

# Discretionary Housing Payments

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## Discretionary Housing Payments

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) are a DWP funded scheme administered by local authorities(LAs).

They are available to claimants who already receive either Housing Benefit or housing costs in their Universal Credit if the LA considers that a claimant needs further financial assistance towards rented housing costs. Discretionary Housing Payments are usually a temporary solution to financial difficulty.

The payments are very flexible, as LAs have full discretion over whether a payment is made in any case and for how long an award should last.

Local authorities make the decision about:

- eligibility
- when Discretionary Housing Payments are awarded
- how much is awarded

Payments can cover:

- one-off costs such as a deposit or rent-in-advance
- on-going rental costs where there is a shortfall between the actual rent and the amount of housing costs support in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit
- lump sum costs associated with a housing need such as removal costs
- the Benefit Cap
- removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector
- local housing allowance shortfalls.

Payments don't cover:

- money towards mortgage payments
- help with Council Tax
- ineligible service charges
- increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears

- sanctions and certain reductions in benefit

This is not a complete list.

### **When a Benefit Cap and a Managed Payment to Landlord is in place**

Universal Credit claimants, who have a Managed Payment to Landlord in place, may be left with little or no Universal Credit to meet other living costs, once the Benefit Cap is applied.

Capped claimants in this situation can still apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment despite having a Managed Payment to Landlord in place.

### **Application for a Discretionary Housing Payment**

Claimants should contact the local authority or visit their website for more information. Most LAs offer the option to download or complete an application online. Contact details of LAs can be found on [GOV.UK. Find your local council](#)