

Council Tax Support for Pensioners

You are treated as a pensioner for Council Tax Support if you have reached the qualifying age for State Pension Credit and are not in receipt of Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based), Employment Support Allowance (Income Based) or an award of Universal Credit.

The way we work out your Council Tax Support entitlement will depend on what income you receive.

Pension Credits

As a person of State Pension Credit age you may get Pension Credit.

Pension Credit can give you two different payments:

- Guarantee Credit – gives a guaranteed level of income for everyone treated as being of pension age
- Savings Credit – gives an additional payment for people aged 65 and over for some of the savings and income they have for their retirement.

If you or your partner are aged 65 or over, you may get both Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit.

You may get a Savings Credit award even if you do not get a Guarantee Credit, depending on your circumstances.

For more information about Pension Credits go to www.pension.gov.uk

How do Pension Credits affect my Council Tax Support?

Guarantee Credit

If you receive the Guarantee Credit (with or without Savings Credit), you will get the full amount of Council Tax Support after any deductions for other people (non-dependants) living with you.

If you receive Guarantee Credit and have savings above £16,000, you can still claim Council Tax Support.

Savings Credit

If you get Savings Credit only you may not get full Council Tax Support.

The Pension Service will work out your total income for Pension Credit. This is called your Assessed Income Figure – (AIF). From this amount any Savings Credit is worked out. The Pension Service will tell us both your AIF figure and any Savings Credit award you are entitled to.

It will be these two amounts we use when working out your Council Tax Support entitlement. If you do not agree with the figures provided by the Pension Service you must tell the Pension Service to look again at your details.

If you do receive Savings Credit but have savings over the £16,000 capital limit you cannot get Council Tax Support.

What if I don't get any Pension Credit?

If you haven't claimed or don't qualify for Pension Credit, you can still claim Council Tax Support.

We will work out any entitlement using the income and savings you tell us about.

We will work out your normal weekly income based on your income including any State Pensions and other pensions, etc you and any partner may receive.

Savings

Where you or your partner have savings we will look at the total amount you hold to work out the "tariff income" from these savings which will be included in the support calculation. If you have savings and capital over £16,000 you will not be entitled to Council Tax Support

We work out "tariff income" as follows:

We do not count any savings less than £10,000.

For savings above £10,000, we take £1 income (tariff income) for every £500 or part of £500 over £10,000. This tariff income will be applied up to the £16,000 cut off level.

For example:

Pensioner with £14,000 in savings

We ignore the first £10,000

From the remaining amount (£14,000 - £10,000) = £4,000 we will assume "tariff income" of £8 per week. (£4,000 divided by £500 = £8)

Any tariff income will be added to your other income to work out your total weekly income for support entitlement purposes.

Changes to circumstances

If you receive Pension Credit you will only need to tell us about certain changes. If you have a change in income or savings you must tell the Pension Service about these changes.

Here are the things which you must tell us about.

If you get **Guarantee Credit** you must tell us about:

- changes to people who live with you (non-dependants)
- if you are away from your property for more than 13 weeks, such as going into hospital, in residential care, a long holiday, etc.

If you get **Savings Credit only** you must tell us also about:

- changes about children who live with you, and for whom you get Child Benefit
- changes to people who live with you (non-dependants)
- changes to the amounts of Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit or Child Special Allowance paid to you

- if your savings go over £16,000
- changes of any income or savings to your partner who is not included in your Savings Credit.
- if you are away from your property for more than 13 weeks, such as going into hospital, in residential care, a long holiday, etc.

If you do not receive any Pension Credit you must tell the Benefit Section straight away of any changes (increase/decreases) in your income or savings which may affect the amount of support you get.

Non Dependant rules if you are aged 65 or over

We will not reduce your Council Tax Support until six months after the date of change where:

- a non-dependant moves in with you – meaning less benefit is being paid.
- a non-dependant's income changes giving you less benefit because a higher non dependant deduction is being used.

However, if a change with a non-dependant means we will give you more support, then the normal rules about the date a change in circumstances will be used will apply. (See the Change in Circumstances page of the web site).

If you are not sure what you must tell us about, tell us anyway and we will let you know exactly how it will affect your claim.