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Since April 2013 council tax benefit was abolished by Government and replaced with a localised Council Tax Support Scheme, aimed at helping those on a low income. This change means that:

- > the level of council tax benefit was reduced by 30%
- > some people who did not have to pay any council tax will now have to pay something
- > some people who do have some help may have to pay more.



[Council tax support scheme summary \(https://pcc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/CouncilTaxSupportSchemeSummary17-18.pdf?inline=1\)](https://pcc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/CouncilTaxSupportSchemeSummary17-18.pdf?inline=1)  
Size: 1.21 MB File format: pdf

The change only affects the working age population.

If you think you are eligible you can [apply online for council tax support](https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/eclaimlive/ufsmain?ebz=1_1426676003867&formid=ECLAIM) ([https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/eclaimlive/ufsmain?ebz=1\\_1426676003867&formid=ECLAIM](https://selfservice.peterborough.gov.uk/eclaimlive/ufsmain?ebz=1_1426676003867&formid=ECLAIM)).

**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 \(http://www.citapeterborough.org.uk\)](http://www.citapeterborough.org.uk) or by calling 0344 499 4120.

## Council tax discount

Other discounts and exemptions are also available. For example, a full council tax bill is based on at least two adults living in a home. You'll get 25% off your bill if you count as an adult for council tax and live on your own (called Single Person Discount). You'll also get a discount if you live with people who don't count as adults for council tax.

Further details and information about how to apply for these discounts is available on the [council tax forms page](#).

## Protection for pensioners

The Government stated that pensioners (persons who are of an age where they can claim [Pension Credit \(https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/overview\)](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.



[Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy \(https://pcc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/tax/DiscretionaryCouncilTaxHardshipPolicy-January2016.pdf\)](https://pcc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/tax/DiscretionaryCouncilTaxHardshipPolicy-January2016.pdf)  
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