# Tax Help for Older People: Paul’s £1,300 tax nightmare

Briefings

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Read Paul’s story to see how Tax Help for Older People can make a real difference to taxpayers on a low income.

Paul came to us stressed, with a high tax bill, and not a clue where to turn. He admitted that he did not understand the letters he was receiving. On our investigation, the tax bill was not the only problem with Paul’s tax.

When a brown letter arrived telling Paul that he owed late filing penalties of £1,300, he had no idea what to do next. Paul is employed but is also in receipt of universal credit, without any spare money at the end of each month. Paul was particularly anxious when it came to using the internet to manage his taxes as four years ago he was scammed and all his money drained from his bank account. Understandably, he did not feel confident enough to log into his HMRC account by himself, worried that he would be scammed yet again.

He phoned Tax Help for Older People and spoke with one of our helpline advisers, telling her about his late filing fee and mentioning that he also believed his tax code was wrong. Paul had previously been self-employed but was unaware that he had to file a tax return for his last year of his self-employment as he had only earned £902.77. This is where his late filing fee had come from.

We submitted an appeal for the penalties and rang HMRC to ask about his tax code. It transpired that Paul's account had been incorrectly merged with someone else's account through no fault of his own. The £1,300 penalty was remitted and Paul's tax code was corrected, leaving him with more take-home pay.

Paul said: 'Thank you so much. I didn't know where to turn and thought I was going to have to pay another accountant to help me to appeal as the form made no sense. Many thanks for your valuable help.'

Thanks to the support of Tax Help for Older People, Paul is now in a much better situation. He is not worried about paying a tax bill that he cannot afford, he has a clearer understanding of his own tax situation, and thanks to his corrected tax code he now has more money to take home at the end of each month. This is the difference that tax advice can make, even to those on a low income.

## Tax Help for Older People

We are a charity providing expert tax help to people over 60 who are on a low income. If you would like to support our work, you can make a one-off or regular donation at: https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/18218

Or visit our website at taxvol.org.uk to find out more about what we do.