



NORWICH
City Council

Council Tax Reduction Overpayment Recovery Policy

April 2019

Introduction

In April 2013 Norwich City Council implemented a council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) following a consultation process. This replaced council tax benefit and the scheme is set locally.

The council tax reduction scheme helps people on low incomes and/or certain welfare benefits to pay their council tax bill. This provides support to those under the greatest financial pressure.

Anyone who needs help to pay council tax and is on a low income could qualify for council tax reduction.

The amount of council tax reduction awarded depends on:

- income
- savings
- the number of people living in the property

Applications for council tax reductions can be made online at:

<https://www.norwich.gov.uk/apply-for-HB-CTR>

Norwich City Council is committed, through sound administration, to the prevention and detection of council tax reduction overpayments. We will take firm but fair action when administering overpayments of council tax reduction.

The aim of this policy is to act as a guide to Norwich City Council's administration of CTRS recovery.

1. The policy

Anyone who needs help to pay council tax and is on a low income could qualify for council tax reduction.

The amount of council tax reduction awarded depends on:

- income
- savings
- the number of people living in the property

Awards of council tax reduction are made to repay part or all of an individual's council tax liability. Any awards granted are based on a full income assessment and are subject to review if circumstances change.

When an award of council tax reduction is revised, resulting in a reduction or withdrawal of the award, we will notify the changes in writing and give details of how to appeal.

Council tax reduction award changes are adjusted against an individual's council tax account which can result in changes to the council tax to be paid.

Establishing an overpayment

First of all, we must establish why this has happened, how much the overpayment is and the period it covers. We then decide whether we should recover the overpayment.

Informing you of overpayments

You will be notified of any overpayment in writing. If you do not agree with the decision, you can ask for this to be explained or reviewed or you may appeal against the decision. Any request for us to do any of the above should be in writing within one month of the date of the letter informing you about the decision.

Paying overpayments back

If council tax reduction has been overpaid, the overpayment will be added to an individual's council tax account and normal recovery procedures for council tax arrears will take place.

Each case is considered individually and where appropriate, we will consider contacting the council tax payer with advice specific to their circumstances.

Where an overpayment was as a result of an official error or mistake and the person receiving the award could not reasonably have been expected to know that they were being overpaid, we may not ask for the money back.

If an individual in receipt of assistance through council tax reduction has not paid enough to clear their liability, we may have to ask for additional payments to be made to ensure that the liability is cleared in full during the financial year.

Failure to repay

Failure to repay the debt, or reach an agreement, will mean that we secure the debt at the magistrates court to enable us to take further steps to recover the debt. This might mean an attachment to earnings or other benefits including Universal Credit. It may also mean a referral to an enforcement agent.

Further information

Full details of the Norwich City Council Tax Scheme 2019/2020 can be found here:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/3838/council_tax_reduction_scheme

[Applications for CTRS can be made online](#)

<https://www.norwich.gov.uk/apply-for-HB-CTR>

Valuation Office Agency for council tax / council tax reduction appeals

<https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/forms/appeal-forms/council-tax-reduction/>

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/4712/council_tax_care_leaver_discount_policy

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/4713/council_tax_second_home_refuge_discount_policy