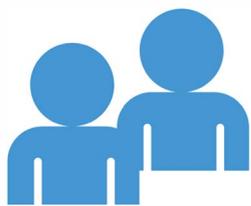


COUNCIL TAX FRAUD

Council tax is a vital source of income for local authorities that pays for frontline services and supports those in need. Residents may be eligible for discounts or exemptions on their liability, for example if they are the sole adult resident or are in full-time education. Fraud can occur when those not entitled to a reduction deliberately put in a false application for a discount or exemption, or when there is a change in circumstance that they fail to tell the council about. The most common discount is Single Person Discount which can only be claimed when a sole occupant lives in the property.

How does fraud occur?



More than one adult living at the address



Discounts on multiple homes



Married couples claiming Single Person Discount

In 2017, an investigation led to a North Yorkshire resident being prosecuted for what may be the longest running council tax fraud in the country. Over a 17 year period, the man misled the council into believing that he lived alone when he in fact lived with his wife. He was reported to the counter fraud team after being heard bragging about his gains. Pleading guilty at court, the council were able to recover nearly £5,000 in unpaid council tax. [Click here to read about the case](#)

Other types of council tax fraud include cases where someone is claiming Single Person Discount at multiple properties. This is against the rules, as the person receiving the discount must be resident in the property to be eligible. Fraud can also occur where married couples claim Single Person Discount at more than one property, as only one residence is considered to be the 'marital home'. To find out more about this, visit your local authority's website.

Councils take part in a number of local and national exercises to help uncover fraudulent discount claims. One exercise conducted by Veritau in 2018 found that a woman was living with her daughter and claiming Single Person Discount in her name. This was the first case of its kind to be discovered through a data matching exercise, which compared records from multiple sources and revealed that a second individual was linked to a property which had the discount applied. The case concluded with the woman pleading guilty to fraud and paying back the discount, plus a fine.

If you suspect someone is committing council tax fraud, get in touch.

Want to know more about using data analytics to fight fraud? [Click here](#)



Veritau works on behalf of several local authorities in North Yorkshire and acts as their counter fraud provider. Please report all fraud to:

0800 9179 247
Confidential fraud hotline

