

Rates Refunds at the eThekweni Municipality

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INTRODUCTION

Have you recently gone through the process of selling your property and in doing so, had to pay for rates clearance figures? If so, the eThekweni Municipality probably asked you to make payment of 3 to 6 months' worth of projected figures, in order to cover its charges for the time period of your transfer. (This is obviously excluding any amounts that you owed the eThekweni Municipality due to arrear figures). Did your transfer then register before the 3 to 6 month period came to an end? Then surely, you should be refunded the amounts that you overpaid the eThekweni Municipality to get your rates clearance figures, because you paid for a period longer than the transfer of the property took. This amount that would be due to you, is called a "refund" in this article.

It is quite a dreadful experience having to go to the municipality and stand in long queues to query a dispute let alone having to navigate the municipality's procedures, particularly when it comes to issues like refunds. Knowing the process and what information is required can speed up the process, lower your blood pressure and guarantee that you have your refund in your bank account ASAP. To help you save time and effort, this article will hold your hand as we take you on the roller-coaster journey of requesting your rates refund from the eThekweni Municipality.

In order to apply for a refund at the eThekweni Municipality, you need to:

1. Complete the refund application form that is available on the website;
2. Attach all the required documents as listed on the form. The documents that are required are as follows (and should all be readily available):
 1. If the account is held by a Legal entity, the company's banking details must be on an authorised company letterhead,
 2. A cancelled cheque,
 3. A bank statement or letter from the bank confirming the details.
 4. If the account is held by an individual, a certified copy of the ID is required.

3. You can submit the form online through the eThekweni Municipality's eServices portal alternatively, you can email refunds@ethekwini.gov.za.

It is important to note that even though the municipality has provided the above email address, from our own experience the above email address does not work. We have had to direct our refund applications to MwBillingT1@durban.gov.za, Sizakala.Pinetown@durban.gov.za and Billing.Team5@durban.gov.za.

Refunds are typically processed via electronic funds transfer (EFT) to ensure secure and timely payments. Remember that there are no fees charged when applying for a refund.

If you have any issues or do not receive your refund within the specified timeframe, you can follow up with the Refunds Department using the methods as listed below.

If you feel like having a telephonic conversation, you can contact the Refunds Department on 031 311 2222.

You can email the municipality, remember emails provide a record of your communication. So, if you have trust issues (like we do) drop them an email on refunds@ethekwini.gov.za however, as mentioned above this email is as dead as a rock. It is best advised to use one of the above mentioned email addresses.

You can also pop in at their office if you prefer face to face interaction at 75 Dr. Langalibalele Dube St, Durban, 4001, just don't expect coffee - but a long wait.

Remember that the period for processing a refund varies, typically, it can take between 4 to 6 weeks. When you are querying your refund application ensure that you have all your necessary documents on hand to avoid running around like a headless chicken and take a lot of patience with you.

If none of the above methods yield any results for you and you still do not get your refund after following up on your refund queries, you will have to lodge a formal dispute with eThekweni Municipality and follow that to completion in order to get your refund. If all else fails you can approach a court for assistance in this regard. If you want more information on how to lodge a formal dispute with eThekweni Municipality, follow the below link to our article that deals more fully with this aspect: [How to Lodge a Billing Dispute in eThekweni and an Analysis of the Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy - HBGSchindlers Attorneys, Conveyancers & Notaries](#)

We hope that the above assists you in navigating this process, but if all else fails, please feel free to contact us, or any other attorney with experience in fighting the good fight against municipalities, for assistance with your refund application (and make this headache someone else's problem).



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