

## Council Tax

### Discretionary Energy Rebate 2022 to 2023

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 On 3 February 2022 as part of its support for rising fuel prices the Government announced a £150 Energy Rebate Payment for most households in Council Tax Bands A to D (referred to in this document as the Main Scheme). The Government also announced a Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme of up to £150.

1.2 Read more on [government guidelines for the Energy Rebate Payment scheme](#)

1.3 Each Council must determine its own Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme within some national guidelines. Guildford Borough Council has been allocated £235,500. This will provide 1,570 payments of £150.00.

1.4 This document provides details of Guildford Borough Council's discretionary scheme and how it will be administered locally.

#### 2. National Rules

2.1 The government has set the following timescales

All payments from the main scheme for Bands A to D must be made by 30 September 2022. All payments from the discretionary scheme must be made by 30 November 2022

- 2.2 No additional discretionary funds will be provided.
- 2.3 Once a discretionary scheme has been agreed it should be published.
- 2.4 Councils should undertake pre-payment checks before providing support from the discretionary fund.

### **3. Local Scheme Criteria**

- 3.1 To ensure that as many households as possible receive help from public funds:
  - No discretionary payments will be made to anyone eligible for a mandatory payment.
  - Discretionary payments will initially be made by reference to the situation on 1 April 2022. This is consistent with the main scheme and minimises the possibility of applicants qualifying twice.
  - Discretionary payments will initially be made to the Council Tax payer. This is consistent with the main scheme and ensures that funds are spread amongst as many households as possible.
  - The Council Tax payer must be resident at the property, and commercial or not for profit organisations are excluded from the scheme.
  - Discretionary payments will initially be available only for those in properties banded E to H. These are the properties excluded from the main scheme.
  - Only one payment will be made per household.

3.2 The funds will be distributed as follows:

3.2.1 **Strand 1:** £150 to Council Tax payers in properties banded E, F, G or H, meeting at least one of the following criteria on 1 April 2022 and all of the rules in 3.1

- In receipt of Local Council Tax Support
- In receipt of a disabled band reduction (NB band E is in the main scheme)
- With either a carers or severely mentally impaired disregard
- With a severely mentally impaired exemption
- In receipt of housing benefit for a working age taxpayer.

3.2.2 **Strand 2:** Up to £150 to Council Tax payers in properties banded E, F, G or H on 1 April 2022, meeting at least one of the following criteria during the period 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 and all of the rules in 3.1. A full application to be made by 31 July 2022.

The Council Tax payer or partner is in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Disability Living Allowance Care Element, any rate
- Disability Living Allowance Mobility Element, any rate

- Personal Independence Payment Daily Living Component, any rate
- Personal Independence Payment Mobility Component, any rate
- Attendance Allowance
- New Style Employment Support Allowance
- War Pension
- Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.
- Industrial Injuries Benefit.
- Carers Allowance

3.2.3 **Strand 3:** If any funds remain following the allocation of 3.2.2 payments, discretionary hardship energy payments will be considered from other residents. Further details will be published on the website in August 2022.

#### **4. Amount**

4.1 For applicants eligible under 3.2.1 - £150

4.2 For applicants eligible under 3.2.2 a sum determined after all applications have been received and assessed. This will be a maximum of £150, but could be considerably less depending on the number of successful applications received.

#### **5. Payment**

5.1 All payments will be made by BACS following verification of the applicant's bank details.

5.2 Where bank details cannot be verified the payment will be made to the Council Tax account and a revised bill issued.

5.3 Payments will be made as soon as possible, and no later than 30 November 2022.

## **6. How to apply**

6.1 To facilitate verification, applications should be made via our online application form.

6.2 The application form will be available at

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/counciltaxenergyrebate>

6.3 Family, friends or support workers can help with the application however the bank details provided must be those of the Council Tax payer.

6.4 We will try to identify potential recipients and write to them to advise them of the scheme 3.2.1. We will also promote all the schemes through our social media.

6.5 All applicants will need their:

- Council Tax number,
- Date of birth
- Bank account details.

6.6 All applicants will need to upload an image of their bank account showing their name and address, plus bank sort code and bank account number.

6.7 Applicants under 3.2.2 will also need to upload an image of a document confirming their entitlement to one of the relevant benefits. This must cover any part of the period 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022. Applications must be made by 17:00 on 12 August 2022.

## **7. Notification of decision**

- 7.1 We will write to successful applicants; however, this may be after payment has been made.
- 7.2 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

## **8. Appeals**

- 8.1 There is no right of appeal against any decision not to award a Council Tax Discretionary Energy Rebate.
- 8.2 Applicants who are turned down will not be eligible because they do not meet the criteria under the terms of this scheme, or have not provided a complete application in accordance with the scheme.

## **9. Cancellation, Repayment and Data Sharing**

- 9.1 Guildford Borough Council and the Government will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. An applicant who falsely applies for the Council Tax Discretionary Energy Rebate, provides false information or makes false representation in order to gain payment may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006.
- 9.2 Any payments found to be made in error or on the account of fraud will be subject to clawback.
- 9.3 Pre payment verification checks will be made. Data will be shared with approved bodies to enable this to happen.
- 9.4 Payments may also be subject to post payment audit

9.5 In making an application, applicants understand that their details may be shared with central government departments for verification, monitoring, statistics and evaluation purposes. This is in addition to Guildford Borough Council's privacy statement found at <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/privacy>.