

Application for a Discretionary Housing Payment

**Pembrokeshire
County Council**

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Guidance Notes

DHP's are discretionary payments to help people with their housing costs i.e. rent.

You must be in receipt of housing benefit to be able to receive a DHP.

The fund is cash limited and therefore payment is made on a temporary basis and will not be awarded indefinitely.

As specified in regulations, a DHP cannot be paid towards the costs of any of the following:

- ineligible service charges, e.g. heating, hot water, water and sewage charges, support charges
- rent liability if the customer is entitled to Council Tax Support only
- increases in rent to cover arrears of rent, service charges or other unpaid charges
- reductions in any benefit as a result of Child Support or JSA sanctions
- Shortfalls caused by the recovery of an overpayment of housing benefit or Universal Credit

The Council has therefore developed a policy for eligibility which is outlined overleaf:

Category 1

Property built/specifically adapted for wheelchair use for any member of the household i.e. adult or children.

Category 2

Extra bedroom as a result of childcare related issues e.g. children in care - (room required should they return), estranged parents with children staying intermittently etc.

Category 3

Property adapted for the disabled e.g. walk in shower, ramps and rails.

Category 4

Approaching a critical birthday e.g. pension age which exempts them from the "bedroom tax" or children's birthday which triggers an extra bedroom.

Category 5

In respect of customers in Category 5, each case will be determined on its individual merits and the value of any award will depend on the circumstances of each application.

A financial test of resources will be required in categories 2 - 5 however, the Council will disregard War Widows/War Disablement Pensions, disability living allowance care and mobility and personal independence payments.

a Name and address

Make sure you complete your name and the address for which you wish to claim a DHP as clearly as possible using BLOCK CAPITALS and IN BLACK INK.

Please also answer the other questions in this section as fully as possible.

b Housing benefit

Please say if you need help with rent. You MUST qualify for at least 50 pence each week of Housing Benefit before we can pay a DHP.

c Are you in arrears?

Please give us details of any rent and/or council tax arrears and let us know what action (if any) has been taken to recover these.

If you are not in arrears please tell us how you have managed to meet any shortfall between the rent and/or council tax due and the benefit you receive from us.

d Why is the accommodation suitable for you?

You need to tell us why the accommodation that you live in is particularly suitable for you or a member of your family.

For example, do you have any disabilities which require ground floor accommodation, or is your property adapted in some way? Do you need an extra room because you need a carer or because you have children who only stay with you at weekends? Is the accommodation the right size for you or your family? Do you need a lift or intercom for some reason?

Please tell us if you have any physical or mental health problems which mean that where you live is particularly suitable for you or a member of your family. Would you have difficulty in finding more suitable accommodation? If so, tell us how your disability or ill health would affect this.

e Have you looked for alternative accommodation?

Please tell us if you have tried to find alternative accommodation. Have you registered with the Council or a Housing Association?

f Is the area particularly suitable for you?

Is it near your children's school or nursery? Are you near your family who provide you with support of some kind? Is it near a clinic or hospital that you attend on a regular basis?

Do you need to live in a flat area because of your disability and/or near to public services?

g Can anyone else help?

Can you get help from anywhere else? Family, friends, charities? If so, for how long? The DHP fund is cash-limited so unfortunately we cannot help everyone who applies.

h Future or recent changes?

Please tell us about any recent or future changes which have made you ask for additional help. For example, you are due to have a baby or have just had one, a recent bereavement, a rent increase, a relationship breakdown, moving home, starting or leaving work, changes in your income, someone leaving your household, etc.

j Financial assessment form?

Please complete these details as fully as possible. It may delay your claim if this is not completed. If you receive other benefits please tell us if you are having deductions for a Social Fund or Budgeting Loan.

k Signing the form?

Make sure you sign and date the form and if you have a partner, please make sure they sign it too. If someone has completed the form on your behalf, please tell us why and get them to sign in this section as well.

l Further Details

Further details on Council's DHP Policy is available on the Council's website www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk