

DEBT ADVICE TEAM FACTSHEET

DEBT ADVICE LINE
0121 303 2087



TELEVISION LICENCE

You need a TV Licence to use any television receiving equipment to watch or record TV programmes as they are being shown. These include programmes on the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 plus cable and satellite channels. The equipment can be a TV set, set-top box, DVD or video recorder, computer, mobile phone or other portable device.

A television licence allows the person named on it and any member of their household to use one or more television sets or video recording equipment. You do not need a TV licence to watch catch-up services on the Internet that allow you to watch programmes after they have been broadcast.

If you only have a black and white television, you only need a black and white television licence. If you have at least one colour television, DVD or video recorder, you will require a colour television licence. This applies even if the DVD or video recorder is used with a black and white television.

If you buy or rent a television set, DVD or video recorder, the seller or rental agent is under a legal obligation to notify TV Licensing. It is the licence-holder's responsibility to tell TV Licensing if you move house.

Check with TV Licensing to find out the current rates for colour or black & white TVs. Failure to have a licence can result in a fine of up to £1,000. If you are detected using a TV without a license then your details will be taken and a summons sent to appear in the Magistrates Court. The Magistrate will decide the penalty. However the fine should reflect the income of the non-payer, so it is important to attend the

hearing and to provide proof of income. No one can be imprisoned for licence evasion but if the fine is not paid, then the Magistrates have the power to impose a prison sentence.

USING A TELEVISION SET AWAY FROM HOME

If you have a television set or DVD/video recorder which you use at another address on a temporary basis, for instance at weekends or during holiday periods, you will need a separate licence for that address. This is true even if you already have a licence for a television in your main home.

STUDENTS

If you are a full-time student living away from home, you will usually need a television licence if you have a TV or DVD/video recorder, set top box or computer with a TV card. This applies even if you live in shared accommodation but have a TV in your own room. Students can apply for a refund of an unused portion of their licence. If you have bought a licence at the beginning of the autumn term and do not stay in university accommodation or lodgings over the summer, you are entitled to a refund of any unused quarter of the year.

CONCESSIONS

In some circumstances, viewers may qualify for a concessionary licence.

- **Short Term Licence:** If you are 74 you can apply for a Short Term Licence to cover you until the month of your 75th birthday. At 75 years you become entitled to a free Over 75 Licence.
- If you are blind, you can apply for a Blind Concessionary Licence at 50% of the full licence fee. If you have a sound only receiver, then no licence is required.
- If you live in residential care, you may qualify for a licence at a considerably reduced rate. If you are over 75 and live in a care home then the licence is free.

WAYS TO PAY

Viewers can pay by direct debit, debit or credit card, at a PayPoint, through TV Licensing Payment Card or Savings Card.

PayPoint outlets you can buy or renew your TV Licence, make a payment on your payment card if you have one, or add savings on your savings card. There are 20,000 PayPoint outlets across the UK, usually located in newsagents, local stores, supermarkets and petrol stations.

Payment Card lets you spread the cost of your colour TV Licence. You can pay weekly or monthly.

Savings card is for people who already have a TV Licence and would like an easy way to save for their next licence. You can deposit savings whenever you like. It's free to apply for a card and there is no charge for using it.

CONTACT DETAILS

Customer Services, TV Licensing,
Bristol, BS98 1TL

www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Customer Enquiries: **0300 790 6071**

Direct Debit and credit card payments:
0300 790 6063

Cash Payment Plan: **0300 555 0300**

Saving Card scheme / Over 75 Licence:
0300 555 0281

Licence costs will change over time so it is important to check for up to date information.

The information provided in this factsheet is for guidance only
Before you take any action it is important to seek advice

Debt Advice can be obtained from Birmingham City Council on **0121 303 2087** or ask at your local Neighbourhood Office (please call **0121 303 1111** for your nearest office). You can also visit the Council's website at:
www.birmingham.gov.uk/debtadviceteam

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