

# COUNCIL TAX SUMMONS NOTES FOR GUIDANCE



## **Why have I been sent a Summons?**

Council records show that you were sent a Council Tax bill requiring payment by instalments on specified dates. You were then sent a reminder informing you that one or more instalments were overdue, and warning you that you would lose your right to pay by instalments unless a payment was made within 7 days. As you have not made a payment this right has now been withdrawn.

The enclosed summons is for the full amount of Council Tax outstanding for the year, together with the council's recovery costs incurred to date of £92.50.

## **Joint and several liability**

If the Council's records show that you are jointly liable for the tax, a summons has been issued for the full amount to each member of the household who is liable for the council tax. Please note the amount outstanding should be paid only once.

I strongly recommend that you read this notice and discuss with all other liable persons the action you now need to take in response to this summons.

## **What if I paid recently?**

If you have already paid all outstanding instalments before receiving the summons you should contact the Council Tax Service as shown at the end of this notice immediately. If, for any reason the summons is subsequently withdrawn by the council, please ensure that all future instalments are paid by the due date.

## **What if I wish to dispute the issue of the summons?**

If you wish to dispute the issue of the summons for any other reason than recent full payment, please write to this office quoting your Council Tax number and Summons number as shown on the front of the summons:

Council Tax Service  
Wandsworth Council  
P.O. Box 65962  
London SW18 9HN

Alternatively, you can contact the Council by email: [counciltaxsummons@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:counciltaxsummons@wandsworth.gov.uk)

## **What if I am awaiting the outcome of an appeal regarding an application for a discount/exemption, entitlement to council tax benefit etc?**

If your case is the subject of any appeal, this fact cannot be considered in respect of this summons, and cannot be used as a defence in any dispute over payment with the council. At the same time, the possible outcome of an appeal will not affect the recovery of Council Tax currently outstanding. You are obliged to continue to pay your original Council Tax bill until the outcome of your appeal has been decided. If your appeal is successful, you may be entitled to a refund of any overpaid tax.

## **What will happen at the Magistrates court?**

If you attend court, the staff there will direct you to the court-room where the application is to be heard. Every effort will be made to ensure the application is dealt with on the date specified in the summons. However, if there is insufficient time for it to be heard that day you will be given details of the date and time when you are next required to attend court.

## **What will happen next?**

If the court decides that you are liable for the Council Tax, and that you are required to pay the full amount outstanding, it will grant the council a "Liability Order".

## **What happens if a Liability Order is granted against me?**

A Liability Order gives the council authority to:

- PASS THE DEBT TO BAILIFFS FOR COLLECTION
- ORDER YOUR EMPLOYERS TO MAKE DEDUCTIONS FROM YOUR EARNINGS
- REQUEST THAT DEDUCTIONS BE MADE FROM YOUR INCOME SUPPORT/JOBSEEKERS ALLOWANCE/EMPLOYMENT & SUPPORT ALLOWANCE
- REGISTER A CHARGE AGAINST YOUR PROPERTY IN THE COUNTY COURT AND REQUEST ITS SALE
- APPLY FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO PRISON
- APPLY TO MAKE YOU BANKRUPT

**THE GRANTING OF A LIABILITY ORDER WILL ALSO INCUR ADDITIONAL COSTS OF £28.00, WHICH YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY.**

## **How can I stop this process?**

Once a summons is issued, the proceedings can only be stopped by making a payment in full, **including costs**. Payments must be received by the council before the date of the court hearing. Details about our methods of payment are given on the reverse of the enclosed summons.

Payments will not be accepted at the court.

## **What if I am unable to pay?**

If you are unable to pay the full amount immediately, please contact the Council Tax Service to discuss your position. Arrangements to pay cannot be discussed on the day of the court hearing.

If you have not already claimed Council Tax Benefit, you may wish to do so now. However, this will not prevent further action on the enclosed summons.

## **Should I attend the court?**

If you feel that you are not liable for the amount shown on the enclosed summons you have the right to attend the court hearing to present your case. However, it is easier, quicker and cheaper to sort out the matter with the Council Tax Service before the hearing.

The court has jurisdiction only to decide whether or not you are responsible for the amount of Council Tax claimed by the council. The court has no power to grant time in which to pay and cannot consider any such request.

## **Enquiries**

Written enquiries should be made to:

Council Tax Service  
Wandsworth Council  
P.O. Box 65962  
London SW18 9HN

Please quote your Council Tax number and Summons number as shown on the front of the summons

**Council Tax Fax Number: 020-8871-8148**

**Email: [counciltaxsummons@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:counciltaxsummons@wandsworth.gov.uk)**

**Website: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/counciltax)**

Request a call back by visiting our website: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/counciltax)

Or text your query to 020 7183 9092 and someone will call you back between 9am-5pm within 2 working days.

**Call 0800 021 7763 (free of charge) and we can accept your debit or credit card payment over the phone 24hrs a day.**