

Energy Rebate FAQs

Who qualifies for a Council Tax Rebate?

The property must be in Council Tax Band A to D on 1 April 2022.

There is one exception, a property in Band E that receives a disabled band reduction in their council Tax will count as being in Band D and will qualify for the rebate

You must be living in the property as your main home on 1 April 2022.

What about discounts and exemptions?

So long as the above criteria is met you don't to pay Council Tax to qualify so households who receive 100% Council Tax Reduction can still qualify

Properties which are occupied but exempt from payment can also still qualify

- Properties where all the occupants are under the age of 18 and receiving exemption class S on their Council Tax bill on 1 April 2022
- Properties where all the occupants are severely mentally impaired and receiving exemption class U on their council tax bill on 1 April 2022
- Properties occupied as a granny annexe and receiving exemption class W on their Council Tax bill on 1 April 2022
- Properties where all the occupants are full time students and receiving exemption class N on their Council Tax bill – so long as their names is on the Council Tax bill and it is not a House in Multiple Occupation where the landlord gets the Council Tax bill.

Who doesn't qualify for a Council Tax Rebate?

- Empty properties
- Properties occupied as a second home
- Properties where the person named on the Council Tax bill does not live at the address for example, limited companies, housing associations, houses in multiple occupation etc.
- Properties in Band E to H – these may be eligible for the discretionary rebate scheme

How will it be paid?

If the household meets the eligibility criteria and the Council Tax is currently paid by Direct Debit then we will make an automatic payment to the bank account so long as

- The name on the bank account matches the council taxpayer's name
- There has been a recent payment of Council Tax made by direct debit

If the Council Tax account doesn't pass these checks, then we will ask for an application to be made so that we can check that the household meets the eligibility criteria before making a payment

If the household meets the eligibility criteria but does not currently pay by direct debit or it did not pass the direct debit verification checks then an application will be needed so that we can verify who is receiving the payment and that they meet the eligibility criteria. This is required by the Government to minimise the possibility of fraud.

How do I apply?

For those households who pay by direct debit and they pass the direct debit verification criteria then payments will be made automatically into bank accounts with the first payments due to be made week commencing 18 April 2022.

We will write to all households that we believe meet the eligibility criteria and where we have not been able to make an auto-payment to invite them to apply. These letters will be sent week commencing 18 April 2022.

Applications need to be made through the Council's online portal 'Grant approval'.

<https://horsham.grantapproval.co.uk/>

This is to ensure that we can quickly carry out the checks we need to confirm they meet the eligibility criteria, validate their bank details and to avoid duplicate payments .

There is no paper form but we can take an assisted application over the telephone if a household does not have access to the internet .

What scheme do I apply for?

There are two schemes to choose from when making an application

Pay to my bank account

If you choose to have the payment made to your bank account you will have to agree to an ID and bank verification check made using credit reference data to confirm their address and bank details. You will also need to upload a copy of your bank statement – this is in case the bank verification does not match 100% and allows us to make some manual checks . If you do not want to agree to the ID checks then the application will not be accepted in the portal and you will need to apply to have the payment paid against your council Tax account instead. Payment should reach bank accounts within 5 working days once the payment has been approved

Pay to my Council Tax account

If this scheme is selected there is an optional ID check, but the application can proceed if you choose not to agree to the check. You do not need to provide bank details or any bank account evidence and once approved the payment will be credited to your Council Tax account and your monthly instalments will be recalculated and a new Council Tax bill will be sent to you.

I don't think I should have received a payment as I don't meet the eligibility criteria

Please contact us by email at energyrebate@milton-keynes.gov.uk and tells us why you don't think you should receive the rebate. We will check your Council Tax account and if you are not eligible we will tell you how you can return the payment to us.

Why am I getting emails from a Milton Keynes email address?

Our colleagues at Milton Keynes Council are helping us to deliver the Energy Rebate scheme and so you may get emails from a Milton Keynes email address.

I have had a call from the Council asking for my bank details?

Do not provide your bank details to anyone calling you claiming to be from Milton Keynes Council or Horsham Council and asking for your bank details. We will not be calling you to ask for these details.

If you think you may have been the victim of fraud or cybercrime and incurred a financial loss or have been hacked as a result of responding to a phishing message, you should report this www.ncsc.gov.uk.

I have moved, do I still get the rebate?

You will receive the rebate if you lived in the property on 1 April 2022 as your main home and it is in Band A to D, if you moved home after 1 April you would receive the rebate on your old home but not your new home.

I am a first time buyer but did not move into my property until after 1 April 2022, can I still get a rebate?.

You do not qualify for the Council Rax rebate scheme if you were not living in the property on 1 April 2022. You may make a claim for a discretionary rebate payment if you are experiencing financial hardship due to rising energy bills.

I live with another tenant and they have already claimed the payment?

There is only payment per household and it is the responsibility of the person claiming the rebate to make arrangements regarding the rebate with the other residents in the household.

My property is in Band E to H, can I get a rebate payment?

The Council Tax Rebate scheme is only for properties in Council tax bands A to D. Horsham Council will be launching a discretionary rebate scheme to support some residents in Bands E to H, for example those in receiving Council Tax Reduction or a discount because they have a carer or disabled person living with them.

My landlord pays the Council Tax but I have to pay towards the energy costs

The Council Tax rebate is only available to council tax payers who live in the property so if you are not named on the Council Tax bill you cannot receive the rebate. If your landlord does not live in the same property as you then they will not be able to claim the rebate either. If you are not the Council Taxpayer but still have to pay towards the energy costs you can apply for a discretionary rebate payment

I live in a newly built house and it hasn't got a Council Tax Band yet?

If you were living in the property on 1 April 2022 then you will receive the rebate when the Valuation Office provide the Council with details of the official Council Tax band, so long as it is in Bands A to D

Where do I find my property reference?

This is shown on your Council Tax bill and on the letter that we will be sending to invite you to apply for the rebate.

Why haven't I had a payment?

There are many reasons why you may not receive a payment, some examples are

- You don't qualify because you were not living in the property as your main home on 1 April 2022
- the Council Tax records show the property as empty or as a second home property
- you are a landlord and have tenants living in the property
- a rebate has already been paid to another household member
- further information is needed to process your application and we have sent you an email from the grant approval portal
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The Council Tax is paid by direct debit but I have not received an automatic payment?

There could be several reasons

- An automatic payment can only be made where the name on the council tax account matches exactly with the bank account name held on the council tax records. If there is not an exact match then you need to submit an application so we can verify the payment details.
- An automatic payment can only be made when we have used those bank details to collect a direct debit for Council Tax so if it is a newly set up direct debit we can not make an automatic payment until the first payment has been successfully collected

Can I have the money taken off my Council Tax bill instead?

Yes, when applying select the scheme 'pay against my Council Tax account' and we will arrange to credit the payment to your Council Tax account and send you a revised Council Tax bill.

I am overdrawn at the bank and the money will be offset against my overdraft so I won't benefit from it

Yes, you can. Instead of the rebate being taken by your bank to pay off an unarranged overdraft you may have, you can tell them how you would prefer the money to be used. This might be to pay for phone or energy bills, for example.

All you have to do is send them a letter telling them that the rebate for £150 will be credited to your account, and how you would like it to be spent by detailing upcoming transactions.

This process is called 'First Right of Appropriation'.

[Download a sample 'First Right of Appropriation' letter from the National Debtline website.](#)

Why do I have to agree to have my identity checked?

The identity check is part of the payment assurance process to reduce the chance of fraud or error being committed.

The Government and Horsham Council will not tolerate any person falsifying their records or providing false evidence to gain this rebate and person who falsely accepts or applies for the rebate or provides false information or makes false representation in order to gain relief may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006.

I don't want to agree to have my identity checked?

If you do not wish to consent to the identity check then you can apply to have the £150 rebate set against your Council Tax bill to reduce your monthly payments

I don't want the rebate?

Please contact us by email to confirm that you do not wish to claim the rebate. energyrebate@milton-keynes.gov.uk . If you have already received the payment then please contact us so that we can tell you how you can return the payment to us.

Can I apply to have my Council Tax band reduced?

If you think your council tax band is incorrect you will need to request a review of your band through the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), you will need to explain why you believe your band is incorrect and provide supporting evidence.

For more information on when the VOA will undertake a band review and the evidence that you need to provide can be found on the UK Government's [Challenging your Council Tax band webpage](#).