



A CLAIM FOR

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

Claim Ref:

SECTION 1 INFORMATION

If you are getting Housing Benefit, Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and/or Council Tax Benefit but you are still having problems meeting your rent or council tax payments, you may be able to get extra help.

What are Discretionary Housing Payments?

Discretionary Housing Payments are considered where the Authority is satisfied there is an additional need to meet housing costs. There is a limited budget for these awards and each case is considered on its own merits. Usually awards are made for a short term, fixed period only, allowing time to seek alternative solutions to financial problems. Discretionary Housing Payments should not be considered as a long term measure or as part of your normal benefit award.

What are housing costs?

'Housing costs' means the amount you have to pay for your rent and Council Tax. But a number of items can't be counted.

These include:

- Parts of rent that are not covered by Benefit, for example, charges for fuel, hot water or meals.
- Charges for water and sewerage.
- Increases in rent due to you paying back rent arrears on top of your normal rent.
- Benefit that has been suspended because you have not supplied information needed to support your claim
- Any reduction in benefit because you did not go to a work-related interview.
- Any reduction or loss of benefit due to Job Seekers Allowance employment sanction.
- Any reduction in benefit due to a Reduced Benefit Direction or because you have not co-operated when arranging maintenance.

We cannot make a Discretionary Payment to meet any shortfall between Second Adult Rebate and your Council Tax liability.

Who can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

To be eligible for a payment, you must be receiving Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, or both. You also have to prove that you need more help with housing costs. You cannot apply if you do not receive Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

If you are getting Housing Benefit but do not get Council Tax Benefit you will not be able to get help with your Council Tax.

If you are getting Council Tax Benefit but do not get Housing Benefit you will not be able to get help with your rent costs. You will not be able to get a Discretionary Housing Payment if your Housing or Council Tax Benefit covers all of your rent or council tax.

How can I apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

Fill in this form and send it to us straight away. You will need to enclose proof of the money you have coming in and going out.

We have a limited budget for Discretionary Housing Payments, so not all applications will be successful.

If the application is filled in by someone acting on your behalf, please make this clear on the form.

How will it be paid?

Payment will be made along with your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit. It will normally start from the Monday following the day we receive your application. Discretionary Housing Payments are paid for at least 1 week.

The Government only allows us a limited amount to spend on this scheme, so not all applications will be successful.

Any extra help given may not be for the full difference between your benefit and your rent or Council Tax and may only be paid for a short period of time.

We cannot make a Discretionary Payment to meet any shortfall between Second Adult Rebate and your Council Tax liability.

These are not benefit payments, although they will be paid in with your Housing Benefit, LHA and/or Council Tax Benefit.

If you disagree with the decision that we make, you have the right to ask for it to be looked at again, but there is no right of appeal to the Tribunal Service.

If you would like to apply for extra help, please complete this claim form and return it to:

The Leicestershire Partnership
Benefits Section
PO Box 10004
Hinckley
LE10 9EJ

Application for a Discretionary Housing Benefit Payment

Please answer all the questions in full, or tick the boxes that apply. Fill in and pull out this form and send it to the address on the back of this leaflet.

SECTION 2 YOUR DETAILS

Surname:

Other names:

Your date of birth:

National Insurance Number:

Home address:

Daytime telephone number:

SECTION 3 INFORMATION TO SUPPORT YOUR CLAIM

What date did you move to this address?

How many bedrooms are there in your home?

1 2 3 4 other

If you have moved within the last 12 months, please state why you left your previous address.

How did you find out about your present home?

Why did you move to this address?

Was there a particular reason for choosing this accommodation?

Do you or any of your family have any disabilities or health problems?

If yes, please give details.

Please tell me if your accommodation is particularly suitable for you (or your family)
For instance, has it been adapted if you have a disability; do you need ground floor accommodation etc?

Please tell me if the area in which you live is particularly suitable for you (or your family)
For instance, do you or any member of your family need to live near a particular nursery, school, hospital or other service?

Did you ask the Council about the level of benefit that you might get before you took on the tenancy?
If yes, how did you expect to meet the shortfall?

Could you afford the rent when you first moved in?
If yes, please tell me how, for example were you working at the time?

If you rent from a private landlord, have you asked the landlord to reduce the rent?
Please tell us what the landlord said.

Has your landlord threatened to evict you for not paying the full rent? Yes No

Have you tried to find alternative, cheaper accommodation? Yes No

If yes, please give details of any accommodation you found, when you found it and why you were not able to move:

Is there any reason why you would not be able to move if you found somewhere cheaper to live?
If yes, please give details.

How much notice would you have to give?

When does your current tenancy end?

Are you registered with any Housing Associations or on the waiting list for a council property?

Yes No

Do you have family or friends who could help you to pay your rent and/or Council Tax?
If yes, please give details.

Do you have any income or savings/investments that you could use to top up your rent or Council Tax payments?

Yes No

If yes, how much could you pay towards the shortfall?

£ a week (rent)

£ a week (Council Tax)

Have you recently been bereaved?

If yes, please state the date and who has died.

Do you have rent or council tax arrears?

If yes, please give details.

If you do not have rent arrears, how have you managed to pay the shortfall up to now?

Do you have any other debts? (HP, loans, fines, credit cards etc)

If yes, please give details.

Have you contacted the Citizens Advice Bureau or a similar organisation to check that you have claimed all the benefit you are entitled to or for debt advice?

Yes No

Have your circumstances changed since you moved to this property, or are they likely to change in the near future?

If yes please give details.

SECTION 4 YOUR INCOME AND OUT-GOINGS

Please give details of the money coming in to and going out of your household.

Household income details	How much?	How often?	For office use only
Take-home pay (claimant)			
(partner)			
self-employed income (claimant)			
(partner)			
Redundancy Payments			
Works pension or annuity			
State Pension/ Pension Credit			
Income Support			
Jobseekers Allowance			
Child Tax Credits			
Working Tax Credits			
Child Benefit			
Incapacity Benefit			
Employment Support Allowance			
Other benefits please state:			
Statutory Sick Pay			
Maternity Pay or Allowance			
Retirement Pension			
Board from people living with you			
Money from friends or family			
Child Support or maintenance			
Total Savings			
Other income (please specify)			
TOTAL			

Household out-goings	How much?	How often?	For office use only
Rent			
Council Tax			
Mortgage			
Electricity			
Fuel (gas, oil and coal)			
Water rates			
Telephone (home)			
Telephone (mobile)			
Travel costs(please give details)			
Maintenance (inc child or CSA)			
Hire purchase and catalogues			
Court fines (please give details)			
Secured loans (please give details)			
Television licence			
Television rental			
Satellite or cable television			
Internet or broadband			
Clothing			
Housekeeping (food & necessities)			
Cigarettes & tobacco			
School meals			
Child care costs			
House insurance			
Life insurance			
Bus or train travel			
Car expenses (fuel, tax, insurance)			
Leisure & social activities			
Medical expenses			
Food/household items			
Other outgoings (please specify)			
TOTAL			

If any of your expenses are unusually high, please tell me why below and send proof of these expenses.

SECTION 5 OTHER INFORMATION

Is there anything else you would like to tell us in support of your application?

SECTION 6 DECLARATION

If you give false information, or you do not tell us information that is relevant, you may be prosecuted.

Declaration

- The information I have given is true and complete
- I authorise the local authority to check the information if they want to.
- I will write and tell you if there are any changes in my circumstances or my household circumstances.
- I understand that my application may not be considered if I do not give all the information you have asked for.

We must protect the public funds we handle and so we may use the information you have given on this form to prevent and detect fraud. We may also share this information, for the same reasons, with other organisations which handle public funds. This information may be given to other departments within the council.

The information may also be used for statistical surveys. This means we may pass this information, in confidence, to the Department for Work and Pensions and agencies working on our behalf.

Do not delay in sending back this form.

You must sign the declaration below:

I have read the declaration and warning above and declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information shown on this form is true and complete

I know that I must let the Council know in writing about any changes to my circumstances which might affect my claim.

Signature:

Date:

What do I do if my circumstances change?

You must tell us as soon as possible if your circumstances change. We may need to change an award of Discretionary Housing Payment if your circumstances have changed. If the change means that you have received money you are not entitled to you may be asked to pay it back.

Examples of changes in income and family circumstances are:

- When Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance stops or starts.
- Change of address.
- Changes in income or savings.
- When someone moves in or out of your home.

This list cannot cover everything. If you don't know if a change in your circumstances will alter your Discretionary Housing Payment, tell us anyway.

What do I do if I do not agree with your decision?

Discretionary Housing Payments are not part of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit scheme, therefore you have no legal right to appeal.

However if you disagree with the decision you can write and ask us to look at your application again. You must contact us within one month of the date on the decision letter, giving the reasons why you disagree. You can phone, write or visit us and ask us to explain the decision. You can also ask us for a written statement of reasons, which will show more information about the decision