

# Extra help with your housing costs

## Discretionary Housing Payment



**Network  
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# Discretionary Housing Payment

**Welcome to our short leaflet guide about claiming extra help to meet your housing costs.**

Councils are given a pot of money each year to help people who qualify for Housing Benefit but are having trouble paying their rent.

So if you're affected by the following:

- Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit is less than your rent
- Benefit Cap or Under Occupancy Charge (Bedroom Tax)
- Rent arrears

**A Discretionary Housing Payment may help you.**



# What can it pay for?

A Discretionary Housing Payment can cover:

- Rent deposits
- Rent in advance
- Rent arrears, but not if you were receiving enough Housing Benefit to pay your rent at the time the arrears built up.
- A shortfall between Housing Benefit or housing element of Universal Credit and your rent, particularly if you are affected by the Benefit Cap or Bedroom Tax.

## How does the council decide?

The council will look at the following considerations:

- You have to pay child maintenance
- You have more bedrooms than you now need because someone has left the home or died and you are currently trying to downsize
- Your benefits have reduced due to the Benefit Cap
- You have to pay legal costs
- Your heating costs are high as you spend a lot of time at home because of sickness or disability
- You have additional travel costs because you travel to a doctor or hospital or you care for a relative or friend
- Your work-related travel costs have increased because you had to move as a result of other benefit changes
- You are likely to become homeless if a payment is not made.

## What doesn't it cover?

- Shortfall between your rent and Housing Benefit due to deductions for living with non dependants
- Shortfall between your rent and Housing Benefit due to deductions for an overpayment of Housing Benefit
- Ineligible service charges

## How can you claim?

You usually have to fill in a special claim form which you can get by contacting your local council.

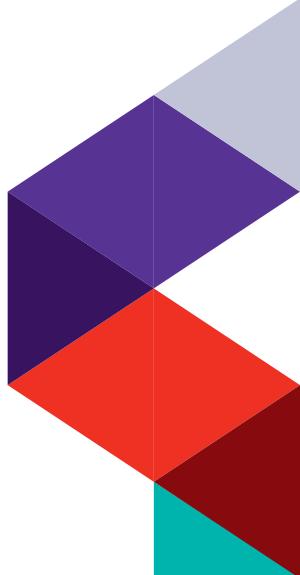
Unlike most benefits though, there is only a limited amount of money for Discretionary Housing Payments given to each council and once the year's pot is used up, no more claims can be made.

## What information should I send with the claim?

You may be asked for details of your income and outgoings. You will need to provide any information about your circumstances that make things difficult for you financially.

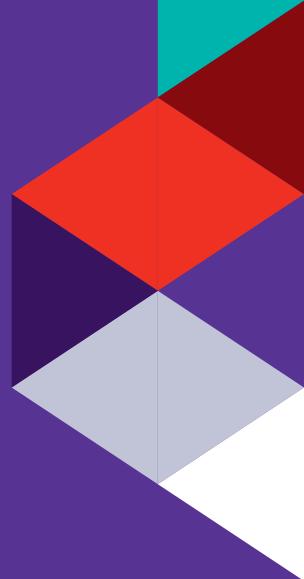
## If I don't get it, can I appeal?

There is no right of appeal to a tribunal, but you can ask your council to have another look at the decision. If this fails, the only other way to challenge the decision is in the courts using a judicial review, but this is often not possible and you would need specialist legal advice which can be costly (legal aid may not be available).



## How can we support you?

Our Welfare Benefit Advice Team can assist you.  
Contact them by email on  
**welfareadvisors@networkhomes.org.uk**



## Need help managing your payments?

Our Income team will be able to help you, please  
email **customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk**

Call any of our teams on **0300 373 3000**

## Where can I get more info?

For further information visit **www.gov.uk**





## Contact us

 by phone on **0300 373 3000**

 online at **[www.networkhomes.org.uk](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk)**

 email **[customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk)**

 in person at our offices:

**Olympic Office Centre, 8 Fulton Road,  
Wembley, HA9 0NU**

**or 36 Ware Road, Hertford, SG13 7HH**

 **@networkhomesuk**

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