



# Payment of Council Tax to care leavers up to the age of 25 years

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# 1. About this document

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to specify how the council will support care leavers between the ages of 18-25 years for a period of 3 years only and to indicate the criteria which must be met when determining when payment of council tax will be made.
- 1.2 The council intends to provide on-going support to care leavers under the age of 25, by reducing the financial burden of council tax liability during their initial years of independence. Each application will be dealt with on its merits and all individuals that apply will be treated equally and fairly.

# 2. Qualifying criteria

- 2.1 The scheme will be effective from 1st April 2018. No award will be made prior to this date.
- 2.2 The reimbursement will only apply to an account for a property at which the care leaver is liable as a resident under [Section 6 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992](#).
- 2.3 To qualify for the council tax reimbursement:
- a) *The individual must be a liable person for council tax and resident at the property;*
  - b) *The individual must be under the age of 25 years; and*
  - c) *Warwickshire County Council must have been the corporate parent of the individual at the time they left care.*

# 3. Making an application

- 3.1 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) will accept applications made verbally, in writing or using the provided application form. WCC will issue application forms on request or in circumstances where it is considered an individual may be entitled to the reimbursement. An electronic version of the application form will also be made available on the [Warwickshire Leaving Care website](#).
- 3.2 An application should be completed by the care leaver or a person authorised to act on their behalf.
- 3.3 Warwickshire County Council will reimburse the council tax bill when it is satisfied that the care leaver has met the qualifying criteria as set out in this document.

## 4. How much will be awarded

- 4.1 Where the qualifying care leaver is determined to be liable for council tax, a 100% reimbursement will be granted on the council tax account. If a qualifying individual is jointly liable with another person for council tax, a 100% reimbursement will still be awarded for the property. If the care leaver's council tax is increased or decreased at any time while entitled to this reduction, the reimbursement will be amended so that any award does not exceed the Council Tax Liability.
- 4.2 The care leaver's council tax reimbursement will be applied for after all other statutory discounts and exemptions have been applied. For example, if a care leaver is entitled to single person discount, this 25% statutory discount will be awarded, and the care leavers' reimbursement will apply to the remaining 75% liability.

## 5. Who pays for the reimbursement granted?

- 5.1 The full cost of the reimbursement is met by Warwickshire County Council.

## 6. Period of the award

- 6.1 The scheme will be effective from 1st April 2018. No award will be made prior to this date.
- 6.2 The award of the reimbursement can be backdated to 1st April of the financial year in which the application is received. If liability for council tax commences after the 1st April of that year, the reimbursement will be awarded from the start date of occupation.
- 6.3 The council tax will be awarded to a care leaver between the ages of 18-25 years for a period of 3 years only.
- 6.4 The reimbursement will not be backdated into previous financial years.
- 6.5 Where awarded, the reimbursement will end if/when:
- a) *The care leaver ceases to be liable for council tax;*
  - b) *The care leaver ceases to be resident in the property giving rise to the liability; and/or*
  - c) *The care leaver reaches the age of 25.*

## **7. How will payment be made**

- 7.1 The care leaver will be required to pay monthly payments for their council tax. They will be required to provide a receipt and the Leaving Care Service will then reimburse them the amount they have paid.

## **8. Publicity**

- 8.1 Warwickshire County Council will include information about this scheme on its [Leaving Care Website](#), Facebook, and on any associated posters and leaflets.

## **9. Review of the scheme**

- 9.1 The scheme will be reviewed periodically, taking into account Council policies and priorities and any changes in legislation.