

## **Application for direct payments of Local Housing Allowance to your landlord**

### **What is the form for?**

The Benefits Service has to make all payments of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) directly to you, but we can make payments directly to your landlord where you have difficulty in managing your affairs. The information you provide in this form will help us to decide whether it is appropriate to pay LHA directly to your landlord. You may not need to complete all the questions, as each case will be different, but try to give as much information and evidence as possible.

### **Who should complete this form?**

This form should be completed by the tenant, but it can also be completed on behalf of the tenant by:

- family or friends
- main carer
- advice or welfare agency
- the landlord or letting agent
- another service within the council
- the tenant must always sign the form, and be fully aware that it may lead to their benefit being paid directly to the landlord towards their rent.

### **What should be sent with this form?**

Written evidence needs to be provided to support the evidence given in this form. This can be from various sources depending on a person's individual circumstances, for example from the tenants'

- family and/or friends
- landlord
- general practitioner (GP)
- probation officer
- social worker
- main carer
- welfare groups
- Department for Work and Pensions

Please note this list is not exhaustive. Refer to the guidance notes for further advice on how to complete this form and what is acceptable evidence.

## Guidance notes

### Introduction

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) payments will be made directly to tenants. However, in certain specific circumstances you can have payments made to your landlord.
- If you feel that you could have problems keeping up your rent payments and it would be easier for you if your landlord was paid directly, please complete this form. You can fill it in yourself or if you can't manage, someone else can help you. See the front of the form for details of who can help.
- We will use this information to make a decision. Tell us as much information as possible and provide relevant evidence so that we can make a prompt decision. Please use extra paper if there is not enough space. In some cases it may be necessary to gather further evidence or interview you and/or your representative. If this is necessary we will write to you.
- We will write to you and anyone else affected, with the decision and the rights of appeal.
- Where we decide to pay your landlord, the landlord will only receive LHA up to the amount of the contractual rent. If there is any excess, this will be paid to you.

### Questions

#### **1 - 5) Make sure your name and address is completed clearly.**

The name of anyone completing the form on your behalf or helping you complete it should be clearly stated. We need to know their address and whether they are from a statutory or voluntary agency, as we may need to contact them directly.

Please also tell us about the relationship you have with the person completing the form and the reasons they are filling in the form for you

#### **6.(a) Tell us about any learning disabilities that may cause you problems in paying your rent.**

This is likely to be appropriate for people with slight learning difficulties. Those with severe disabilities should have appointees. The ways learning disabilities affect people's lives vary greatly. You may experience difficulties with everyday practical skills like cooking or using public transport, or social skills like holding a conversation. In some cases like these, it may be appropriate to pay benefit directly to your landlord so that you don't get into rent arrears.

**(b) Tell us about any physical disabilities or medical conditions that may cause you problems in paying your rent.**

Physical disabilities vary enormously, and it may only be in a few cases that it affects how a person manages their affairs. For example, a severe impairment in both your sight and hearing may mean you have additional problems with communication, mobility and access to information. You may need to remain close to medical equipment. Similarly, some disabilities may be encountered when you go out or try to access public buildings. You may also have physical problems because of your age.

**(c) Tell us about any mental health problems that may hinder your ability to pay your rent.**

Some people coping with mental illness may be less able to manage their financial affairs and may feel that organising rent payments is too much to cope with.

**The most common forms of mental illness include:**

- \* Anxiety
- \* Dementia
- \* Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- \* Phobias
- \* Eating Disorders
- \* Personality Disorders
- \* Alzheimer's
- \* Schizophrenia
- \* Manic Depression (Bipolar Depression)
- \* Depression
- \* Postnatal Depression.

**(d) Are you coping with addiction?**

Someone who is experiencing (or has a history of) addiction, for example alcohol, drugs or gambling, may find it difficult to prioritise their outgoings. Therefore, it may be more helpful to pay benefit directly to your landlord.

**Have you encountered difficulties in managing your affairs because you need assistance with understanding English or have difficulty reading and writing English?**

The barriers faced by people who are not fluent in English or have difficulty reading and writing English can inhibit their ability to deal with agencies and organizations. This can extend to banks and/or landlords or letting agents when trying to organise rent payments and the receipt of benefits. In some cases it may be in your best interest to have your benefit paid directly to the landlord whilst you receive support and assistance to help you manage your affairs.

**(f) Please tell us about any recent changes that mean you need additional support, or if you anticipate any in the near future?**

There may be times when you have experienced, or are about to experience, a change in your life which means you need additional help over a short period of time. This could be in terms of bereavement, a relationship breakdown (possibly violent), recently left prison, coming out of hospital, going into hospital or a terminal illness of a close relative.

**(g) Have you had any previous problems in maintaining your rent payments?**

You may have fallen into rent arrears in the past, which has led to eviction and possibly homelessness. If you feel there is a risk of this happening again and are receiving support to sustain your current tenancy, please give us details. We may be able to offer additional support and help keep your rent payments up to date by paying your LHA to your landlord. If possible, please provide evidence of the previous eviction, homelessness or rough sleeping.

**(h) Do you have rent arrears?**

Please give us details of any rent arrears that you currently owe. Provide evidence of any action taken by the landlord to recover these debts, e.g Eviction notice or a rent arrears letter.

**(i) Do you have other debts outstanding, any undischarged bankruptcy or are you unable to open a bank account?**

If you have major debts, you may find yourself in a position where you are unable to open a bank account due to a bad credit rating. This can be severe debts such as undischarged bankruptcy and County Court Judgments, or simply mounting bills such as electricity, gas, water etc.

**(j) Do you currently receive ongoing support from an agency, organisation, friend or family member to help you to make rent payments?**

Support from various organisations is available to many people to help with basic skills. Please advise us whether you receive any support or care packages.

**(k) Are you having deductions made from your other income, such as DWP benefits to help repay debts?**

The Department of Work and Pensions can make deductions from your benefit for rent arrears, council tax or utility debts. You may also have deductions from your earnings to pay the Child Support Agency or to repay your council tax arrears. Please provide evidence if this is happening to you.

**7) How long might you need payments to be made to the landlord?**

Please indicate whether you would expect the payments to the landlord to be a temporary or a permanent arrangement. For example, it could only be while you are in hospital or until other priority debts have been repaid.

**8) Tenant's Declaration**

Make sure you sign and date the form, if you have a partner please make sure they sign it too. By signing the form you are accepting that the information you have provided may lead to your benefit being paid to your landlord.

**9) Declaration from person completing the form**

If someone has completed the form on your behalf, they must also sign the form.

## **Useful Contacts for Support and Advice**

### **Wrexham Citizen's Advice Bureau:**

35 Grosvenor Road  
Wrexham,  
LL11 1BT

**Telephone:**  
01978 364639

### **Wrexham Credit Union:**

WCBC Credit Union  
1 North Arcade,  
Chester Street,  
LL13 3BB

**Telephone:**  
01978 266856

### **Shelter Wrexham:**

Shelter Cymru  
PO BOX 2293,  
Wrexham,  
LL13 0FB

**Telephone:**  
01978 317911

### **Welfare Rights Wrexham:**

WCBC Welfare Rights  
Gladman Buildings,  
Unit 5 Edison Court,  
Wrexham

**Telephone:**  
01978 298254

### **Barnardos:**

Barnardos: Compass Project  
Bryn Hyfryd,  
2 Grosvenor Road,  
Wrexham  
LL11 1ER

**Telephone:**  
01978 315130

## **APPLICATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT TO LANDLORD**

**1 Name of tenant**

**2 Address of tenant**

**3 Person completing the form**

**4 Contact address and telephone number, if the above is not the tenant**

**5 If the tenant is not completing the form, please tell us your relationship to the tenant and the reason for completing the form on their behalf**

**6 Having read the guidance notes, please explain why you want to make an application for direct payment of LHA to your landlord.**

**7 How long might you need payments to be made to the landlord?**

**13 weeks**

**26 weeks**

**52 weeks**

**indefinitely**

**If longer, please specify and tell us why?**

**8 Tenant's Declaration**

- The information given is true and correct
- I apply for my Local Housing Allowance to be paid directly to my landlord to cover the contractual rent
- I will contact the Benefits Service should I feel I am able to receive my benefit directly

I have read and understood the declaration. Please sign and date the form below (if you have a partner they should also sign below)

You

Your Partner

Date

Date

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO INCLUDE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE  
TO SUPPORT YOUR REQUEST**

**9 Person completing the form, if not the tenant**

- The information given is true and correct
- I believe it to be in the best interest of the tenant to pay Local Housing Allowance directly to their landlord

I have read and understood the declaration. Please sign and date the form below.

Name

Signature

Date

Please return this form, together with documentary proof to support the information provided, to **Housing Benefits Section, Lambpit Street, Wrexham, LL11 1AR**

**A WELSH FORM IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

**Ref No – LHA/DPF1**

