

HOUSING BENEFIT - Request for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) may be awarded where there is a shortfall between your rent and your Housing Benefit. It cannot cover ineligible services such as meals or water rates. If you wish to apply for DHP you should answer the questions overleaf, in full, and give as much information as possible. Please provide any documents that may support your case.

NOTE: If you are getting Universal Credit and want to claim DHP for a shortfall in your housing cost element, please go to merton.gov.uk/benefitforms and download and print the DHP form for Universal Credit form instead.

If you wish to get help with paying your Council Tax due to a shortfall in your Council Tax Support, please go to merton.gov.uk/cts to download and print the right form to do this.

Please note you will not be eligible for DHP if you already receive maximum Housing Benefit.

You should return this form as soon as possible but not later than one calendar month of the above date.

If you would like more information in your own language, please contact us at the address shown in the box below.

Albanian

Nese deshironi me shume informacion ne gjuhen tuaj, ju lutemi te na kontaktoni ne adresen e dhene ne kutine me poshte.

Arabic

إذا أردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان المدون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় আরও তথ্য জানতে চান, তাহলে নিম্নের বাক্সে প্রদত্ত ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese

如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯系。

Farsi

اگر مایل به کسب اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً از طریق آدرس زیر با ما تماس بگیرید.

French

Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Polish

Jeśli życzy sobie Pan/i więcej informacji w swoim języku, proszę się z nami skontaktować pod adresem podanym w dolnej ramce.

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish

Si usted desea más información en su propia lengua, por favor contáctenos en la dirección al pie del formato.

Tamil

உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக்குள் தரப்பட்டுள்ள விவரத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu

اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے کس میں درج ہے۔

You can also get this information in large print, in Braille and on tape.

Merton Benefits Service, London Borough of Merton, Civic Centre, PO Box 610 Morden SM4 5ZT

Housing Benefit - Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) application

Please answer the questions below as fully as possible. We will need to see proof of what you tell us. We may also ask you to attend an interview or we may visit you at home.

SECTION 1 – ABOUT YOU

Your first name _____

Your surname _____

Your National Insurance number: _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _ _ | _

The address you want DHP for (including flat or room number and post code)

What date did you move into this address? ____ / ____ / ____

What is your country of birth? _____

When did you last arrive in the United Kingdom? ____ / ____ / ____

What is your status in the United Kingdom? British citizen Other state below:

Contact telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

(We will only use these details to contact you if we need further information to help us with your benefits claims.)

SECTION 2 – PEOPLE WHO LIVE WITH YOU

Please tell us about other people who live with you.

Name	Date of birth	Relationship to you

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Could any of these people, help you with your rent payments? Yes No

If yes, how much could they afford in total? £ _____ every _____

Can anyone make up the difference between your rent or council tax and Housing Benefit? Yes No

If yes, who is it? _____

How much can they afford? £ _____ every _____

SECTION 3 – ABOUT YOUR TENANCY & RENT

Your landlord's name: _____

Your landlord's address: _____

Your landlord's email: _____

Your landlord's phone number: _____

Can we speak to your landlord about your application for DHP? Yes No

Are you in rent arrears? Yes No

If yes, please provide proof of the amount.

Has your landlord given you notice to quit? Yes No

If yes, please send a copy of your notice to quit or upload it using the upload form at merton.gov.uk/hbupload. See the section on PROOF at the end of this form. **You should also contact the council's Housing Advice Service on 020 8545 3734/3735 for advice.**

SECTION 4 – ACTION YOU HAVE TAKEN TO REDUCE YOUR RENT

Have you, or someone on your behalf, tried to get your landlord to reduce the rent? Yes No

If yes, what rent will your landlord accept? £ _____

If no, please say why you have not tried: _____

Have you, or someone on your behalf, tried to find cheaper accommodation?

Yes please give details and provide any proof you have.

No please say why you have not tried:

For help and advice on moving, or for advice about your existing tenancy rights, contact the council's Housing Advice Service on Tel: 020 8545 3734/3735

Could you live with family or friends? Yes No

If no, please state why not?

Did you have to pay a deposit before you moved in? Yes No

If yes:

is it protected by the rent deposit scheme? Yes No

If you will not get your deposit back, please explain why:

SECTION 5 – LOCAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE RESTRICTIONS

Is your short fall due to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) restrictions? This is where the Government LHA rate is lower than the rent you are charged. If you rent your home from a Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord this will not apply to you.

Yes Answer the questions below. No Go to **Section 6**

Did you move to your current address in the last 12 months? Yes No

If Yes, answer the questions below. If No, go to **Section 7**

Your previous address

What was your previous address, including flat or room number & postcode?

How much was the rent? £ _____ every _____

Were you receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Cost Element at this address? Yes No

Why did you move from this address? If you were given Notice to Quit the property, please attach a copy of it.

If your previous address was not in the London Borough of Merton, why did you move to this borough?

Your current address

Did you find this accommodation through an agency? Yes No

If no, how did you find it?

Was anywhere cheaper offered to you? Yes No

If yes, why did you not take it?

Were you able to afford the rent when you moved in (for example because you were in work)? Yes No

Was the Local Housing Allowance standard rate less than the charged rate when you signed the tenancy agreement? Yes No

If yes, why did you take the tenancy?

Now go to SECTION 6

SECTION 6 – BENEFIT CAP RESTRICTIONS

Are you claiming a DHP due the benefits caps? The Benefit caps restrict the amount of benefit you can receive.

Yes **Answer the question below** No Go to **Section 7**

Have your benefits been capped from at least the date you moved into the property?

Yes No

If Yes, why did you move into this property and not move into a property where your benefits would not be capped?

SECTION 7 – SOCIAL RENTED SECTOR UNDER-OCCUPATION RESTRICTIONS

This restriction is applied because you have too many rooms for the number of people living in your home and is also known as the Bedroom Tax.

Are you claiming a Discretionary Housing Payment due to a reduction in your Housing Benefit caused by the under occupation changes to social rented sector tenants?

Yes **Answer the question below** No Go to **Section 8**

Are you looking for a smaller property?

Yes No

If No, please say why not in the space below:

If Yes, please say what steps you have taken:

SECTION 12 – YOUR OUTGOINGS

Please provide proof of your outgoings (e.g. rent account statement, gas bills, electricity bills, bank statements showing payments made; credit agreement etc.)

Household bills	How much?	How often?
Rent (total amount charged including services)		
Gas		
Electricity		
Water rates		
Household insurance		
Child care (after childcare grants/tax credits)		
Food and toiletries		
Clothing		
Laundrette fees		
Landline telephone/broadband		
Mobile phone		
TV licence		
Washing machine rental		
Fridge freezer rental		
Cooker rental		
Hire purchase payments		
Travel to work/school/job seeking		
Council Tax (after council tax support)		
Additional expenses related to health or disability		

Repayment of loans/debts

Name of loan provider/debt	Reason for loan/debt	How much are you paying?	How much do you still owe?
		£ _____ every _____	
		£ _____ every _____	
		£ _____ every _____	

Other outgoings (e.g. deductions from your benefits to repay debts or overpayments)

Description	How much are you paying?	How often?
	£ _____	
	£ _____	
	£ _____	

SECTION 16 – DECLARATION

You must read the following statement carefully and sign and date the form in the appropriate spaces below. If you have a partner, they should also sign it too.

1. **The information I have given on this form is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.**
2. **I understand that anyone who dishonestly claims or receives benefit or a discretionary housing payment may be prosecuted.**
3. **I give my permission for the council to make any enquiries it thinks necessary to verify the information on this form. This includes permission to contact the council where I/we previously lived regarding my Housing Benefit entitlement and the circumstances in which I/we vacated my previous address.**
4. **I also give my permission for Merton Council to verify this information with my/my partner's employers and my/my partner's bank or building society and to visit me to check that the details of my claim are correct.**
5. **I also understand that you may share and verify this information with other organisations that handle public funds; including, other sections within the council, rent officer, other councils and benefit authorities.**
6. **I know that I must tell the council benefit office about any relevant changes of circumstances that happen after I have signed this claim. These could be things like:**
 - **A change of address temporarily or permanently**
 - **A change in my/our income, or that of anyone living with me/us**
 - **I/we stop getting Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance**
 - **If somebody joins or leaves my household**
 - **If I go on holiday or leave the country**

Your signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date _____

Your partner's signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

If you have had help filling in this form please give the details below:

I have completed this application form on behalf of the person named above. I have read out each question to this person and written down their answers:

Signature: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

INFORMATION ON AWARDS

Where a Discretionary Housing Payment award is made in respect of help with rent, this will be paid with your Housing Benefit, directly the agreed bank account. We will pay the DHP directly to your landlord where we believe it is in your interests to do so or if your Housing Benefit is being paid directly to your landlord.

If you are awarded Discretionary Housing Payments, your award will be made from the Monday after we received your form in the office. The award will be made for a minimum of 13 weeks (unless your Housing Benefit ends in less than 13 weeks, when it will be paid only until the end of that HB entitlement). When you make a new claim for HB you will also need to make a new claim for Discretionary Housing Payment.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE

Merton Benefits Service is allocated a strictly limited budget by central Government that we can spend on Discretionary Housing Payments.

For this reason even if you are awarded a Discretionary Housing Payment, it may not be given for the full amount of the shortfall of your rent or for the whole of your benefit period.

It is also possible that you may not be able to receive a Discretionary Housing Payment every time, or if you do, it may not be for the full amount of the shortfall.

Where this payment is made to help with the shortfall in your Housing Benefit entitlement due to a rent restriction, you should begin looking for more affordable accommodation immediately. Before you accept a new tenancy you should get the Local Housing Allowance standard rate that applies to you. This means that you will have a better idea of the maximum Housing Benefit you could get before taking on a new tenancy and if there is likely to be a shortfall. Please visit either of these websites:

- www.merton.gov.uk/local_housing_allowance
- www.gov.uk website www.gov.uk/housing-benefit/what-youll-get and click on Local Housing Allowance Limit.

Please return this form by:

Electronic method	Post to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take an image of the form (digital photo/scanned image)• Upload the image to merton.gov.uk/hbupload• In the HB ref field quote HB ref number shown on this letter.	Merton Benefits Service PO Box 610 Merton Civic Centre London Road Morden SM4 5ZT

Merton Benefits Service is committed to providing a service that suits the needs of its customers. Please tick your answers to the questions below to help us and return this survey with your application for Discretionary Housing Payments. The information you give is confidential and will not be held on your Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support file. The information will help us to improve our services and will help to target them in the right areas of the borough:

1. Ethnic origin

White	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black British	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tamil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
British Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please say what _____			

2. Registered blind

In what format do you prefer to receive correspondence?

Large Print	<input type="checkbox"/>	Braille	<input type="checkbox"/>	Audio	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please say what _____			

3. Languages

a) What is your first/main language? _____

b) If you are deaf or hard-of-hearing do you use:

British Sign Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lip Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sign Supported English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other. Please say what	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What is your postcode?