



Northumberland

County Council

Your ref:

Our ref: DBR FORM/

Enquiries to: Council Tax Section

Email: counciltax@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: (01670) 624884

Date:

Dear

Council Tax – Disabled Band Reduction Scheme

The amount of Council Tax you pay may be reduced if there is a disabled person living in your household. The reduction that can be granted is equivalent to re-banding your property into the next lowest valuation band. For example, a property in Band C would be charged the Council Tax for Band B. Properties in Band A are given a reduction equivalent to one ninth of the amount normally payable. The reduction can only be granted if your property has one or more of the following facilities. The facilities must be essential or of major importance to the well-being of the disabled person because of the extent of their disability.

A room used predominantly by the disabled person

The fact a disabled resident uses a room will not in itself lead to a reduction, only if it is a room specifically to meet the needs of the disabled resident. This must be a room that is not a kitchen, bathroom, lavatory or a bedroom in normal use. For example, the room may be used for housing a dialysis machine or other special equipment; it may be a downstairs room taken out of normal domestic use or a room used for therapy or special treatment.

There must be a causal link between the resident's disability and the use of the room.

A second bathroom or kitchen

An extra bathroom or kitchen, which is essential, or of major importance, to the well-being of the disabled person because of the extent of their disability.

Space to use a wheelchair

Where space has been allowed for the disabled person to use a wheelchair indoors.

continued overleaf

If you wish to apply for a disabled reduction in your Council Tax, please complete the enclosed form and return it to us. **Please read the guidance notes prior to making your application.** It may be necessary for us to visit your home, and it would be helpful if you provide a daytime telephone number for us to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Council Tax Section

**APPLICATION FOR
DISABLED BAND REDUCTION**

Date of Issue: 13 July 2022

Acct. Ref: DBR FORM/

Name of disabled person:			
Date of Birth			
Nature of Disability:			
Address:			
Date disabled resident moved in:		Date disabled facilities first used:	

The following facilities are essential or of major importance to the above named disabled person because of the nature of their disability (please tick all boxes that apply)

A room used predominantly by the disabled person:

A second bathroom or kitchen

Space to use a wheelchair indoors by the disabled person

Please explain below how the room is used by the disabled resident to meet their needs.

DECLARATION

I declare that the disabled person named above is solely or mainly resident in the property and that the information given is correct to the best of my knowledge and

Signed:			
Full Name:			
Date:			
Daytime Telephone Number:			

Please complete and return this form to the address below.

Guidance Notes

Disabled Band Reduction is based on an assessment of the property. It is not an assessment of the disabled person themselves. It is based on how the property is used and any adaptations that may have been made.

Once we receive your application you will be contacted by one of our visiting officers who will arrange a convenient time to visit the property and compose a report. Ideally this will be when the disabled resident is present, but this is not mandatory. The visiting officer does not make the decision on whether the Disabled Band Relief will be awarded; this is done by a senior officer within the Council Tax team.

Should you be successful in your application you will receive a revised Council Tax bill showing the reduction. Should you be unsuccessful you will receive a letter advising of this decision and the reasoning behind it.

Should a significant backdating of the relief be requested evidence of the existence of the facilities will be required. Failure to supply a date that the disabled facilities were first used, or suitable evidence to support a backdated application, will result in successful applications being awarded from the date of application

Case Law

Howell Williams v Wirral Borough Council (1981)

A disabled resident applied for relief in respect of their living room that contained a night storage heater that was needed because of the resident's disability.

This was rejected as the resident needed a living room in the same way anybody, disabled or not, would need a living room as part of everyday life.

R (Sandwell MBC) v Perks & West Mids VT (QBD) 2003

An application was made for relief in respect of a downstairs living room that was used as a bedroom by a disabled resident. This was rejected by the High Court as there was no causative link between the disability and the use of the room.

It is therefore unlikely that your application will be successful if;

- the room is only one of a number equally available in the house for the use of the disabled person
- the use is not intrinsically linked to the room but to items (such as heating, hearing loop or washing/bathing equipment) which could just as well be accommodated in other rooms in the house
- the use of the room by the disabled person does not interfere with its normal use by other members of the household. For example, a bed in a living room would not qualify if the room also continued to be used as a living room.