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Are you a council tax payer whose home has been affected by recent flooding? If so, you could be entitled to claim a discretionary reduction to your council tax from your local authority.

The Benefit Legal Group has produced an easy-to-follow guide to claim this discretionary reduction of your council tax bill from your local authority. This entitlement is found in regulation 13 A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 *. It was enacted by parliament precisely to assist victims of the floods in 2000, and since been extended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

The Benefit Legal Group's online, step-by-step guide explains how to collect the necessary evidence to make a claim and provides a downloadable pro forma letter to send to your local council tax office requesting the discretionary reduction. The plain English guide also explains what to do if your claim is rejected and how to appeal.

A spokesperson for the Benefit Legal Group said: "Any Council Tax payer affected by flooding is entitled to apply for a discretionary reduction to their Council Tax bill from their local authority. We hope that local authorities will act reasonably in considering such applications and that these reductions will be granted to those who need help. A discretionary reduction to council tax bills will offer an immediate and practical solution to those in financial hardship, or lacking home contents insurance."

The spokesperson further added: "Brought in after the floods of 2000, regulation 13 A (1) (c), allows anyone affected by flooding to request a reduction of all or part of their council tax bill and thereby potentially save themselves hundreds of pounds. This can then be used to make good flood damage or replace damaged property."

Notes for editors

The Benefit Legal Group is an unincorporated charitable trust established in November 2013. It provides up to date, on-line specialist legal advice in order to support those helping the elderly, sick, vulnerable or the poor, who need to claim different kinds of benefits. It is not affiliated to any political party, but is sponsored by *the Pavement* magazine and Nucleus Legal Advice Centre in Earl's Court.

Benefit Legal Group web-site is: <http://benefitslegalgroup.org.uk/>

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*As inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012.