherwise be liable is a diplomat.

W - An annexe occupied by a dependant relative of a person in another dwelling within the same single overall property.

Council tax support backdated claim

Housing benefit and council tax support is normally awarded from the Monday following the date on which we receive your application. This form only relates to backdates where a claim has already been made for the current period.

If you have not yet claimed housing benefit or council tax support, you can claim a backdate on the main housing benefit and council tax support online claim form (https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/eeclaim/live/ys/main?ezc=1.1440084689659&formid=EGS_AIM).

The maximum period benefit can be considered is as follows:

➢ If you are of pensionable age you can apply for a maximum 3 months backdated award
➢ If you are working age (not of pensionable age) you can apply for 1 month backdated award.

You will need to provide full details, together with any supporting evidence, to explain the reasons you did not apply for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support at the correct time.

Sending evidence and documents

If you have evidence or documents to send to us please email them to benefits@peterborough.gov.uk after submitting the claim form, we accept digital photographs, scanned copies or electronic versions.

Please put your benefit claim number in the subject heading (this begins with a ‘Z’ and can be found on any letter we send to you) and also mark it "Backdate Application".
Contact the council tax team

By phone
01733 452258 (8am to 6pm Monday to Friday)

By post
Revenues and Benefits Service
Peterborough City Council
Sand Martin House
Bittern Way
Fletton Quays
Peterborough
PE2 8TY

By fax
01733 452585