

How will you pay the DHP if my application is successful?

Your DHP will either be paid with the Housing Benefit that you already get or by a separate cheque or BACS payment.

If you rent from the Council then any payment would be made direct to your rent account.

If the award of the DHP is for help towards your Council Tax then payment will be made direct to your Council Tax account.

What if I disagree with the decision about my DHP application?

If you disagree with our decision either not to award a DHP, the amount awarded or the period of the award, you can ask us to look at our decision again.

Write to us within one month of the date on your decision letter telling us why you do not agree with the decision.

Other leaflets available:

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- ▶ 2 Non-dependant deductions
- ▶ 3 Overpayments
- ▶ 4 Extended payments
- ▶ 5 Understanding our Decision and Making an Appeal
- ▶ 6 Benefit on two homes
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Housing & Council Tax Benefit



Discretionary Housing Payments

Leaflet also available in large print

Introduction

This guide is one of a number produced with the aim of helping customers understand Housing and Council Tax Benefit.

It is intended as a general guide. People have different circumstances so for more detailed individual advice please contact your local Council's Benefits Service.

What are Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)?

If you are getting Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit but still find it difficult to pay your rent and/or Council Tax, you may be able to get extra help towards your housing costs in the form of a Discretionary Housing Payment.

DHPs are not benefit payments. They are paid in addition to your benefit and are based on your circumstances.

Who can apply for a DHP?

You can apply for a DHP if you are already receiving Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit and that benefit does not cover the full amount of your rent or Council Tax liability.

What DHPs cannot pay for

DHPs cannot pay for the services included in your rent like fuel, water, electricity, or arrears of rent and Council Tax.

How do I apply?

Contact your local Council's Benefits Service for an application form.

What information do I need to put on the application form?

Answer all of the questions on the form giving as much information as you can. Tell us in your own words why you need additional help to meet your rent or Council Tax.

Use another sheet of paper if you need to.

Tell us about any exceptional or unusual circumstances you have. You may wish to provide evidence to support your application, for example, a letter from your doctor.

Tell us about your weekly income and your weekly expenditure. We may ask you to provide evidence of your expenses and debts.

Sign the declaration and return the form with any supporting evidence to your local Council's Benefits Service without delay.

How long does a DHP last for if my application is successful?

The length of award will vary depending on your circumstances.

You will be notified of how long your DHP has been awarded for (if your application is successful). DHPs are awarded for a limited period only to give you time to ease your financial circumstances.

When a DHP award ends you can reapply but account may be taken of any efforts you have made since your earlier application, to ensure you can meet your housing costs yourself.



How much will the DHP be?

If you are awarded a DHP the amount you get will depend on your circumstances and the reason it has been awarded.

It cannot be higher than the difference between your rent, less any services, and your benefit entitlement.