

Westminster City Council

Council Tax Rebate

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the £150 Council Tax rebate scheme?

This is a part of the government's initiative to help households with rising energy costs. The government has asked Councils to make these payments to council taxpayers in Bands A to D. The £150 does NOT need to be paid back. More details are shown below.

The Council also has limited funds to make discretionary payments to people over and above the Government's scheme. Details of the Westminster City Council discretionary scheme are being developed and will be added to this document once finalised. Discretionary payments will not need to be paid back.

Who will be eligible for the £150 Council Tax rebate?

You must be liable for the Council Tax bill at a property in **Bands A to D** on 1st April 2022. It must be your main residence.

If you do not pay any Council Tax because you receive full council tax support, you **will** be eligible for the payment. The rebate is also to be paid on these specific exemption classes:-

- Class N – lived in only by students
- Class S – lived in only by people under 18.
- Class U -lived in only by people who are severely mentally impaired
- Class W – is an annex lived in by a dependant relative

The government has stated that the rebate is not to be paid :-

- on properties without a permanent resident such as empty properties and second homes,
- where the council taxpayer is a corporate entity,
- on houses of multiple occupation (HMO),
- on most Council Tax exemption cases, with the four exceptions shown above.

How do I check my Council Tax band?

You can find your Council Tax Band by visiting:- <https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands>

How is the money to be paid?

Direct Debit payers

Council Taxpayers who paid by Direct Debit in April have been sent the £150 payment automatically. We have written to all those who have been paid in this way.

NB If the Direct Debit payments come from an account which does not match the Council Taxpayer details on our records the payment could not be paid automatically and will be treated as a Non-Direct Debit payer.

Non-Direct Debit payers

The Council has credited the council tax accounts of all those eligible for the £150 rebate that could not be paid automatically. We have written to all of these Council Taxpayers.

The letter advises that Council Taxpayers with ongoing instalments should reduce their next instalment(s) by £150 so that they then have the £150 to use for their fuel bills. You can check your council tax account online at

<https://revenuesbenefits.westminster.gov.uk/publicaccesslive/selfservice/citizenportal/login.htm>

For some Council Taxpayers, it is more appropriate for a direct payment of the £150 to be made. i.e. those without instalments to pay in 2022/23. If this applies to you, please ensure that you complete the “Council Tax Rebate – Request for a Direct Payment” form accurately and send it WITH the bank account evidence requested to : westminster.counciltax1@secure.capita.co.uk using “Rebate Direct Payment” and your nine digit Council Tax Account Reference in the subject line of the email.

The bank account verification evidence required is ONE of the following:

- A copy of a recent bank account statement (redacted statements are acceptable if the name, address, and bank details are shown)
- A copy of a paying in slip
- A copy of a cheque
- A copy of bank card showing bank account details

IMPORTANT :-

- (1) These payments CANNOT be actioned over the telephone
- (2) If you do not provide the bank account verification evidence with your form, your request for a Direct Payment will be rejected
- (3) Please do NOT send original bank documents to the Council , only copies or scanned images

WARNING Bogus callers – Fraud Awareness

Do not provide your bank details to anyone calling you claiming to be from Westminster Council's Council Tax office asking you to give your bank details to them over the phone. We will not be calling you to ask for these details. However, if you did not supply the bank evidence with your form, we may phone you to ask you to send your bank evidence to the council tax email :- Westminster.counciltax1@secure.capita.co.uk as your application cannot be processed without the bank account verification evidence.

If you realise now that you did not supply your bank account evidence when you sent in the form, you can send it now WITH your council tax account number and "Rebate" in the subject of your email, to :- westminster.counciltax1@secure.capita.co.uk so it can be matched with your form for processing. **Please ensure all images are clear.**

When is the £150 going to be paid by Westminster City Council?

The government asked councils to make the one-off payments of £150 to eligible households between April and September.

We have now sent payments of £150 to the bank accounts of all eligible Direct Debit payers and we have written out to Council Taxpayers to advise them of the payment being made. Please note that if the bank details for the Direct Debit did not match sufficiently the liable Council Taxpayer details we were not able to use the automatic payment process.

We have also written to all of our 26,000 non-Direct Debit payers in Bands A to D explaining that we will be crediting their Council tax account. As stated above, there will be some Council taxpayers that prefer to have a direct payment of the £150 rather than a credit to their Council tax account, e.g. Council taxpayers who have already paid their 2022/23 Council tax liability. For these Council taxpayers, a direct payment request form has been included within the Council's letter. The processing of Direct Payment claims will take a considerable time to process and we thank you for your patience.

If you are claiming a Direct Payment please ensure that you complete the form carefully and include the bank account verification evidence (please only attach copies or scanned images – **please do not send the Council original documents**)

UPDATE June 2022

We are receiving many applications for the Direct Payments. To ensure these are dealt with as quickly as possible we will not contact you unless the application

cannot be processed. The £150 will arrive in your bank account within 21 days. There is no need to chase up your application before that time. We will be contacting those whose applications cannot be processed in due course.

If you realise now that you did not supply your bank account evidence when you sent in the form, you can send it now WITH your council tax account number and “Rebate” in the subject of your email, to westminster.counciltax1@secure.capita.co.uk so it can be matched with your form for processing. Please ensure all images are clear.

What if I am overdrawn?

If you are overdrawn, you can exercise your first right of appropriation on the £150 payment, so that your bank doesn't use it to pay off your overdraft. A sample letter that you can use to exercise your right of appropriation is available here: <https://www.nationaldebtlive.org/sample-letters/ask-your-bank-pay-particular-bills>

What if I do not want the £150 rebate paid automatically?

The Council has to process the payments in line with the government's guidance so Direct Debit payers will receive the money automatically. If you feel you do not need the money you may consider giving the money to a charity. The Westminster Community Charitable Trust details can be found here:

[Westminster Trust | Westminster City Council](#)

Where can I get more information?

The Government leaflet about the scheme has been sent to all council taxpayers with their bill or by email. The leaflet also appears on

[Council Tax band and charges | Westminster City Council](#)

The government website GOV.UK has announcements including:-

[Millions of most vulnerable households will receive £1,200 of help with cost of living - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)