

**Discretionary Housing Payments and Council Tax
Support Exceptional Hardship Scheme**

Preston and Lancaster Shared Services

This form is not to be used for DHP for upfront rent or removal costs to move to a new property.

Discretionary Housing Payment Information

Discretionary Housing Payments are not a long-term solution to housing problems. Any award made will normally be for a short period.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) may be claimed if you receive housing benefit or universal credit for housing costs but are having difficulty paying the rest of your rent yourself.

A Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) may be used to pay for:

- rent arrears (but not if you were receiving enough housing benefit to pay all of your rent at the time the arrears built up)
- a shortfall between housing benefit and rent

A Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) cannot be paid if the reason for shortfall is that your housing benefit has been reduced to recover an overpayment or because your other benefits have been reduced, for example, a sanction on Universal Credit.

The local authority will consider any special circumstances that contribute to your financial difficulties for example, if:

- you are under-occupying a Council or housing association property,
- you are impacted by benefit cap,
- the local housing allowance rate is lower than your rent charge,
- you have additional travel costs because you travel to a doctor or hospital or you care for a relative or friend,
- you are likely to become homeless if a payment is not made.

You will be asked for details of your income and outgoings. **You should send with your application copies of relevant bills or bank statements.** Please also provide any information about your circumstances that make things difficult for you financially. Please provide all details within fourteen days of the date of the request or a decision will have to be made based on the available information.

Please note that DHPs can be considered **in exceptional circumstances**, for help with starting a new tenancy, e.g., deposit, rent in advance or moving costs. **Please see the form DHP Deposits and Removals.**

Council Tax Support Exceptional Hardship Scheme

If you want us to consider an exceptional hardship payment to help with your council tax you must be the liable person at the address and you must be in receipt of council tax support.

An exceptional hardship payment will be considered if you are of working age and cannot afford to pay your council tax liability.

You will be asked for details of your income and outgoings. You should send with your application copies of relevant bills or bank statements. Please also provide any information about your circumstances that make things difficult for you financially.

Please provide all details within fourteen days of the date of the request or a decision will have to be made based on the available information.

RETURN ADDRESS.

**HEAD OF REVENUE SERVICES
PO BOX 4
TOWN HALL
LANCASTER
LA1 1QR**

Or hand in at Lancaster or Morecambe Town Halls; open between 9am and 1pm from Monday to Friday.

Do not forget to enclose any documentary evidence you have to support your claim e.g., proof of outstanding loans etc.

APPLICATION FORM

Name -

Address -	Date of Birth -
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Telephone / E-Mail	HB Ref -
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What date do you want your Discretionary Housing Payment to start?

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Does anyone else live with you? YES /NO

If yes, please give their details below –

Name	Date of birth	Relationship to you	Weekly income if over 16 and not dependent on you

**Do you have rent arrears? If yes, how much and for what period?
(Please provide you most recent rent statement)**

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Are you about to be evicted?

Please provide all notices and eviction letters/court letters

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Please tell us why you want a Discretionary Housing Payment/Exceptional Hardship Payment (DHP/EHP). Tell us anything about your special circumstances. (Please include information regarding health problems, disabilities, carers, recent “life events” including bereavements) Please provide as much supporting evidence as possible

Financial statement

Please complete the income in the relevant column that you receive it. There are blank rows to complete for incomes not listed.

Income	Amount per week	Amount per calendar month	Amount per year
Wages/Salary			
Partners Wages/Salary			
Rent/Board from members of household			
Income Support			
Universal Credit			
Job Seekers Allowance			
Employment Support Allowance			
Retirement Pension			
Private/Works Pension			
Pension Credit (Guaranteed Credit)			
Pension Credit (Savings Credit)			
Disability Living Allowance			
Personal independence Payments			
Carers allowance			
Attendance Allowance			
Bereavement Allowance			
Incapacity Benefit			
Maternity Allowance			
Industrial Injuries / Disablement Benefit			
Child Benefit			
Working Tax Credit			
Child Tax Credit			
Maintenance received			
Total Income			

Expenditure details

Please complete the amounts in the relevant columns. There are some blanks at the end if there is expenditure that we have not listed.

Outgoings	Amount per week	Amount per calendar month	Amount per year
Rent			
Council Tax			
Gas			
Electricity			
Water Rates			
House insurance			
Life insurance			
TV licence			
Sky/Cable TV			
Telephone			
Mobile Phones			
Internet			
Travel (bus/taxi fare)			
Clothing/Footwear			
Prescriptions			
Dentist/Opticians			
Court fines			
Cigarettes/tobacco			
Car/bike insurance			
MOT			
Car tax			
Petrol/diesel			
Car loan/finance			
Housekeeping/essential shopping			

Laundry			
Debt repayments			
Total outgoings			

Please provide your last 2 months banks statements/building society accounts.

Details of your current property

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, we do not hold details about your property. Please complete this sheet:

Name, address, and telephone number for your landlord:

Date moved in: _____

Date tenancy started (please provide tenancy agreement):

Rent charge and how often (e.g., £425.00 per calendar month):

Amount of rent arrears and period they cover:

Please provide a rent statement showing where arrears accrued.

Type of property (e.g., flat, house):

Detail what rooms you have for you and your household and which if any you share:

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State which, if any, bills, and service charges are included in the rent charge:

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Debts – please list any outstanding debts, including rent, council tax, fuel, utilities, and credit cards etc. Please provide proof.

Company	Amount owing	Repayment amount and frequency

Loans/HP agreements - please provide copies of all agreements

Loan/Hire Purchase Company	Start date	Amount owing	Reason for loan	Repayment amount and frequency

DECLARATION

The information on this form is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I give my permission for the Council to make necessary enquiries to check the information. I know I must tell the Benefits Team about any change in my circumstances which could affect my Discretionary Housing Payment. I also understand that any false declaration may be used by the Council in connection with its prevention and detection of fraud.

I give all other agencies (e.g. Social Services, Citizens Advice Service, NHS, support workers, etc.) permission to discuss any relevant details and provide information pertinent to the DHP/EHP claim with the officers dealing with my current DHP/EHP.

Personal information will be kept safe and secure and will only be kept for as long as is necessary. Further information can be found in the Privacy Notice on the Council's website <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-reduction-scheme-privacy-notice>

Your signature _____ Date _____

Name and telephone number of person filling in the form, if not you.

Relationship to person _____

Signature of person filling in the form _____