



Energy Rebate Scheme 2022-23

Purpose

The government's 'Energy Bills Rebate Scheme' is intended to help households with rising energy bills. Support includes:

- Energy rebate: A £150 non-repayable rebate for eligible households
- Discretionary Energy Rebate: Discretionary support for households in need, but who are not eligible for the Energy Rebate.

The Main Energy Rebate scheme only apply to residents in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough on 1 April 2022.

The Discretionary scheme relates to residents in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough between the 1 April 2022 to the end 31 October 2022.

This policy government guidance, which includes this 'Frequently Asked Questions' document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance/support-for-energy-bills-the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance>

The Main Scheme is due to end on 30 September 2022.

The Discretionary Scheme is due to end on 30 November 2022.

Eligibility

Council Tax liability details will be taken on 1 April 2022, as this is the eligibility date.

Changes or alterations in the council tax liability before or after this date will not alter eligibility for the rebate.

People residing in properties in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough that pay Council Tax at Band A- D rates will be eligible for the Energy Rebate Scheme, as follows:

- You must be liable to pay Council Tax at the property on 1 April 2022 (Main scheme only) or have moved into the property during the period 1 April 2022 to 16 November 2022 (Discretionary Scheme only)
- Your property is valued in council tax bands A – D. This includes property that is valued in band E but has an alternative valuation band of band D, as a result of the disabled band reduction scheme.
- It is someone's sole or main residence.
- It is a chargeable dwelling, or in the following exemption classes:
 - o Class N – a dwelling occupied entirely by students
 - o Class S – a dwelling occupied wholly by persons under the age of 18
 - o Class U – a dwelling occupied wholly by persons who are severely mentally impaired

- o Class W – an annex flat or similar self-contained property occupied by a dependent relative of a person living in the main part of the building; and
- The person who is liable to pay council tax (or would be, were the property is not exempt) is not a local authority, corporate body or other body such as a housing association, the government or government body.

Eligibility for Tenants

Some examples of situations involving tenants, and the expected approach, are as follows:

- A rental property meets the criteria set out at paragraph 11 of the guidance, and councils hold a live council tax direct debit instruction for that property.
 - a) Automatic rebate payment can be made if the name on the direct debit details matches the details of someone liable to pay Council Tax
 - b) If the name on the direct debit details do not match a liable party automatic payment will not be made. Further information will be requested, and the resident may be asked to submit an application for rebate.
- A rental property meets the criteria set out at paragraph 11 of the guidance and it is a house in multiple occupation.
 - a) The liable council taxpayer is the landlord, who is liable as an individual rather than as a corporate body (e.g., a company).
Payment should be made to the landlord, who in many cases may also be the energy bill payer. If the tenants pay energy bills directly, they can apply through the council's discretionary fund.
 - b) The liable council taxpayer is the landlord, who is liable as a corporate body rather than as an individual. No payment will be made. If the tenants pay energy bills directly, they can apply through the council's discretionary fund

Main Scheme – known as the Energy Rebate

Liable people will be automatically paid the rebate where:

- a) They reside in a property with a Council Tax band charge A-D.
- b) The Council Tax system has matching bank account details on the property account; or
- c) Bank account details are available on other council systems such as the benefits system.

Payment will be made as soon as practicably possible after the Council has received the first payment of Council Tax by direct debit. This allows the validation of a bank account for the payment via bank transfer. Where a direct debit is unsuccessful, further checks will be required and may result in a delay in payment. Payment will follow once the information is confirmed.

Non-eligible people for the Energy Rebate Scheme are those in properties outside of the A-D bands (excluding exceptions as previously stated).

Those eligible for the Energy Rebate Scheme, where possible, have been notified through their annual 2022/2023 Council Tax statement.

People without bank accounts held against their Council Tax liability or those that pay by cash can apply for a direct debit at any point up to the 19 September 2022 for an automatic payment (Main Scheme only).

Those eligible without bank account details held against their council tax liability may have their rebate:

- a) Reduced from the current year's council tax charge.
- b) Used to reduce prior years council tax charge.
- c) Paid to Third Party Bank Account (Appropriate Pre-payment checks will be undertaken)

Where payment has not been possible on eligible Main Scheme accounts

A bank account that has been used for payments made to the Local Authority and proven to belong to the Council Tax account holder may be used for payment of the Energy Rebate. However, we may use bank accounts, not held on the Council Tax system, but confirmed by other departments, for example the Benefits Section.

For persons who are automatically eligible for the Main Scheme, the money will be credited to their Council Tax account on or around the 30 September 2022, where no claim has been made, no capacity to pay direct to the liable person's bank account has been established or the Third-Party option has not been requested or verified.

Once this has payment has occurred the money may not be refunded until the council tax account goes into credit.

Where possible authorisation will be requested from the liable Council Tax payer for any proposed action. Automatic credit to the Council Tax payer's account will only be used a last resort.

Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme

Households suffering from hardship or financial difficulties will be considered through the Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme.

Awards will be £150 per application.

The funding provided by government is fixed so to ensure we have funding available for as many households as possible, awards are limited to:

- one award of a Discretionary Energy payment for households who have already received a payment from the main Energy Rebate Scheme
- two awards of a Discretionary Energy Rebate payment, for those who do not fall under the main Energy Rebate Scheme

Depending on take up of the discretionary scheme, we leave the option open to revise the criteria for the Discretionary Scheme to ensure full use of the fund.

Eligibility

Recipients of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme or a means tested benefit issued by the Department of Works and Pensions or the Pension Service will receive a discretionary payment:

- If they have not qualified automatically for the main Energy Rebate payment scheme.
 - If the Local Authority holds bank account details for the liable person, a discretionary payment will be made automatically. Where a bank account is not available then an application for the money will be required.
- 1) An application is required for people who:
 - Have not received an automatic payment because they are suffering hardship, this includes households which have already received the £150 Energy Rebate.
 - Have received an automatic payment and require further financial assistance due to hardship.
 - Do not have a Council Tax account and are liable for making energy payments and are suffering hardship.
 - 2) Customers will need to provide evidence they are:
 - Resident in the property on 1 April 2022 or moved into the property during the 1 April to 16 November 2022
 - Have less than £3,000 in capital
 - Earn less than 37 hours x National Minimum Wage, unless exceptional circumstances can be shown
 - Make payment for energy (Gas, electric or alternative which can provide heating or electricity)
 - Supporting statement explaining the hardship they are suffering

Customers in Bands A- D who are resident in the property after 1 April 2022 can apply for a Discretionary Energy Rebate Payment and will need to provide their bank details

Customers in Bands E- H who are resident in the property after 1 April 2022 can apply for a Discretionary Energy Rebate Payment, they will need to meet the above criteria (2) and provide bank details

Evidence may be supplied electronically or by post, to support the applications for either main Energy Rebate or the Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme and these applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and each on its own merit.

Validation checks will be carried out on the Department of Works and Pensions Spotlight system for all applications. For Third Party account payments, further appropriate checks will need to be undertaken.

Applications for the Discretionary fund will close on the 16 November 2022

Where the funding provided for the discretionary scheme has been exhausted, no further payments will be made.

In the case of being over subscribed for the Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme, customers who have supplied all information required first will be offered the payment.

Those deemed ineligible will be classed as those that do not satisfy the criteria above.

Where the funding provided for the discretionary scheme has not been exhausted by the Application closing date

For us to ensure we are assisting as many households as possible, where we have not been able to spend the full government allocation following the closing of our application scheme we will:

- Firstly, ensure all current applications are paid as a priority
- Look to provide some support for our customers in Band E who have not received a payment so far.

The level of payment to Band E customers will be based on a share of the funds left after all applications have been completed. The payment will be paid directly to the customer's Council Tax account.

Appeals

There is no appeals process, but any refused claimant may request a reconsideration, in writing, within 14 days of the decision being made.

Reclaim

If new information comes to light showing ineligibility, after the Energy Rebate or the Discretionary Energy Rebate payments have been made, the Authority will seek to recover these funds from the payee.

Fraud

Where a customer falsely applies for any relief, provides false information, makes false representation, or withholds information in order to gain monies, prosecutions will be considered under the Fraud Act 2006.