

Discretionary Housing Payment Form

Name

Address

 Postcode

Telephone number

e:mail

Benefit reference (9 digit number starting with 5)

About Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

The council can award a discretionary housing payment (DHP) to top up your housing benefit if your entitlement is less than the full rent. “Discretionary” means that we decide whether to award the top-up payment. It is discretionary because we do not have enough money to help everyone who applies. We use the information you give us on this form to decide whether to award you a DHP.

When may we award a DHP?

We may award a DHP if:

- your benefit is less than your rent because your income is too high to qualify for maximum benefit
- your housing benefit has been restricted because of the rate of local housing allowance or the valuation provided by a rent officer is less than your rent
- your benefit has been reduced because of the number of adults living with you
- your housing benefit / universal credit has been capped because the value of all your benefits together exceeds £350 per week for a single person or £500 per week for couples or families
- your housing benefit has been restricted because you have more bedrooms than you require and you live in a council or housing association property.

When can't we award a discretionary housing payment?

We can't award a DHP:

- to cover personal service charges (such as for fuel and water rates) that are included in your rent
- if you do not qualify for benefit or if your benefit already pays for all your rent

How long will we pay you for?

We will award you a DHP for a fixed period and never for more than a year. So when completing this form you must tell us how long you think you will need extra financial help and what you will do to avoid needing the money in the long term.

Part 1: Your income and expenses

You must complete Part 2. Complete the following tables to tell us about the income you are getting and how much you spend.

Income

Type of income	Amount	Frequency (Delete as appropriate)
Net pay (after deductions for tax and National Insurance)	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Income support, jobseeker's allowance or employment and support allowance	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Pensions	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Child benefit	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Child tax credit	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Working tax credit	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Child maintenance	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Money from family or friends	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Other state benefits	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Other income	£	Weekly / 4-weekly / monthly
Savings	£	Not applicable

Spending

Type of expense	Amount	Frequency (Delete as appropriate)
Rent (the amount left to pay after receiving housing benefit)	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly*
Rent arrears (regular extra payments you must make under a court order or as agreed with the landlord)	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Council tax	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Council tax arrears (regular extra payments you are making to repay money owing from previous years)	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Gas	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Electricity	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Water rates	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Home telephone	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Mobile phone	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
TV licence	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly

Family food shopping	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Meals at work	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Child care or play scheme	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
School dinners	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Children's clothes	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Nappies and baby products	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Travel to work	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Other travel	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Home contents insurance	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Life insurance	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Personal loan repayments	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
Hire-purchase agreements	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly

*Every three months

Any other expenses (please tell us what the expense is for):

	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly*
	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly
	£	Weekly / monthly / quarterly

*Every three months

Based on your budget, what is the most you can afford to pay towards your rent?

£	a week
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When we look at your spending, we normally disregard household expenses for food, fuel, clothes, telephone and toiletries. This is because the benefit calculation includes an allowance for essential day-to-day living expenses. But if some of these expenses are especially high at the moment, please tell us why here. For example, you may have a new baby or spend more on food because of a special diet.

Part 2: The reason for your request

Please tell us why you are not receiving full benefit:

(tick all that apply to you)

- | | Yes | No | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Because my overall benefit has been capped? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please go to part 3 |
| Because I have more bedrooms than I need (council or housing association tenants only) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please go to part 4 |
| Because the value of the local housing allowance is less than my rent (private sector tenants only) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please go to part 5 |
| Any other reason (including deduction to your benefit because of adults in your property or if income is too high to qualify for maximum benefit) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please go to part 6 |

Part 3: Overall benefit cap

3.1 If you are working and in receipt of working tax credit, your benefit will not be capped. Please explain why you (or your partner) are not working and what action you are taking to get a job

3.2 Do you have any opportunities that mean you will be able to start work in the near future? Please provide details

Please go to part 6

Part 4: Spare room reduction (council or housing association tenants only)

	Yes	No
Are you a foster carer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a child serving in the armed forces on operations who will be returning to the property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your property been adapted for disabled purposes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have children who are unable to share due to a disability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered "Yes" to any of the above, please provide details

Please go to part 6

Part 5: Rent restrictions including local housing allowance caps

5.1 **How long have you lived in Hammersmith and Fulham?**

5.2 **Why do you need to live in Hammersmith and Fulham?**

5.3 When did you move to your current address?

5.4 How much was the rent in your old property?

5.5 Why did you move to your current property?

Please go to part 6

Part 6 Children that live with you

- 6.1 Do you have any children living with you aged under 20 attending school or college? Yes Complete the table below then go to 6.2
No Go to part 7

Use the table below to tell us about the school or college your children attend

Child's name	Name and address of school or college

- 6.2 Tell us if any of the children above are due to take GCSE, A-level or BTec exams in the next year.
Please provide the date(s) of the final exam.

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- 6.3 Tell us about any other special circumstances relating to your children's education that would make it difficult to move home at this time.
Please give details and confirmation from the school

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Part 7 Other information

7.1 Tell us about any medical services you currently rely on. Explain if there are any special circumstances that mean the service is not available elsewhere.

7.2 Tell us about any disability adaptations that have been made to your home.

7.3 Are you or your partner working? Yes Answer 7.4
No Go to 7.5

7.4 Tell us if moving home will make it difficult to keep your job. Tell us why this is.

7.5 Tell us about any other circumstances that would make it difficult for you to move home.

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7.6 Please list here everyone (including those that you have already mentioned that live with you)

Name	Age	Relationship to you

Part 8: Other information about your claim

You must complete Part 8.

Please use the space below to tell us anything else you want us to take into account. Here are some examples:

- Medical conditions or disabilities that you or a member of your household has.
- You are claiming a DHP because your benefit has been reduced because another adult lives with you and they can't contribute towards your rent – please say why they can't.
- You are claiming a DHP because you have to pay rent for two homes for an overlapping period. Tell us why you were unable to move home when your new tenancy started

For how long would you like to receive a DHP? And please say why.

Part 9: Declaration

You must complete Part 9.

You must read the following statement carefully and sign and date the form in the appropriate spaces below. If you have a partner, they must also sign the declaration. The information I/we have given on this form is correct and complete to the best of my/our knowledge.

I/we understand that the council must protect the public funds it handles and so may use the information I/we have given on this form to prevent and detect fraud. I/we understand that anyone who dishonestly claims or receives benefit or a discretionary housing payment may be prosecuted

I/we give my permission for the council to make any enquiries that it thinks necessary to verify the information on this form. This includes permission to contact the council where I/we previously lived regarding my Housing Benefit entitlement and the circumstances in which I/we vacated my previous address.

I/we also give my permission for the council to verify this information with my/my partner's employers and my/my partner's bank or building society and to visit me to check that the details of my claim are correct.

I/we also understand that you may share and verify this information with other organisations that handle public funds; including, other sections within the council, rent officer, other councils and benefit authorities.

I know that I must tell the council benefit office about any relevant changes of circumstances that happen after I/we have signed this claim. These could be things like:

- **A change of address temporarily or permanently**
- **A change in my/our income, or that of anyone living with me/us**
- **I/we stop getting Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance**
- **If somebody joins or leaves my/our household**
- **If I/we go on holiday or leave the country**

Your signature _____ Date _____

Your partner's signature _____ Date _____

Endorsement

I have completed this application form on behalf of Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms

I have read out each question to this person and written down their answers:

Signature _____ Date _____

Supporting evidence

Please provide the following documents in support of your DHP claim:

- Your most recent payslip if you are working
- Your partner's most recent payslip (if you have a partner and they are working)
- Bank account statements covering the last two consecutive months consecutive months
- Partner's bank account statements covering the last two consecutive months
- Proof of any loan or credit-card or hire-purchase repayment agreements
- Any letters you have received from the landlord about rent arrears
- Proof of any expenses that are especially high.

We accept photocopies of these documents – you do not need to send us the originals.

What happens next?

Send the form and any photocopies we need to:

**Benefits, h&f Direct,
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
1st Floor, Hammersmith Town Hall Ext,
King Street,
Hammersmith
London W6 9JU**

If we need more information, we will contact you. When we have all the information we need, we will consider your claim and write to you with our decision and reasons.

Part 10: Consent to share information

You only need to complete Part 10 if you are claiming a DHP because your overall benefit has been capped, because of a reduction due to a spare room or because of a rent restriction. Anyone who has completed Parts 3, 4 or 5 of the DHP claim must also complete Part 10.

We would like your permission to share information you have given in support of your claims for housing benefit and DHP with other departments in the council. In particular, the Housing Options Service offers a range of support to households affected by the housing benefit caps depending on the circumstances of each case. This support includes:

- help negotiating with landlords over rent levels
- access to housing-related support for vulnerable households
- debt counselling and budgetary advice
- help with finding a new home where appropriate and help with moving and settling into a new area.

I give consent for h&f Direct to share information provided in support of my claims for housing benefit and DHP with other departments in the council. I understand that information will be shared only to help lessen the effects of the reduction to my housing benefit. Yes
No

I further give consent for the council to contact my landlord to negotiate a rent reduction on my behalf. Yes
No

Signature of person claiming

Date

You can withdraw your consent at any time by writing to:

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
1st Floor, Hammersmith Town Hall Ext,
King Street,
Hammersmith
London W6 9JU

The outcome of your claim for DHP does not depend on whether you choose to give consent or not. However, if we restrict your housing benefit because of the caps on LHA, it's important for us to know whether or not the landlord is willing to reduce the rent.

INFORMATION ON AWARDS

Where a discretionary housing payment award is made in respect of help with rent, this will be made in the same way and at the same frequency as your housing benefit payments and will be included in these payments.

Where a discretionary housing payment award is made in respect of help with council tax, this will be credited direct to your council tax account for the same period as your council tax benefit.

An award will be made from the Monday after the form is received and will be for a fixed period that will not be more than 52 weeks and may be less than 52 weeks. If your housing and/or council tax benefits end for any reason then your DHP will also end. If you make a new claim for housing and/or council tax benefits you will also need to make a new claim for a discretionary housing payment.

In exceptional circumstances an award can be backdated. If you wish to apply for the award to be paid from an earlier date you must state this in your Personal Statement above and explain why you did not make a claim or enquiries earlier.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE

The authority is allocated a strictly limited budget by central government that it is allowed to spend on discretionary housing payments.

For this reason even if you are awarded a discretionary housing payment it may not be given for the full amount of the shortfall of your rent or council tax.

It is also possible that you may not be able to receive a discretionary housing payment every time you apply, or if you do, it may not be for the full amount of the shortfall.

Where this payment is made to help with the shortfall in your housing benefit entitlement due to a rent restriction, you should begin looking for more affordable accommodation immediately.