

APPLICATION FOR A DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT



ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

If you currently receive Housing Benefit, (or a rent housing element of Universal Credit) but still have a shortfall to pay and this causes you hardship, you may be able to get extra help.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are payments to help with housing costs. Housing costs generally means rent.

Housing costs also means help with rent deposits, rent in advance and other lump sums associated with housing needs such as removal costs.

The Government has set limits on how much the Council can spend on these payments, but allows the Council to decide how it will spend this money.

Where help will be given:

The Council can only help with Rent payments where you already receive some Housing Benefit (or a rent housing element of Universal Credit).

This means that you cannot get any help to pay your rent, rent deposits, rent in advance and moving costs if you do not already get Housing Benefit (or a rent housing element of Universal Credit).

We cannot help with some parts of your rent, for instance if meals, heating, hot water or water rates are included.

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot help with Council Tax. If you need help with your Council Tax please call us on 0300 300 8306.

Examples of who we want to help:

The following are examples of the categories of people the Council wants to help:

- People where they or a member of their household is disabled, they have more bedrooms than Housing Benefit (or Universal Credit) allows and
 - a) Their home has been adapted for their disablement needs or
 - b) Due to the nature of their disability they cannot share a bedroom or
 - c) There is an issue related to their disability which makes it difficult to move to a smaller or cheaper property;(by disabled we mean a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and negative affect on their ability to do normal daily activities)
- Foster Carers who have more bedrooms than Housing Benefit (or Universal Credit) allows;
- People fleeing domestic violence;
- Families with children at a critical point in their education;
- Young people leaving local authority care;
- Staying Put Carers with children in care and care leavers respectively;
- Families with kinship care arrangements;
- Families with a child in temporary care who is expected to return home;
- Families with a social service intervention or are part of a Supporting Families Programme;
- Where some one in the household is expecting a baby/to adopt a child and this future change will increase the level of bedrooms Housing Benefit or Universal Credit allows;
- Ex-homeless people being supported to settle in the community;
- People threatened with homelessness;
- People with health or medical problems, particularly where they need to access medical services or support not available elsewhere;
- People with medical conditions who receive informal care which would not be available in a new area;
- Single people under 35 who cannot live in shared accommodation due to an illness or other issue such as HIV;
- Elderly and frail people who have lived in their home for a long time and would find it difficult to establish support networks in a new area;
- People who live near their jobs because they work unsocial hours/split shifts/inadequate public transport;
- People who as a consequence of a move have additional travel to work costs;
- People who need to move to cheaper/smaller accommodation and need help with a rent deposit and/or rent in advance for their new home or lump sum costs associated with the move i.e. removals;
- People who are affected by reductions in Housing Benefit entitlement following changes to Local Housing Allowance rates from April 2011 and need additional time to find cheaper accommodation;
- People who are affected by reductions in Housing Benefit following the April 2013 under-occupancy rules in social housing properties and are actively working with their housing provider to find a smaller home or need additional time to adjust to the change;
- People affected by the Benefit Cap that cannot immediately move into work because of complex challenges such as child protection;
- People, who are not in the aforementioned, however have special circumstances that are such that warrants DHP.

How to apply:

If you want to apply for extra help please fill out the application form. The form will allow you to write down the reasons why you think you need extra help.

If you need help filling in this form please contact us on 0300 300 8306 or you can visit us at any of the offices listed below:

Biggleswade

73 High Street (located within Jobcentre Plus), Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 0JH

Dunstable

Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds. LU6 1LF

Leighton Buzzard

Bossard House, West Street, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 1DA
(Monday, Wednesday & Thursdays only)

Shefford

Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds. SG17 5TQ

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Customer Accounts
Central Bedfordshire Council
Watling House
High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1LF

Please complete this form and return it to the address above.

Your Name	
Your Surname	
Your Address	
	Post Code
Phone Number	
Mobile Number	

Do you need help with your:

- Rent Rent deposit Rent in advance
Overlap of tenancy Moving costs

If you are applying for help with your rent, how long do you anticipate you will need Discretionary Housing Payments?

If you want the Discretionary Housing Payment backdated, please give the date you want it to start.

If you need extra help to pay your rent please explain why. You may find it helpful to look at the list of examples under the section **Examples of who we want to help** detailed on this form. Please give us as much information as possible, such as reasons why you cannot move to cheaper/smaller accommodation and continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.

[Protected when complete]

If you need help for a rent deposit, rent in advance, overlap of tenancy or moving costs please explain what you need and why. You may find it helpful to look at the list of examples under the section **Examples of who we want to help** detailed on this form. Please give us as much information as possible and continue on a separate piece of paper if needed. If you have evidence of the costs please enclose with your application.

Do you have rent arrears or Council Tax arrears?

Yes

No

If yes, please state how much:

Rent	£
Council Tax	£

Please supply proof of rent arrears.

Have you tried to find suitable alternative accommodation?

Please give details if you have looked for cheaper/ smaller properties or if you have asked your landlord to help you move into a property with less bedrooms.

Have you sought any housing advice from the Council's Housing and Homelessness Sections or other organisation?
Please give details here.

If you (or your family) have a physical/mental disability or a health problem please explain what it is here. If you have supporting medical evidence it may be helpful to provide it with your application.

If you have had a previous Discretionary Housing Payment award, what steps have you taken to improve your situation since your last application was granted?

Please use this space to tell us about anything else you feel is relevant to your application. Please continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.

If you would like us to contact your support worker or helper direct, as they may be able to help support your application, please state their name and contact details below:

Name of contact

Address

Telephone number

Email address

Post Code

[Protected when complete]

Financial Assessment

If you have expensive or excessive costs/outgoings, that make it difficult to manage your money, please give details below.

For example, expensive travel to work costs or large bills for extra heating or other costs due to ill health.

COST / OUTGOING FOR:	AMOUNT	MONTHLY OR WEEKLY	REASON FOR EXPENSE OR EXCESSIVE AMOUNT
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		
	£		

Do you have any outstanding debts or loans? (Including credit cards, catalogues etc)

Yes

No

Please provide proof and give details here.

COMPANY or CREDITOR	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING	REPAYMENT OFFER (If any made)
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£

Declaration

Read this declaration carefully before you sign and date it.

- I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete as far as I know and believe.
- I understand that if I knowingly give information that is incorrect or incomplete, I may be liable to prosecution or other action.
- I agree that you will use the information provided to process my claim for Discretionary Housing Payments. You may check some of the information with other sources as allowed by the law.
- I understand that you may use any information I have provided in connection with this and any other claim for state benefits that I have made or may make. You may give some information to other organisations, such as government departments, local authorities and private-sector companies such as banks and organisations that may lend me money, if the law allows this.
- I know that I must let the Council's Customer Accounts Section know straight away in writing about any change in my circumstances, or the circumstances of anyone living with me, which might affect my claim.

Applicant's signature

Name (print name)

Date

If this form has been partly or fully filled in by someone other than the applicant, please complete the following declaration:

As far as possible, I have confirmed with the applicant that the information given on this application is correct and complete and if I knowingly give information that is incorrect or incomplete I may be liable to prosecution or other action.

Signed

Name (print name)

Date

Relationship to applicant

[Protected when complete]