



DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT GUIDANCE NOTES

Are you having difficulty paying your rent?

If you are receiving Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs but are still having difficulty meeting your rent payments, you may be able to get extra help from the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

What is the Discretionary Payment Fund?

The fund has been made available by the Council, with assistance from the Government, to enable additional financial assistance to be provided to customers of Housing Benefit or with Universal Credit housing costs where they are not entitled to full benefit but are experiencing financial difficulty in paying their rent.

The following are some examples to show the types of circumstances where someone might wish to apply.

- A reduction in Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs as a direct result of Welfare Reform changes, for example, if a customer has been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and they are a foster carer or their home has been significantly adapted to meet the needs of a disability for them or a member of their household.
- A customer is not entitled to full Housing Benefit because their income is above the Income Support level but is having difficulty making ends meet due to an illness affecting a member of the household which is leaving them short of money.
- A customer has just started work and has had their Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs reduced but is finding it difficult to make ends meet because they have new expenses, such as buying overalls, tools or other equipment needed for their job.

The above are just illustrations of the types of cases where a customer might consider applying for some help from the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund.

Who can apply for assistance from the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund?

The fund is only available to provide further financial assistance to people who are receiving Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs but their entitlement is less than the full amount of their rent charge. The fund will not cover charges paid with the rent such as heating, fuel, house content insurance, food/board.

How do I apply?

Customers who are in receipt of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs but do not receive the full rent charge may apply for Discretionary Housing payment. An application must be completed, a form can be downloaded from www.glasgow.gov.uk/ben, requested by telephoning 0141 287 5050, or by visiting one of the local Council Tax and Housing Benefit Offices.

The application form be completed in full ensuring that all questions are answered providing as much detail as possible about the customer's household and financial circumstances. Supporting evidence should be provided with the application.

Who decides if I will get a Discretionary Housing Payment?

An officer from our Revenues and Benefit Service will have the discretion to make payments where the circumstances of the application are such that further financial assistance with housing costs is needed. In most cases, this will be for a limited period to help the applicant through a particular difficulty. The amount of money which the Council can spend has been set by the Government and the Council may not be able to make payments to everyone who is likely to apply. Applicants may be asked to produce documents to confirm the information they have entered on the claim form and in some situations may have to take part in an interview.

Completed application forms should be returned to:

Glasgow City Council
Financial Services
Revenues and Benefits Service
PO Box 36
Glasgow
G1 1JE

Or, you can hand your form into any Council Tax and Housing Benefit Office:

Govan: 780 Govan Rd, G51 2YL
Parkhead: 125 Westmuir St, G31 5EX
City Centre: 45 John Street, G1 1PR