

# DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS



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## What are Discretionary Housing Payments?

We can make Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) if we decide someone needs extra help with their rent payments. The payments are in addition to Housing Benefit awards where the claimant does not receive Universal credit. Universal Credit claimants can claim Discretionary Housing Payments, but only where the Department for Work and Pensions has made an assessment of Housing Costs as part of the Universal Credit claim. We only have a certain amount of money to spend on these payments, so this application form will help us to decide if a Discretionary Housing Payment can be made to you.

## Discretionary Housing Payments cannot cover..

- parts of rent that are not covered by Housing Benefit or the Housing Costs assessment of Universal Credit: for example, charges for fuel, hot water or meals;
- charges for water and sewerage;
- increases in rent due to you paying back rent arrears on top of your normal rent;
- Housing Benefit or Universal Credit that has been suspended because you have not supplied information needed to support your claim;
- any reduction in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit because you did not go to a work-related interview;
- any reduction or loss of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit due to employment sanctions imposed by the DWP;
- any reduction in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit due to a Reduced Benefit Direction or because you have not co-operated with the Child Support Agency in arranging maintenance

## Who can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

To be eligible for a payment, you must be receiving Housing Benefit or have an assessment of Housing Costs in your Universal Credit entitlement. You also have to prove that you need more help with your rent payments. **You cannot apply if you do not receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and you will not be able to get a Discretionary Housing Payment if you are already receiving the full amount of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Costs.**

## How can I apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

Fill in the form inside this booklet and send it to us straight away. You will need to enclose proof of the money you have coming in and going out as well as any other evidence to support your request. We only have a limited amount of money for Discretionary Housing Payments, so not all applications will be successful. If the application is filled in by someone acting on your behalf, please make this clear on the form.

## How will the Discretionary Housing Payment be paid?

For Housing Benefit claimants, payment will be made along with your Housing Benefit payment. For Universal Credit claimants we will tell you in writing when you will receive your payment. Your award will normally start from the Monday following the day we receive your application. Discretionary Housing Payments are paid for at least 1 week.

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS ON THIS FORM.**  
**IF YOU MISS ANY QUESTIONS IT WILL DELAY YOUR APPLICATION.**

<b>Title</b>	Mr / Mrs/ Miss/ Ms
<b>Your surname</b>	
<b>All other names</b>	
<b>Your date of birth</b>	/ /
<b>Your National Insurance No.</b>	
<b>Your address</b>	
	Postcode
<b>Contact phone number</b>	

**List all the people who live in the Household with you:**

*(continue on a blank sheet if there are more than 3 other people living in the property with you)*

Name	DOB	Employed/Unemployed/ On benefit/Student	Does this member have a disability? Y/N

**Your Landlord's name and full address**

Postcode

- If someone is helping you to complete this form, please write in the box below their name and their relationship to you. *If they are not your relative, please state who they are and why they are helping you to complete the form.*

.....(name) is helping me to complete this form.

This person is ..... relation to me.

They are helping me to complete this form because:.....

2 Are you currently up to date with your rent? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

2a If **No**, what is the current position of your arrears? **Please provide proof of your arrears when you send in this form to us.**

I am ..... weeks in arrears with my rent.

2b If **Yes**, please state how you have managed to pay your rent.

I have managed to continue paying my rent by.....  
.....

3 If you are a private tenant, have you tried to negotiate with the landlord to lower the rent? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

3a If "**Yes**" please enclose proof that the landlord refuses to lower the rent

4 If we award you a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), what steps will you take to meet your rent payments in the future? \* **Please note DHP payments are short-term awards.**

I will .....  
.....

5 If you are a tenant of a Housing Association or a Registered Social Landlord have you asked if you can move to a smaller property if you are said to be under-occupying your home? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

5a If **Yes**, please provide written evidence from your Landlord to show how often you have placed bids on other properties which are smaller than your current home.

6 If you are a tenant of a Private Landlord (i.e not a Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord tenant) have you tried to find another home that is cheaper? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

6a Please give details in the box below of how successful you have been in looking for another cheaper home to move into:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# Financial Statement

<b>Income</b>	<small>(please tick)</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly	<b>Expenditure</b>	<small>(please tick)</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly	
<b>Wages/Salary</b>	£	<b>Housing Costs</b>	£ (current)	£ (arrears)
Your take home pay		Rent		
Partner's take home pay		Mortgage		
Other eg bonus/overtime		Secured Loan		
<b>Benefits</b>		Council Tax		
Housing Benefit		Ground Rent/Service Charge		
Council Tax Reduction		House Content/Building Insurance		
Jobseeker's Allowance		<b>Utilities</b>		
Employment and Support Allowance		Gas		
Child Benefit		Electric		
Child Tax Credit		Water/Sewerage		
Working Tax Credit		Coal and other fuels eg bottled gas		
Universal Credit		<b>Housekeeping</b>		
Maternity pay/allowance		Food general household items		
Bereavement benefits		Clothing		
Statutory Sick Pay		Subscriptions		
Incapacity Benefits		Cigarettes/Alcohol		
Carers Allowance		Laundrette		
Disability Living Allowance (Care)		Children		
Disability Living Allowance (Mobility)		Childcare		
Personal Independence Payment		School meals/trips		
Industrial Injuries Benefit		Nappies/baby items		
Attendance Allowance		Pocket Money		
<b>Pensions</b>		<b>Other Important items</b>		
State Retirement Pension		Court fines/loans		
Occupational Pension		Maintenance		
Private Pension		Life assurance		
Annuity		HP/conditional sale		
War Pension		TV licence		
Partner's Pension		Telephone (mobile)		
Pension Credit Guaranteed		Telephone (home)		
Pension Credit Savings		<b>Travel</b>		
<b>Other Income</b>		Fares (eg taxi/bus)		
Maintenance		Car running costs		
Student grant/loan		Car loan		
Income from lodgers/property		<b>Health</b>		
Son's/Daughter's contribution		Prescriptions		
Shares/Dividends		Care costs/special needs		
Other Income (please specify)		<b>Other Expenditure</b>		
		TV/satellite/Broadband		
		Loans/catalogues		
		Benefit overpayment/social fund loan		
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>Total Expenditure</b>		
<b>Total Savings/Balances on all accounts held</b>				

**Please note: to validate your income and expenditure, we require the last month's statements for all the accounts that you and your partner hold.**

Please use this space to tell us about any other income or outgoings you have.

.....

.....

**7** If you have received a DHP award from us in the last 12 months, tell us what steps you have taken to improve your financial situation since your last application was granted. Eg, how have you reduced your outstanding debts or other outgoings?

.....

.....

**8** Could you move if you were not able to pay your rent? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

**8a** If **"No"**, please say why not.

I cannot move out of my home because.....

.....

**9** Are all members of your household in good health? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

**9a** If **"No"**, please give details and provide supporting medical evidence.

.....

.....

**10** Have you received any assistance from organisations such as Citizens Advice, Money Advice and Pensions Service, Stepchange or another welfare benefit advice organisation to check that you have claimed all the benefits and received debt advice you are entitled to? **Yes / No** (delete as applicable)

**10a** I have contacted.....  
for help with my benefits and income.

Do you consent to us referring you to Citizens Advice for support? Tick Box if Yes

**11.** Please give any other information that you think supports your application. Continue on a separate sheet if you need to.

.....

.....

.....

## Declaration and warning

If you give false information, or you do not tell us information that is relevant, you may be prosecuted under the Theft Acts 1968 and 1978 or the Social Security Act 1992.

### 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's 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. We may also share the information, for the same reasons, with other organisations which handle public funds. This information may be given to other departments within the Council.

The information may also be used for statistical surveys. This means we may pass this information, in confidence, to the Department for Work and Pensions and agencies working on our behalf.

**Do not delay in sending back this form, otherwise we may not be able to help you.**

### You must now sign the following declaration:

I/We have read the declaration and warning above and declare that to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, the information shown on this form is true and complete.

Your signature ..... Date .....

Your partner's signature ..... Date .....

## What do I do now?

- 1) Make sure you have answered every question and given details of all of your income and outgoings.
- 2) Make sure you (and your partner, if you have one) have read and signed the **Declaration** on the previous page.
- 3) Enclose with this form proof of your income and outgoings. If we don't already have the details on our records we will write to you and ask you more about them.
- 4) Send your completed form and evidence to us, either in person to one of our Customer Service Centres, by email to us at [benefits@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk), or by post to the address on the next page.

## 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/Job Seekers Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit stops or starts
- Change of address
- Changes in income or savings
- When someone moves in or out of your home

This list does not cover everything. If you don't know if a change in your circumstances will alter your Discretionary Housing Payment, tell us anyway.

## What do I do if I do not agree with your decision?

Discretionary Housing Payments are not part of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit regulations. Therefore, you have no legal right to appeal.

However, 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 our 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.

**You can write to us at:**

East Staffordshire Borough Council

Benefits Team  
PO Box 8045  
Burton upon Trent  
Staffordshire  
DE14 9JG

**You can e-mail us at:**

[benefits@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)

**You can telephone us on:**

01283 508422

For independent advice contact:

***Citizens Advice Mid Mercia  
114 Church Street  
Church Gresley  
Swadlincote  
Derbyshire  
DE11 9NR***

***Tel: 0300 330 9002***

*You can also get free debt advice online from the Money Advice Service at*

[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

[www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

[www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

*This is a free and impartial advice service set up by the Government.*