



Ministry of Housing,
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To Local Authorities in England

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL TAX SECTION

Council Tax Information Letter – 13 January 2021

Dear Colleague,

Helping care leavers to secure and sustain suitable accommodation is one of the key outcomes in the cross-Government care leaver strategy – Keep on Caring. Local authorities will be aware of the Department for Education's [guidance on applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers](#). This stresses the importance of joint working in supporting care leavers. In many cases this will involve collaboration between children's services, housing, and other specialist services to ensure that suitable support is in place.

Revenues and benefits teams will also be aware that they can support vulnerable groups to help manage their council tax liabilities. Many authorities offer council tax reductions to care leavers. When local authorities choose to provide reductions, this should be set out in their Local Offer for care leavers.

Care leavers generally live independently at a much younger age than their peers, and often become responsible for their finances without a family support network to rely on. As a result, 40% of care leavers are not in education, employment or training, and many are at risk of financial vulnerability and often have problems with debt and arrears.

Many local authorities offer a council tax reduction for care leavers in their area to provide immediate financial assistance and to help reduce the risk of debt. Authorities may also wish to consider whether a council tax reduction should "follow" a care leaver, if they move to a different area.

In November, the National Implementation Advisor for Care Leavers' published his [second report](#). The document highlights the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum's Local Offer Toolkit. This is a useful tool for authorities to explore best practice across the country and the wide variety of approaches that are already being taken. These Local Offers can make a significant difference to the relationships with local authority workers and the outcomes for care leavers.

If you have any comments or queries on this subject, please contact the Department at: council.tax@communities.gov.uk.