

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)

DHP's are additional payments that can be made to HB claimants who need further help towards their rent and some service charges, over and above their HB award.

DHP's cannot be given for the following:

- service or support charges not eligible for HB
- outstanding rent arrears
- reduction in HB caused by sanctions of other benefits
- when HB payments are suspended
- towards rent if you are only entitled to Council Tax Benefit
- towards your Council Tax if you only get HB
- reductions in HB caused by overpayment recovery

How do I apply for a DHP?

If you have current entitlement to HB and it does not cover your full rent, you can make a claim for a DHP by contacting your local council.

How does the local council decide if I can have a DHP?

The local council will ask you for lot of information to help them make a decision, such as:-

- your total income
- whether you have any savings
- whether anyone else in the house can help financially
- whether you have any loans or debts still to pay
- whether you could rearrange your finances to help the situation
- whether you or your family have any special circumstances like ill health or disability
- whether you have attempted to remedy the situation yourself

If a DHP has been awarded, you will be notified of the amount and the period of the award in the letter. How much you get depends on your circumstances but together with your HB it will not be more than the rent and eligible service charges you pay.

What can I do if I disagree with the decision not to award me a DHP?

If you disagree with the decision either not to award a DHP, the amount awarded or the period of the award, you can ask for the decision to be looked at again. You would need to write to your local council within one calendar month of the date of the decision letter, telling them why you do not agree with the decision.

You cannot appeal to the Tribunals Service if you disagree with a decision not to pay you a DHP.

What if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change, you must tell your local council, in writing. Your DHP will then be looked at again to see if there is a change to the award. If the change means your DHP award is reduced, you might have to pay back some or all of the DHP already paid to you.