

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers Policy

2020/21

Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers Policy

1. Introduction and Scope

The Council has determined that it will provide 100% discount from the payment of Council Tax to Barnsley care leavers (aged 18 to 25) who live inside and outside of Barnsley.

The Council has the discretion to reduce council tax liability for individuals or prescribed groups under 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Council has determined that it will exercise its discretionary powers to support care leavers by offering council tax discount of up to 100% to Barnsley care leavers.

Providing this support will help care leavers manage the social and financial transition from local authority care to independent living.

2. Qualifying Criteria

For the purposes of this report a care leaver is defined as a person who must have been in care for a period of at least 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) which began after age 14 and included some time after their 16th birthday.

Councils must plan for looked after children so that they have the support they need as they make their transition to the responsibilities of adulthood. The 100% discount from council tax liability for care leavers will apply until the age of 25.

3. Discount Scheme

The council tax discount will take effect from 1st April 2018. Care leavers who become liable for council tax after this date will be granted the exemption from the date of occupation.

For anyone already living independently prior to 1st April 2018 but not yet 25, the discount will be applied from 1st April 2018 up to their 25th birthday or until they cease to be liable for council tax

The level of discount applied will be 100% of any council tax liability after any entitlements to any national reliefs, exemptions or other discounts (including single person discount) have been calculated and awarded

If subsequent to an award, the care leaver 's liability for council tax reduces for example if the care leaver becomes entitled to a single persons discount, the care leaver exemption will be amended to ensure the award does not exceed the care leavers council tax liability

Where awarded the discount will remain in force until the care leaver reaches the age of 25 or ceases to become responsible for council tax, whichever date occurs first. In these circumstances the annual bill is apportioned.

When a discount has been given, a council tax bill will be issued showing the detail. If a discount is refused the care leaver will be informed of the reasons why it has been refused.

4. Making an application

For care leavers living within the Barnsley borough all applications should be made online using the request for discretionary relief form available using the following link www.barnsley.gov.uk/ct-discount-and-exemption-form

5. Right of Appeal

Under Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is a right of appeal if a person applying for discretionary relief under Section 13A is not happy with the Council's decision. The appeal must be made on the online dispute form using the following link www.barnsley.gov.uk/dispute-form

The Council will then reconsider the discount requested, together with any additional information provided, against the policy criteria.

If the original decision is upheld and the applicant remains dissatisfied, there is a further right of appeal to the Valuation Tribunal. The Valuation Tribunal for England is an independent body which adjudicates on disputes between taxpayers and the Council.

6. Policy Review

The Council will review the Care Leavers policy on an annual basis.