



Are you missing out?

Could you be paying less Council Tax? Isn't it time you found out?

Are you missing out on Council Tax Benefit?

Council Tax Benefit could help reduce how much you pay towards your Council Tax bill. You may be entitled to Council Tax Benefit if you are on a low income, even if you own your own home or are working.

How is Council Tax Benefit worked out?

The Council will work out if you qualify for help. They will take into account your individual circumstances. This will include your age, how much money you have coming in and whether you live alone.

What should I do next?

If you would like to check if you qualify for Council Tax Benefit, please use our on-line benefits calculator. The on-line benefits calculator can be found by visiting our website at: www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefitdownloads

Application forms can be found on our website at:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefitdownloads or alternatively fill in the coupon below and return it to the address shown on the front of your Council Tax bill.

Where can I find out more?

You can find out more about Council Tax Benefit by visiting our website at: www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefits Or you can phone us on **01709 336065** between 8:30am and 5:30pm, Monday to Friday, or visit one of the Council's Customer Service Centres, located throughout the Borough.

Further information is also available on the Directgov website at: www.directgov.uk

Please send me a claim form for Council Tax Benefit

Signed: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Mobile Number: _____

Email Address: _____

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Council Tax Annual Bill

Frequently Asked Questions

This leaflet contains the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about your annual Council Tax bill.

This information may help you when you read the enclosed bill.

Q. Can I pay my Council Tax by Direct Debit?

A. Yes. By choosing to pay Council Tax by Direct Debit you have the choice of spreading your payments over 10 or 12 months with a choice of four monthly payment dates on either the 6th, 13th, 20th or 27th of the month. If you pay by 10 instalments you do not need to cancel your direct debit for the remaining 2 months and your direct debit will automatically start again from your new annual bill. Contact us to set up a direct debit, or to request a form. Alternatively, you can complete a form on line 24 hours a day at; www.rotherham.gov.uk/counciltaxdirectdebit

Q. Can I choose the date I pay my Council Tax?

A. Yes. You can pay Council Tax on the 6th, 13th, 20th, or 27th of each month. If you want to change the date you pay your Council Tax please contact us.

Q. Can I pay online or by telephone?

A. Yes. To pay online please go the Council's website at; www.rotherham.gov.uk/payments.

To pay by telephone, please ring the automated payment line on 01709 336810.

Q. Can I pay my Council Tax weekly?

A. Council Tax is normally paid by monthly instalments usually over 10 months. You can pay your Council Tax by smaller amounts providing the full monthly instalment is paid by the due date. This option is not available if you pay by Direct Debit.

Q. I have been awarded Council Tax Benefit. Why do my Council Tax monthly instalments appear high?

A. Council Tax Benefit is paid over 365 days (a full year), but you only pay your instalments over 10 months, with 2 months when you do not pay at all. Your Council Tax instalments are worked out by taking your full bill and dividing it by 10, then taking your Council Tax Benefit for the year, divided by 10, which is then deducted from your monthly liability. Rounding up for odd pennies will mean one of your instalments will be slightly different to the remaining 9 months. Anyone who pays by Direct Debit over 12 months will have their Council Tax Benefit split over all 12 payments.

Q. Do my instalments include the balance outstanding at the time of issuing the annual bill?

A. No. The Law does not allow the outstanding balance from the previous year to be included in instalments starting from April. Any outstanding balance should be paid straight away, or an arrangement made by contacting us.

Q. If my account is in credit when the annual bill is issued, what happens to the credit?

A. A credit reduces the annual amount payable and instalments are calculated on the remaining balance.

Q. Can I get a refund of the credit balance existing at the time of the issue of the annual bill?

A. Yes. If you want the credit to be refunded you will need to contact us. After the refund is made you will be sent an amended bill, which will increase the amounts of instalments payable through the year.

Q. Can I pay my Council Tax annually?

A. Yes. You will need to pay the full amount on or before the first instalment date.

Q. Can I pay my Council Tax in two half yearly amounts?

A. Yes. Pay half the annual amount on or before the first instalment date and the balance on or before the September instalment date.

Q. I have appealed against the valuation band on my property, can I withhold payment of Council Tax?

A. No. Please pay the full amount due on your instalments. Any subsequent reduction in charge will be refunded or offset against future debt.

Q. I have appealed against a decision taken by the Council, can I withhold payment of Council Tax?

A. No. Please pay the full amount due on your instalments. Any subsequent reduction in charge will be refunded or offset against future debt.

Q. I am moving home soon, what should I do?

A. Tell us the date you will be leaving your old address, the new address you are moving to and pay any amount becoming payable as it becomes due. If you pay us too much Council Tax, your money will be refunded to you or if you have moved to another address in the Rotherham area the credit will be transferred to your bill for your new address. You can tell us by writing to the address on your bill or complete a form on line at the Council's website; www.rotherham.gov.uk/movinghome
Please contact us if you prefer to discuss this in person.

Q. Where can I get more advice?

A. There are a number of agencies who offer advice, including The Citizens Advice Bureau, Kiveton Park Information Centre, and Money Advice. Details can be found on line at; <http://www.adviceinrotherham.org.uk/>
Or by picking up an Advice in Rotherham leaflet from one of the Council's Customer Service Centres.

Q. I do not use all the Services that Council Tax pays for, can I withhold the payment for the charge?

A. No. There are no reductions for people who do not use the Service.

Q. My bill shows I have nothing to pay, why have you sent it to me?

A. The Law requires the bill to be sent.

Q. What if I am worried that I can't pay the amount on the bill?

A. If you are having difficulty paying your bill please contact us and we will try to come to an arrangement for payment with you. We can also advise you of ways your Council Tax may be reduced and/or places where you can get financial advice.

Q. When I reach retirement age, do I automatically get a reduction in Council Tax?

A. No, but you may qualify for Council Tax Benefit depending on your income, circumstances and savings. Please see over the page for information about how to request an application form.

Q. Where can I get further financial advice?

A. You can visit the Financial Services Authority website at; <http://www.moneyadeclear.fsa.gov.uk/>
Or pick up a leaflet about Basic Bank Accounts and Credit Unions from one of the Council's Customer Service Centres.

Q. Can I claim Benefit when working?

A. Yes. Taking a job doesn't mean that you can't receive benefit. Your income may still entitle you to a reduction in charge (dependant on household make up). If you are working but in a low paid job you can apply by completing the tear off slip on the next page.

Q. How do I contact you?

☎ By telephone 01709 336006

In person at one of the Council's Customer Service Centres located in:

Rotherham – Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham

Dinnington – New Street, Dinnington

Swinton – Station Street, Swinton, Mexborough

Maltby – Maltby Leisure and Services Centre, Braithwell Road, Maltby

Aston – Worksop Road, Swallownest

By email: council.tax@rotherham.gov.uk

In writing: Rotherham Borough Council, Council Tax Section, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE

Our opening hours can be found on the Council's website at:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/CSCs

Please complete the tear off slip overleaf to request your application form for Council Tax Benefit.

Or download and print a claim form from the Council's website at:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefitdownloads

Or contact us by telephone, in person or you can find more information on the Council's website at;

www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefits

Q. I don't have a computer – where can I get access to the Council's website?

A. You can access the Council's website for free from your local library.