



Discretionary Housing Payments

Extra help towards your rent,
rent deposit or removal costs



What are Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)?

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) provide applicants with short term financial assistance when they are having difficulties paying their rent or a rent deposit.

The DHP fund is made up of an amount of money allocated by the UK Government and this can be increased by the Council but there is an absolute limit on the amount of DHPs that Aberdeenshire Council can pay out.

Aberdeenshire Council has a DHP Policy, which is available on the Council's website.

What can DHPs be paid for?

DHPs may be used to cover:

- Restrictions in housing benefit following the introduction of the social sector size criteria
- Restrictions in housing benefit due to reductions in local housing allowance
- Restrictions in housing benefit where the benefit cap has been applied
- Rent shortfall
- Rent deposits, rent advances or removal costs
- Non dependant deductions

What DHPs cannot be paid for:

- Service charges not covered by housing benefit
- Any rent you owe in rent arrears
- Shortfall caused by housing benefit overpayment recovery
- Certain sanctions or reductions in Department for Work and Pensions benefits

Who can claim DHPs?

Anyone who is currently receiving housing benefit or universal credit (housing element) and requires further financial assistance in order to meet their housing costs can make a claim for a DHP.

How do I claim for a DHP?

Completing the online claim form is the quickest and easiest way to claim. Go to our website: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/benefits select Discretionary Housing Payments and follow the link to the application form.

A claim can also be made in any of the following ways:

- Face to face in any of the 5 benefit offices
- By downloading a form from the Aberdeenshire Council website http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/benefits/ct_benefit/DiscretionaryHousingPaymentApplication.pdf and returning it to:
Aberdeenshire Council, PO Box 18533, Inverurie AB51 5WA or scanning and sending by e-mail to benefits@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
- Calling 08456 080149 to request an application form.

It is important that as much information as possible is given when applying for a DHP in order that the correct award is made first time.

How much help might I get and for how long?

Each application is carefully considered on its individual merits, taking into account your finances and personal circumstances. A DHP will be paid for a specific period of time and when it ends you can re-apply. However, if your circumstances change during the period, your DHP may end or change.

If I qualify for a Discretionary Housing Payment, how will it be paid?

Discretionary Housing Payments will be paid in the same way and at the same time as your housing benefit payment.

Will I receive a letter advising me if my claim has been successful or not?

If you qualify, we will write and tell you how much you will be paid and for how long.

If you do not qualify, we will write and tell you the reason for our decision.

What should I do if I disagree with the decision?

If you disagree with our decision, you should write to us explaining why you feel we should reconsider the decision.

The decision will be looked at again by someone other than the original decision-maker and you will receive a letter explaining the outcome of that review.

If after the first review you are still dis-satisfied you can seek a second tier review.

What if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change, you must tell us immediately. We will then look at the DHP we awarded and see whether it needs to be changed.

If you need more help or information

Phone 08456 080149

E-mail benefits@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Letter Aberdeenshire Council, Benefit Section, PO Box18533,
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