

[Advice and Guidance for applying for Discretionary Housing Payments \(DHP\)](#)

What are Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)?

DHP is a grant assistance scheme to help claimants of Housing Benefit (HB)/ **Universal Credit – Housing Costs Element (UCH)** with their housing costs on a short term basis. To qualify applicants have to live in Solihull and must be entitled to HB / UCH and demonstrate financial hardship. DHP can cover, for example, payments of rent (the shortfall between rent and HB / UCH), rent deposits, **for customers who have been referred from Solihull Community Housing Home Options Team, or removals**. DHP cannot be used to pay for service charges, water rates, heating, lighting, meals, support services, overpayments and administration costs. There are certain costs which cannot be considered for DHP:

- Council Tax
- Ineligible rent charges, (e.g. water rates, personal charges, support charges),
- Additional charges due to outstanding rent arrears, for example court costs, former tenancy arrears, administration charges,
- Sanctions, reductions and suspension in benefits
- A shortfall in Housing benefit or Universal Credit, due to recovery of overpayments of these benefits.
- A DHP must not exceed the weekly / monthly eligible liability for rent.

**This list is not exhaustive.

Before you apply (please read carefully)

- You must be entitled to at least 50 pence per week Housing Benefit (HB) / Universal Credit – housing costs element, and live in the Solihull Borough, **at the time that your need arises**. If you claim in another local authority area, you need to claim DHP from that authority, for example if you are claiming rent deposit to move to Solihull Borough but claim from another local authority.
- You must be able to evidence exceptional circumstances, for example provide medical evidence and supporting letters from a professional advocate.
- You must evidence your current financial pressures, and what steps you have taken to alleviate this.
- You must be able to evidence you cannot afford to budget for the requested liability, due to an unforeseen circumstance and financial hardship.
- We will require the last two months full bank statements for all accounts you hold, showing all income and expenditure.
- We will consider any non priority expenditure and debts which could have been used to finance your need (e.g. credit cards, overdrafts, hire purchase agreements, money borrowed from friends and expenses for non-essential living expenses)
- Any award may be subject to you accepting money, debt, housing or employment advice, if appropriate
- A DHP will only be paid to alleviate a short term financial problem. If your situation is likely to be long term and cannot be resolved through the use of DHP, then we are unlikely to assist.
- **No cash awards can be made and we are unable to reimburse for any costs that you have already paid**