

Discretionary Housing Payment factsheet

Extra help with your rent

What is a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)?

If the amount of housing benefit or universal credit you receive is not enough to pay your rent, you can apply for extra help. This help is known as a Discretionary Housing Payment.

Can I apply for a DHP?

To get a DHP, you must already be in receipt of housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit. However, being in receipt of one of these benefits does not guarantee an award, as the DHP scheme has a limited amount of money each year.

What could a DHP cover?

Here are some examples of the circumstances that may enable you to get a DHP:

- Reductions in housing benefit or universal credit where the benefit cap has been applied
- Reductions in housing benefit or universal credit for under occupation when renting from a local authority, a registered housing association or other registered social landlord
- Reductions in housing benefit or universal credit as a result of LHA restrictions
- Rent shortfall to prevent a household becoming homeless whilst exploring housing alternatives

What isn't covered by a DHP?

Here are some examples of things that you can't receive DHP for:

- Council tax payments
- Benefit suspensions
- Housing benefit overpayment recovery
- Job Seeker's Allowance or universal credit sanctions
- Ineligible service charges

How long can I receive DHP for?

A DHP is paid for a short-term period to help you through a specific financial issue. During the period of the award, it is important that you try to help your situation yourself by increasing your income, negotiating a lower rent with your landlord, or moving to a more affordable property.

In certain limited circumstances, such as where your property has been extensively adapted to cater for a disability, longer awards may be considered.

What if I disagree with your decision?

There is no appeal against a DHP decision. If you do not agree with our decision, you may ask us, in writing, to look at it again. Your application will then be reviewed by a panel of senior officers, whose decision will be final.