

If your benefit/housing element is not enough and you have special circumstances, you may be entitled to further help with your housing costs.

WHAT ARE DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS?

If you are entitled to Housing Benefit or Universal Credits Housing Element and you still cannot manage to pay your rent, you may be able to apply for extra help.

Discretionary Housing Payments are not payments of benefit. They are calculated separately, but you must already be entitled to some Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Element for us to consider your case. If you are already getting your full rent paid (except service charges) we cannot give you any more help.

If you have very special circumstances we may be able to give you some extra help with your rent. Each case is looked at individually, however Inverclyde Council recognises the vulnerability of certain groups and will prioritise applications on these grounds. You can find out more about this at www.inverclyde.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-reduction/discretionary-housing-payment

Each year there is a limit on the amount we can award. Once we have reached that amount we will not be able to make any more Discretionary Housing Payments for the rest of the year whatever your circumstances.

HOW CAN I APPLY FOR DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS?

If you want to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments you should fill in the form overleaf explaining what your special circumstances are. Then return the form to the Benefits Office.

It will help us to deal with your application if you explain why you or a member of your family might suffer hardship if you do not receive this extra help. Here are some examples of the things we will look at when considering your application.

- A** Whether your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit has been restricted by a Rent Officer Service valuation or Local Housing Allowance.
- B** Whether your home has been adapted for a member of your family who is disabled.
- C** Whether you could afford the rent when you first moved in.
- D** Whether you could move to a cheaper property or move in with relatives.
- E** Whether there is anybody else (for example, a relative) who could help you out financially.
- F** If you are in receipt of Foster/Kinship Allowance.
- G** Social Size Criteria (if your property is under occupied by one or more bedrooms).

When completing the form please include all of your special circumstances and provide a detailed breakdown of your income and expenditure. We will also use the information on your application for Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or Council Tax Reduction to help us decide your case.

We may want to interview you to find out more details.

**Inverclyde Council
Revenues & Customer Services
Clyde Square
Greenock
PA15 1LY**

The Office is open:
Monday to Thursday - 8.45am until 4.30pm (excluding Wednesdays)
Wednesday - 11.00am until 4.30pm
Friday - 8.45am until 3.45pm