



Discretionary Housing Payment Application Form

Please give as much detail as you can in order for us to consider your application. If you need help with this form, please contact the Benefits Division either by phone or visit us at the Civic Offices in Epping where a member of staff will be happy to help you. If you do not fully complete this form your claim for Discretionary Housing Payment may be delayed. If you are sick, elderly or housebound and are unable to get to the Civic Offices, our visiting officer can call at your home and help you with the form and any relevant proof to support your claim. If you require this service or have any queries regarding this form please phone 01992 564000 and ask for Benefits.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

This is important as we may wish to contact you about information you have provided.

National Insurance Number: _____

Section One Details about your tenancy

Please tell us the exact date you moved into this property.

Did you ask for a pre-tenancy determination before you moved into this property?

If not why? Or if you knew there would be a shortfall in your rent why did you take the tenancy?

How often is your rent due? (weekly/monthly/fortnightly)

Were you able to afford the rent without having benefit, when you moved into the property?

Do you have rent arrears?

Yes

No

If you have rent arrears, please state how much:

(we will need to see proof of your rent arrears from your landlord)

Please tell us the date your tenancy agreement ends

Did you pay a deposit when you took up the tenancy

Yes

No

If yes, how much, and was this your own money, borrowed or gift etc.,

Do you have a guarantor for your tenancy?

Yes

No

If yes, has your situation been discussed with them, can he/she help you? If not why not?

Section Two

Details about your weekly expenses

We need to know how much money you spend on your weekly living expenses. Please give as much detail as you can on the breakdown of your expenses in this section and provide proof of these costs where possible.

Do you have any debts/loans/HP arrangements/outstanding fines or owe any money

Yes

No

If yes please give details

(we will need to see proof)

Section Four

Details about paying your rent

Have you asked your Landlord to reduce your rent?

Yes

No

What was your landlords reply?

Please give details here of anything you have done to help to pay the shortfall in your rent:

we need to know what steps you have taken to be able to pay the shortfall in your rent, for example have you spoken to your landlord about reducing your rent? Could anyone living with you pay towards the rent? Do you have any friends or relatives who could help?

Please give details here of anything you have done to find cheaper alternative accommodation:

we need to know what steps you have taken to find cheaper alternative accommodation. For example, have you been looking for cheaper accommodation since knowing that Housing Benefit would not meet the full rent? How many properties have you looked at, what type of properties, how much was the rent and why did you not take them? Do you have any friends or relatives that could provide you with accommodation?

If you have not looked for alternative accommodation please explain why not.

Has your landlord started any eviction process?

Yes

No

If yes, have you received an eviction notice?

Yes

No

(we will need to see proof of this)

What type of accommodation did you live in before moving into this property?

(i.e. Local Authority, Private Tenancy, owned property, lived with family etc.) and why did you move?

Please give as much detail as possible of any reasons why you could not move to cheaper alternative accommodation:

for example; health or disability restrictions, your children's education or child care placement, family care obligations, any other commitments etc.,

Section Five Your personal circumstances

We need as much information as possible to be able to decide whether to award Discretionary Housing Payment. Please give details here of why you need help with your housing costs, including anything you feel may be relevant to your application and provide any supporting evidence or official documentation you can to support your application.

Can you make up any of the shortfall yourself?

Yes

No

If you can, how much per week can you pay?

Are there any reasons why this property is particularly suitable for you?

For example have any adaptations been made to help you and your family? Is it suitable because of health reasons or location?

Are there any reasons as to why you consider it unreasonable to expect you to move to cheaper alternative accommodation? Yes No

If yes, please explain your reasons

DECLARATION - Please read this declaration carefully and then you and your partner must both sign it before returning this form to us.

This is my application for a Discretionary Housing Payment and I authorise the Council to make enquires necessary to verify the information on this form. I understand that you may contact or exchange information with other departments and agencies within the Council, Government and Local Authorities. I will contact you straight away if there are any changes in my circumstances or those of anyone living in the property, or if the information on any letter or notification you send me is incorrect. I understand that any changes in my circumstances or those of anyone living in the property with me may result in an overpayment of Discretionary Housing Payment must be paid back to the Council. I understand that if I am overpaid Discretionary Housing Payment on my Council Tax it will be added back to my Council Tax Account for which I will be liable to pay.

I have read and understand this declaration and confirm that the information on this form is true and complete.

Your signature

Partners signature

Date: _____

Date: _____

If someone else has filled in this form on your behalf, they must complete the following:

Name and Address of person who filled in the form:

Their relationship to you: _____

Telephone number in case we need to contact them: _____

Signature of person who filled in the form: _____

Date: _____

We will write to you and tell you our decision on your application for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

Discretionary Housing Payments

Do you need help with your Housing costs? Do you have a shortfall in the amount of Housing and Council Tax Benefit and your eligible rent and council tax? If so, please read this leaflet.

This leaflet will tell you what a Discretionary Housing Payment is. It contains a form to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment. It will also give you information on how we will deal with your application.

What are Discretionary Housing Payments?

- Discretionary Housing Payments are a limited pot of money the Council has.
- The Council may award a Discretionary Housing Payment to people who can show that they really need help with their housing costs.
- Because there is a cash limit it is necessary for the council to look at your needs to decide whether to pay you a Discretionary Housing Payment.
- Once the Discretionary Housing Payment funds are gone, the Council will not be able to award any further payments even if your case is very deserving.
- The Council receives a cash limit each financial year, it is at the Council's discretion who to award and how much.
- There is no right to a Discretionary Housing Payment in law, as it is not an award of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.
- Discretionary Housing Payments do not cover ineligible service charges (i.e. water rates, fuel, heating, lighting etc.),
- You must already be in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit in order to qualify.

In special circumstances you may be able to receive a Discretionary Housing Payment if you have a shortfall between the amount of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit paid and your eligible rent and council tax.

We will look at your financial and personal circumstances before we decide to grant further financial assistance for your rent and council tax.

What you need to do?

If you would like to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment and have a shortfall between your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit and your eligible rent or council tax, then complete the attached form and return to us as soon as possible.

What happens next?

- Once we receive a completed application form, we may require additional information in order to support your claim so we will write to you requesting this information or invite you to an interview at the council's offices or visit you at home.
- Once we receive all the information, an officer will write a report taking into consideration all the points made in your application.
- The report and your form are then passed to the Discretionary Housing Payment panel for consideration.
- The Panel is made up of Senior Benefit Officers and Managers.
- The Panel will then decide whether to grant a Discretionary Housing Payment or not.
- You will be notified of the panel's decision and reasons for their decision in writing. If you disagree with the panel's decision you may request that the panel looks at your case again.

A decision will be made on the information you put on this form. It is important that you include as much information as you can about your circumstances to help us make the right decision.