

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

Please fill in this form and return it to the address overleaf. Please ensure the information you give is accurate.

If you have any questions call (01279) 446633

Name:

Address:

National Insurance
Number:

► **Please complete all sections in CAPITAL LETTERS**

V9.2 website 16/07/2014

What are Discretionary Housing Payments?

If you need extra help with housing costs, Discretionary Housing Payments may be available to you. Discretionary Housing Payments are payments that can be made, along with any Housing Benefit already in payment.

We have a limited annual Discretionary Housing Payment budget. This application form will help us to decide if an award can be made to you. Please note that not all applications will be successful as funds for Discretionary Housing Payments are limited. To ensure consistency we will only consider information included on the form and any current supporting evidence supplied, no assumptions can be made. Each claim made is unique they are not continuations, therefore if another claim is made all information is required once more, we cannot refer to previous claims.

What are Housing Costs?

Housing costs are, in essence, rent and communal service charges. A number of items are excluded:

- Parts of rent not covered by benefit, such as charges for fuel, hot water or meals
- Charges for individual water and sewerage
- Increases in rent due to rent arrears
- Any short fall between your Council Tax liability and your Local Council Tax Scheme (LCTS) award
- Benefit that has been suspended because you have failed to supply the information necessary for your claim
- Any reduction in Benefit as a result of non-attendance at a work-focused interview
- Any reduction or loss of Benefit due to Job Seeker's Allowance employment sanction
- Any reduction in Benefit due to Benefit Direction or failure to comply with Child Support Agency in arranging maintenance
- Any reduction in Benefit due to recovery of an overpayment, social fund loan or direct payments
- This list does not cover all exclusions

Who can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

To be eligible for a payment, you must be receiving Housing Benefit, and you must then satisfy us that you require further help with your housing costs.

If you are already on full Housing Benefit you will not be able to get a Discretionary Housing Payment unless it is for rent in advance, a rent deposit or removal costs.

If you do not get Housing Benefit you cannot apply for Discretionary Housing Payments. If you only get help via the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS), you will not be able to get help with your rent costs.

How can I apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

Complete and return this form immediately, along with any recent supporting evidence you may have. The more supporting evidence supplied, the better your chance of qualifying for an award. If no supporting evidence of debt or outstanding loans is supplied, hardship due to debt will not be proven and therefore cannot be considered.

If a previous claim was refused as the budget had expired and you are now re applying please submit this form as per the refusal notification.

If you are acting on another's behalf, please make this clear on the form.

How will it be paid?

Payment will be made with you Housing Benefit. Awards will normally start from the Monday following the receipt of your application.

Awards can only be made up to the end of the financial year. If you continue to need help with your housing costs you should reclaim two weeks before your current award runs out.

Discretionary Housing Payments Form

If you have been at the same address for more than 6 months miss 1-3, private tenant go to question 4 others go to question 5.

1. Why did you leave your last address?

2. How did you find out about your current property?

3. Please list the names and dates of birth of everyone who lives with you

Name	Date of birth

4. For private tenants only; did you check what LHA rate you would receive before moving into the property? Yes No

Have you tried to negotiate with the landlord to reduce the rent? Yes No

If YES please state what you did and provide proof of refusal to reduce rent if held

5. **Have you attempted to find cheaper alternative accommodation?** Yes No

If YES please give details of what you have done and why you are not able to move

6. **If you are considered to be under occupying your property, what attempts have you made to move? Have you registered on Home Swapper or the Housing Register?**

7. **Is there a risk you will be evicted if you do not pay the short fall?** Yes No

If YES please provide proof of rent arrears or copies of letters from your Landlord, notices of repossession or notice to quit

Please tell us the amount of rent arrears you currently have

£

8. **Are all members of your household in good health?** Yes No

If NO please provide details and supporting medical evidence

9. **Has the property been adapted in any way due to a physical disability of yourself or your household?**

Yes No

If YES, please give details.

10. **Do you have any special circumstances associated with support or incapacity of yourself or others?**

Yes No

If YES, please give details of all medical problems of everyone in your household.

11. **Do you have any special circumstances associated with the schooling or care of dependant children?**

Yes No

If YES, please give details.

12. **Do you have any friends or family living locally who have been giving you, or could give you, help or financial support?** Yes No

If YES, please give details.

13. **Do you have any income that you could use to top up your rent?** Yes No

If YES how much could you pay towards the shortfall?

£ Per week

14. **Have you sold any assets, property or belongings to help pay the rent or do you have any that you could sell?** Yes No

If YES, please give details.

Request for Financial Information

Income Details	Weekly	Monthly
Wages / Salary of the Claimant		
Wages / Salary of any Partner		
Working Tax Credit		
Child Tax Credit		
Income Support / Job Seeker's Allowance / Employment and Support Allowance / Statutory Sick Pay		
Child Benefit		
Other Benefits (Please specify which)		
Retirement Pension		
Pension Credit		
Other Pensions (please specify)		
Child Support / Maintenance		
Income from boarders/ Lodgers		
Non-Dependant Contributions		
Student loans / Grants		
Disability Living Allowance / Attendance Allowance / Personal Independence Payments		
Carers Allowance		
Other Income		
Total Income		
Total Capital		

Please use the following space to give details of any other income you may have.

Expenses	Amount	Frequency
Rent / Mortgage		
Council Tax		
Electricity		
Gas		
Water Rates		
Landline telephone		
Food & grocery shopping		
Secured Loan		
Bus fares		
Taxi fares		
Mobile phone		
TV Licence		
Satellite/cable TV		
Internet		
Household insurance		
Life Insurance		
Car insurance		
Petrol/diesel		
Car Tax		
Car repairs/MOTs		
Drinking		
Smoking		
Clothing and shoes including school uniform		
School expenses		
Gambling		
Christmas/birthdays		
Loans		
Credit cards		
Catalogue Payments		
Any other debts (please specify)		
Other (please specify)		
Total Expenses		

Please include the latest proof, if available, of all debts and loans listed on this application form

Please use this space to tell us of any other income, outgoings or financial liabilities which you may have

15. Could you move if rent cannot be met? Yes No
If NO please give details why. Your request for DHP may be refused if this information is not provided.

16. **Have you approached the Citizens Advice Bureau or similar organisation to check that you have claimed all benefit to which you are entitled?** Yes No
If YES please give details

17. **Have you approached the Citizens Advice Bureau, Harlowsave Credit Union, or similar organisation for money management help and advice?** Yes No
If YES please give details and dates of any appointments made or outstanding

Declaration

The information supplied via this form will only be shared with, or disclosed to other bodies as per the information sharing statement on your original benefit application form.

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



Any false information or failure to disclose relevant information may lead to a prosecution under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (as amended by The Social Security Fraud Act 2001), The Fraud Act 2006 and The Local Government Finance Act 1992

- The information I have given is true and complete
- I authorise the local authority to verify the information if they wish to do so
- I will write and tell you if there are any changes in my circumstances or my households circumstances
- I understand that my application may not be considered if I do not provide all the information you have asked for

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 in accordance with that declaration and warning.

Signature(s):

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Name(s):

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Please provide a mobile telephone number below (or other daytime telephone number):

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Date:

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
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- **Once completed and signed send this form to: Revenues & Benefits, Harlow Council, Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1WG**



Do not delay in returning this form. Any delay may affect your award.

You must inform us of any changes in you circumstances as soon as possible. We may need to revise an award of Discretionary Housing Payment where your circumstances have changed. If the change means that you have received monies to which you are not entitled to, you may be asked to pay the money back.

Examples of changes in income and family circumstances:

- Changes in income or savings
- When Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment Support Allowance stops or starts
- If Tax Credits are awarded withdrawn of the rate of award changes
- When someone moves in or out of your home

If you not sure if a change in your circumstances will alter your Discretionary Housing Payment, tell us anyway.

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

Discretionary Housing Payments are made outside of the Housing Benefit and scheme and therefore there are no statutory appeal rights.

If you disagree with the decision made you can write to us and ask us to look at your application again. A panel of Senior Officers will then review your original request. You must contact us within one month of the date on the decision letter, giving the reasons why you disagree and supply any new supporting evidence that you believe is relevant.

Alternatively you can phone or write to us and ask for a full explanation of the decision.

For Further Help and Advice

In Person

Contact Harlow
Civic Centre
The Water Gardens
Harlow, Essex
CM20 1WG

By Post, Phone or Email

Harlow Council Revenues & Benefits
Civic Centre
The Water Gardens
Harlow, Essex
CM20 1WG

Opening Times:

Monday - Friday **9 am – 4.45 pm**

Telephone: **01279 446633**

E-mail: hdc.benefits@harlow.gov.uk

For Independent Help and Advice

Harlow CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau)
13-15 Eastgate
Harlow
Essex
CM20 1HP



Opening Times:

Monday
to Friday **10 am – 4.00 pm**
Drop in advice

Telephone:

Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Harlowsave Credit Union
1st Floor The Central Library
Cross Street, The High
Harlow
Essex
CM20 1HA

Opening Times:

Monday **12 noon – 2.00 pm**
Tuesday, Thursday
and Friday **10am to 2 pm**

Telephone:

Website: www.harlowsave.coop

You can also get free independent money advice from:

- Money Advice Service: www.moneyadvice.service.co.uk, Tel: 0300 500 5000
- National Debtline: www.mymoneysteps.org, Tel: 0808 808 4000

You can access the internet for free in your local library and at Contact Harlow