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DRAFT WELSH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2013 No. (W.)**

**COUNCIL TAX, WALES**

**The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Transitional Provisions)  
(Wales) Regulations 2013**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) (Regulations) 2012 (“the prescribed requirements Regulations”) require each billing authority in Wales to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable by persons, or classes of persons, whom the authority considers are in financial need. These schemes will operate from 1st April 2013. The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2012 set out a scheme which will take effect if an authority fails to make its own scheme on or before 31st January 2013.

Persons considered to be in financial need receive council tax benefit to assist them to meet their council tax liability. However, under the provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, council tax benefit will be abolished on 31st March 2013. The reduction schemes which authorities are required to make in accordance with the prescribed requirements Regulations will replace council tax benefit. These Regulations set out the transitional provisions that will apply to persons who are in receipt of, or who have made an application for, council tax benefit when the reduction schemes come into operation (regulations 3 to 6).

The Welsh Ministers’ Code of Practice on the carrying out of Regulatory Impact Assessments was considered in relation to these Regulations. As a result, it was not considered necessary to carry out a regulatory impact assessment as to the likely costs and benefits of complying with these Regulations.

**2013 No. (W. )**

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**The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Transitional Provisions)  
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*Made* - - - - - \*\*\*

*Coming into force in accordance with regulation 1(2)*

The Welsh Ministers make the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred upon them by section 13A(4) of, and paragraph 7 of Schedule 1B to, the Local Government Finance Act 1992(1).

In accordance with section 13A(8) of that Act, a draft of this instrument has been laid before and approved by resolution of the National Assembly for Wales.

**Title, commencement and application**

1.—(1) The title of these Regulations is the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Transitional Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2013.

(2) These Regulations come into force on the day after the day on which there were made and apply in relation to Wales.

**Interpretation**

2. In these Regulations—

“council tax benefit” means council tax benefit under Part 7 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992(2);

“council tax reduction scheme” means a scheme made by a billing authority in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2012(3) or which applies in default in accordance with paragraph 6(1)(e) of Schedule 1B to the Local Government Finance Act 1992;

“relevant decision” has the same meaning as in paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 7 to the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000(4);

“relevant authority” means an authority administering council tax benefit;

“specified day” means the day on which these Regulations come into force;

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(1) 1992 c.14; section 13A was substituted by section 10(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 (c. 17), and Schedule 1B was inserted by section 10(5) of that Act.  
(2) 1992 c. 4; the provisions of Part 7 relating to council tax benefit are repealed by section 147 of, and Part 1 of Schedule 14 to, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c.24). At the time of making these Regulations this repeal has not yet commenced.  
(3) S.I. 2012/3144 (W.316).  
(4) 2000 c.19; the provisions of Schedule 7 relating to council tax benefit are repealed by section 147 of, and Part 1 of Schedule 14 to, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c.24), but at the time of making these Regulations the repeal has not yet commenced.

“suspended” means suspended in accordance with regulation 11 or 13 of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001<sup>(1)</sup>.

### **Transitional provisions**

**3.**—(1) A person who falls within one of the categories of person described in paragraph (2) is deemed to have made an application for a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme on the specified day.

(2) A person referred to in paragraph (1) is a person—

- (a) who is in receipt of council tax benefit on the specified day;
- (b) who made a claim for council tax benefit which is not determined immediately before the specified day;
- (c) whose payments of council tax benefit have been wholly or partly suspended immediately before the specified day;
- (d) other than a person described in sub-paragraphs (a) or (c), who has applied for a revision of a relevant decision by a relevant authority and whose decision in respect of that revision is pending immediately before the specified day;
- (e) other than a person described in sub-paragraphs (a) or (c), who has appealed against a decision of the First-tier Tribunal, the Upper Tribunal or a court in relation to a claim for council tax benefit and whose appeal is pending immediately before the specified day.

(3) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (2)(d) a revision of a relevant decision relating to a claim for council tax benefit is pending if—

- (a) an application for a revision has been made but not been determined;
- (b) the time within which an application for a revision may be made as prescribed in regulations 4 and 5 of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001 has not expired.

(4) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (2)(e) an appeal against a decision relating to a claim for council tax benefit is pending if—

- (a) an appeal against the decision has been brought but not been determined;
- (b) an application for permission to appeal against the decision has been made but not determined; or
- (c) the time within which—
  - (i) an application for permission to appeal may be made; or
  - (ii) an appeal against the decision may be brought,

has not expired and one of the circumstances prescribed in regulations 11(3) of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001 apply.

**4.** A person who makes a claim for council tax benefit on any day during the period beginning on the specified day and ending on the 31st March 2013 is deemed to have made an application for a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme on the same day.

**5.**—(1) Where an application for a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme is deemed to have been made in accordance with regulation 3(1) and—

- (a) on the specified day, the person by whom the application is deemed to have been made is a person to whom paragraphs (10) to (12) of regulation 50 of the Council Tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006<sup>(2)</sup> (change of circumstances in connection with non-dependants) apply; and

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(1) S.I. 2001/1002.

(2) S.I. 2006/216.

(b) the effective date<sup>(1)</sup> for the change of circumstances is a date after 31st March 2013, that application is to be determined as though the change of circumstances has not taken place, but is to be re-determined upon the effective date to take account of the change of circumstances.

(2) Where an application for a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme is deemed to have been made in accordance with regulation 3(1) or 4 and—

(a) on a day in the period beginning with the day after the specified day and ending with the 31st March 2013, the person by whom the application is deemed to have been made becomes a person to whom paragraphs (10) to (12) of regulation 50 of the Council Tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 (change of circumstances in connection with non-dependants) apply; and

(b) the effective date for the change of circumstances is a date after 31st March 2013, that application is to be determined to take account of the person's circumstances on the date the application for a reduction is deemed to have been made, but is to be re-determined upon the effective date to take account of the change of circumstances.

6. Where an application for a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme is deemed to have been made in accordance with regulation 3(1) or 4, the following provisions in a council tax reduction scheme do not apply in relation to that application—

(a) a provision contained in the authority's scheme by virtue of regulation 32(3) of, and paragraph 1(7) of Schedule 13 to, the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2012<sup>(2)</sup>; or

(b) paragraph 107(7) of the scheme prescribed in the Schedule to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2012<sup>(3)</sup>.

*Name*

Minister for Local Government and Communities, one of the Welsh Ministers

*Date*

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(1) "effective date" has the meaning given within regulation 50(12) of the Council tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the age of state pension credit) Regulations 2006.

(2) S.I. 2012/3144 (W.316)

(3) S.I. 2012/3145 (W.317)