

## Discretionary Housing Payments Guide

Discretionary Housing Payments help people receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (which includes a housing element for rent) who need extra assistance with their housing costs. Councils have a limited amount of money to make these payments and can only make payments to those in greatest need.

### Extra help with rent

- **Help to pay a rent shortfall**

If your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (which includes a housing element for rent) does not cover all your rent, and you cannot afford to pay the difference, you may be able to get extra help.

Payments can be made if you have:

- Financial need, and
- Exceptional circumstances

- **Financial Need**

If you cannot afford the shortfall they will consider all your and your partner's income and capital. This includes some income that is for special circumstances such as Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

They will then compare this total income with reasonable weekly expenses and decide if you do not have enough money left to pay the rent shortfall.

- **Exceptional Circumstances**

If you show you have financial need, they will then consider if you have exceptional circumstances. They will look at your personal details and those of your family. They will consider how your family would be affected if you had to move, or if because of some special need you have higher expenses than others. They will consider all the information you give.

### Extra help for those starting work

People coming off benefits to start work may get 4 weeks' extra help with their Housing Benefit. Councils may consider giving a similar payment from Discretionary Housing Payments for people not entitled to help from this scheme.

### How do I claim a Discretionary Housing Payment?

If you want to claim extra help with your rent, contact your local Council's Benefit Service.



### **How will the Council decide if I can get extra help?**

They will look at the amount of money you have coming in and your usual expenses and any special circumstances. This is because they only have a limited amount of money so we will only be able to pay those who are in most need. It is therefore important that you complete the application form in full and tell them about all your expenses and the reasons you need extra help.

### **Can payments be backdated?**

Councils can sometimes backdate Discretionary Housing Payments. You will need to ask for your payments to be backdated, and give good reasons for not claiming earlier.

### **What can I do if you decide not to give me any extra help?**

We will tell you about our decision and the reason for it. If you are unhappy with the decision, please contact us within one month. We will look at our decision again.

### **How long will I get the extra help for?**

Discretionary Housing Payments to help with rent are normally only paid for a short period, for example 6 months. If you still need help after your payments end, it is likely you will need to reapply.

### **Who can I talk to at Cadwyn about Discretionary Housing Payments ?**

Our Financial Inclusion Team will be able to speak with you about Discretionary Housing Payments. Get in touch with them on 029 2049 8898 or email [FITeam@cadwyn.co.uk](mailto:FITeam@cadwyn.co.uk).

