

Worcestershire County Care Leavers Concordat between the County Council and Districts

The first step will always be that WCC Care Leavers Team of Personal Advisors will prompt and support the care leaver in all cases to make an application for Council Tax Reduction (CTR) to the relevant local district council's Revenues and Benefits Team. This is in order for the Revenues and Benefit Team to assess any entitlement to national support / exemptions in calculating the sum liable.

Upon completing the CTR application WCC/WCF via the Personal Advisor will notify the relevant district council Revenues & Benefits Team to confirm they are a care leaver and also to include the CTR application reference.

The relevant District Council will update council tax records and assess as follows dependent on the personal circumstances set out below:

Where the Care Leaver is sole occupier/sole tenant of property

The Revenues & Benefits Team will assess Council Tax reduction and other discounts then top up support to 100% of the liability.

Where Care Leaver is joint tenant with other residents

The Revenues & Benefits Team will assess Council Tax Reduction and other discounts, then top up support to % share of liability. i.e. if there are two tenants CTR will be based on 50% liability, and then if full CTR is not awarded discretionary award will top up to full 50%. Three tenants 33%, four 25%.

Where Care Leaver re-joins parent/grand parent

The Revenues & Benefits Team will assess if there is a loss of single person discount; then operate a no detriment approach and apply a discretionary 25% reduction.

Where Care Leaver has formed partnership and is living together as husband and wife, or same-sex relationship

The Revenues & Benefits Team will assess Council Tax Reduction and other discounts, then top up support to mirror the position if the care leaver lived in a shared tenancy with another person, i.e. 50%. This is higher than the national disregard approach taken in Scotland.

Care Leavers from outside of WCC care

The Revenues & Benefits Team will consider discount for out of area care leavers using existing hardship funds and will code these separately so no charge back to WCC.

WCC will work with the Revenues & Benefit Teams to identify contacts at other authorities and ways in which the district council can approach and reclaim funds from working with those authorities.

WCC Refund of costs to each district and sharing data

Each quarter WCC will provide each district Revenues & Benefits Team with a list of care leavers they are aware of and the districts will compare to their list of claimants / exemptions and provide data back to WCC of where there are gaps or potential non-claimants.

Each quarter the districts will inform WCC of the amount of liability exempt under this local process.

At year end each district will bill WCC for the amount owing arising from the discounts.

A year end review will be held to assess the ongoing working relationship, training needs and billing. This will be between the WCC s151 Officer and district Revenues & Benefit Managers / Representative.