

Claim ref:

Property Ref:

Date :

A CLAIM FOR DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP)

SECTION ONE INFORMATION

If you are getting housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit but you are still having problems meeting your rent and council tax payments, you may be able to get extra help.

What are Discretionary housing payments?

Discretionary housing payments (DHP) are considered where the local council 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. 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
- Non-dependant deductions from your housing benefit
- 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 jobseekers allowance employment sanction
- Any reduction in benefit due to a reduced benefit direction or because you have not co-operated when arranging maintenance
- Any repayments of an overpayment deducted from your housing benefit award – in these circumstances we would consider your outgoings and income to reduce the amount you are repaying each week before we would consider a discretionary housing payment

Who can apply for a discretionary housing payment?

To be eligible for a payment, you **must be getting** housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit. You also have to prove that you need more help with housing costs.

If you are getting local council tax support only, you may be able to get help with your council tax through the discretionary discount fund. Please contact the benefits team to request a form.

How do 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.

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

How will it be paid?

If you are getting housing benefit, your discretionary housing payment will be made along with your housing benefit. If you are getting universal credit, we will pay your discretionary housing payment into your bank account.

It will normally start from the Monday following the day we receive your application. Discretionary housing payments are paid for at least one week.

Due to the limited budget allocated by the government each case is considered on its own merits which means that not all applications will be successful.

Any extra help given may not be for the full difference between your benefit and your rent.

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, jobseekers allowance, employment and support allowance or universal credit 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 if I don't agree with your decision?

Discretionary housing payments are not part of the housing benefit scheme - so you have no legal right to appeal.

But 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.

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. Once complete please send the form to Benefits Section, PO Box 10004, Hinckley, LE10 9EF

SECTION TWO YOUR DETAILS

Claim Ref:

Surname:

Other names:

Your date of birth:

National Insurance number:

Home address:

Daytime telephone number:

SECTION THREE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT YOUR CLAIM

What date did you move to this address?

How many bedrooms are there in your home?

One Two Three Four 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?)

Are you applying for a Discretionary housing payment because of the under occupancy rules?

If so, have you contacted your landlord for help?

If you have, was any solution offered such as a move to a suitable property?

Have you looked at taking in a lodger and if not, why?

Have you looked at increasing your hours or finding work?
If not, are there are reasons why not?

If you have other members in your household have you considered asking them to contribute to the shortfall?
If not, why not?

Are you applying for Discretionary housing payment because you are affected by the benefit cap?
If so, how much has your Housing benefit been reduced by?

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?)

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?)

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?
(If yes, please give details.)

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

Yes

No

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

£ a week (rent)

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.)

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 ye, please give details.)

SECTION FOUR 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			
Universal Credit			
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 (including 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 and necessities)			
Cigarettes & tobacco			
School meals			
Child care costs			
House insurance			
Life insurance			
Leisure and social activities			
Medical expenses			
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 FIVE OTHER INFORMATION

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

SECTION SIX HOW YOU WILL BE PAID

If you are receiving housing benefit, your Discretionary housing payment will be paid in the same way.

If you are receiving the housing element of Universal Credit, you can choose whether your Discretionary housing payment is paid to you or your landlord.

You
Your landlord

We pay directly into a bank / building society account. Please provide your / your landlord's account details to pay into.

Name of bank/building society:

Sort Code:

Account number:

Whose name the account is in:

SECTION SEVEN 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.

How will we use your information

Your information will be used so that we can process your claim for housing benefit or council tax support or both. The information provided may also be used in connection with this and any other claim for social security benefits that you have made or may make.

We will give some information to other organisations, such as government departments, local authorities and private-sector companies like banks and other organisations that may lend you money, if the law allows this.

Under Article 6(1) (e) of the General Data Protection Regulations, we are permitted to use data for our tasks; data protection law describes this legal basis for handling your information. It will be used by North West Leicestershire District Council and our partners to deliver and improve services and fulfil our statutory duties. We will not disclose any personal information to any other third parties unless required or allowed to do so by law.

Read more about how we use personal data on our privacy notice page

https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/data_protection_notice or write to the council at: Data Protection Officer, North West Leicestershire District Council, Council Offices, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 3FJ. Telephone: 01530 454763. email: dpo@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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: