INFO SHEET – Accommodation

CONTENTS

ACCOMMODATION SUPPORTS

1 – Social Housing Support

2 – Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

RENT SUPPLEMENT

TENANCY RIGHTS

FUNDAMENTALS OF HOUSING LAW

APPROXIMATE HAP AND RENT CALCULATOR

ACCOMMODATION SUPPORTS

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a scheme to apply for a financial contribution towards your beneficiaries' monthly rent. It is a form of social housing support to those who qualify, provided by each Local Authority (LA) – also known as County Councils.

To qualify for HAP, an individual or household must first qualify and apply for social housing support.

Only the main applicant(s) on the approved application — usually the parents within a family — can apply for HAP for the whole household. If an adult child or another adult relative wants to apply for HAP on their own, they must submit a separate Social Housing Application, be assessed in their own right, and be approved for housing support before they can apply for HAP.

RESOURCE: Video for Application for Social Housing Support:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjYtaOCzQ1o

!! NOTE !!

Keep a copy of all completed applications forms, for your own records.

1 – Social Housing Support

Humanitarian Admissions beneficiaries qualify for Social Housing.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- Applicants must have a legal right to remain in Ireland on a long-term basis.
- The individual or household must have a need for housing support, typically due to financial constraints or unsuitable living conditions, and no suitable alternative accommodation.
- Applicants must have a net income below the thresholds set by the applicable Local Authority.

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Government of Ireland

RESOURCE: Maximum net income limits for a single person:
https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/local-authority-and-social-housing/applying-for-local-authority-housing/#632b26

Application Process:

Applicants can only apply to the Local Authority they are currently living in, unless they prove a connection to another county.

The application form is available from the specific Local Authority's website or office. Ensure the form is fully complete (answers that are not relevant to the applicant, mark as N/A – Not Applicable). The form includes 12 sections and will require supporting documentation submitted with it:

1) Personal Details
- Name, DOB, PPSN, current address – **attach photo ID**
- Applicant 2 details (partner/spouse) – **attach marriage certificate if applicable**

2) Nationality Details
- Country of birth, native language
- Basis of stay in Ireland ("programme refugee") – **attach Irish Residence Permit**

3) Employment Details
- Company name and address

4) Income Details
- Weekly income from social welfare or work, before tax (gross pay) – **attach statement from Department of Social Protection detailing all welfare payments**
- Detail tax deductions

5) Household Members Details
- Details about all others applying with you, including children – **attach birth certificates**

6) Current Accommodation
- **Attach proof of address (Status Confirmation Letter, bill or lease)**
- **Attach proof of rental agreement & RTB registration**
- reason you are looking for support

7) Accommodation History (over the last 5 years)

8) Housing Requirements
- "Access HAP"
- "Rented Local Authority accommodation"
- Any accessibility needs **(you will need a separate form from your LA if you are applying on medical or disability grounds)**

9) Basis for Application to that specific Local Authority

10) Other Property you Own

11) Public Order Offences

12) Other Information – **please get advice for proof of divorce, house ownership, medical or disability housing needs**

If there is more than one applicant, all signatures are required.

If your application is accepted, you join the housing waiting list (for a council house) and you become eligible to apply for HAP.

If your application is not accepted, the LA should give you a reason for this decision.

RESOURCE: Guide to Filling in the Social Housing Support Application Form: https://www.housingagency.ie/sites/default/files/2022-03/Easy%20to%20Read%20Guide%20to%20Filling%20in%20the%20Social%20Housing%20Support%20Application%20Form%202022%20FINAL.pdf

!! NOTE !!

Submitting an accurate and complete application form is essential, to avoid delays and the resulting burden of paying full rent for a prolonged period.

It's highly recommended to contact the Housing Section in your Local Authority or Citizens Advice to support you with completing this form.

The Local Authority has 12 weeks from receiving a completed application form to assess it and make a decision on whether you qualify for social housing or not. This timeframe can be extended if the local authority needs additional information, which they will request from you. You must submit the additional information in the required timeframe, or your application may be refused.

2 – Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

HAP allows you to work full-time, while still receiving rent support. If approved, the LA pays a portion or all the monthly rent, directly to the landlord.

In general, the rent must be within the HAP rent limits for your household size and the area you live in. However, local authorities have flexibility to go above the HAP rent limits published, if you can't find accommodation within the limits. They do this on a case-by-case basis. They have discretion to:

- Go up to 35% above the HAP rates (Dublin has a "homeless HAP rate, increasing by 50%)
- Increase the HAP rates for a single person to the rates allowed for couples

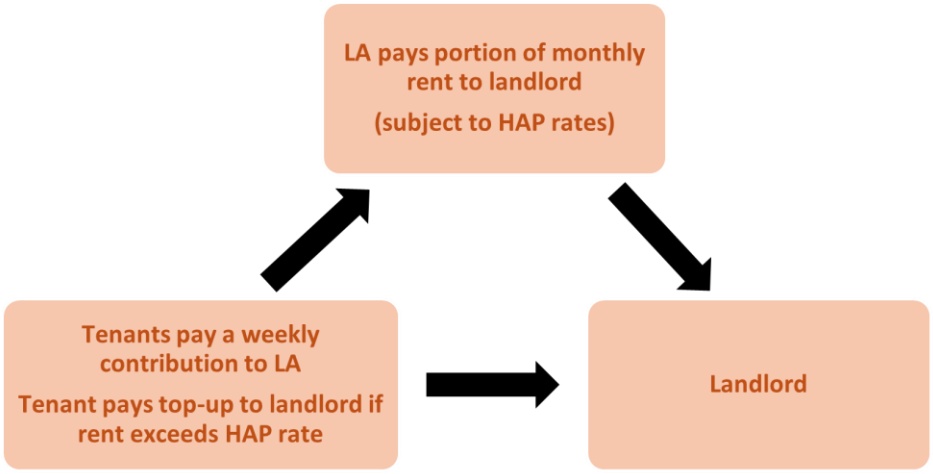
RESOURCE: HAP Rates: https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/renting-a-home/help-with-renting/housing-assistance-payment/#f60791

Tenants must pay a weekly rent contribution to the local authority, based on the differential rent scheme for their LA (on average 17% of their weekly income). Additionally, tenants on social welfare may pay rent beyond the HAP allocation, but not exceeding 30% of their net monthly income (after calculating the HAP contribution). The tenant is responsible for making this top-up payment; however, the CSG may choose to cover this amount on behalf of the beneficiaries for a specified period, not exceeding the 18-month integration period.

An example of an approximate HAP and rent calculation is provided at the end of this document, with an additional Excel template available to tailor the figures to your own situation.

!! NOTE !!

If the HAP tenant does not pay this rent contribution, HAP payments to their landlord will be suspended and eventually stopped.



RESOURCE: Find your Local Authority: https://www.hap.ie/localauthorities/

Application Process:

There are 2 parts to the HAP application form – 1 for the tenant, 1 for the landlord to complete. If the tenant applies online, the landlord will only have the option of completing their section online too. If they are not comfortable with this, it's advisable to submit a paper application (available from your Local Authority).

RESOURCE: Guidance videos for tenants and landlords here: https://www.hap.ie/apply/

The tenant begins, by applying online using their phone and email to register for the "Tenant Portal". Alternatively, they can login via their MyGovID account: https://www.hap.ie/apply/.

Complete the following:

1) Application Details
- Specify Local Authority
- Social Housing Reference Number
- Tenant type (single or joint)
- Personal details

2) Household Income (anyone on the same application)
- Attach evidence

3) Household members
- Personal details of household members

4) Property applicant is Renting
- Property address
- Rent amount

5) Declaration

- Review Terms and Conditions
- Signature

6) Uploads in pdf or jpeg format

- Current payslip (if applicable)
- Social Welfare Award Letter or Screenshot of mywelfare.ie payments
- Employment detail (if applicable)
- Lease Agreement
- Irish Residence Permit
- Letter from school / college for those in full-time education

Once complete, the landlord will receive an email with a link, inviting them to complete their section of the application online, (by registering or logging into the portal).

The Landlord clicks on the property application they wish to complete and access that specific online Portal Application to input the following:

1) PAYEE-Person/Persons Receiving Rent Payment

- Contact details
- Irish residence status
- Bank details – **upload evidence of headed bank statement**
- Proof of ownership – **upload evidence. The following are acceptable:**

❖ RTB Registration Letter within 12 months, addressed to landlord
❖ Current Insurance Policy or Insurance Schedule for the Property. Must include landlord's name, property address, period of cover, building value and on headed paper.
❖ Evidence of payment of current Local Property Tax (LPT). Must include landlord's name, full property address, within 12 months and show payment history. Screen shots from https://lpt.revenue.ie are acceptable.
❖ Mortgage statement within 12 months. Must include landlord's name and property address
❖ Title deeds or similar legal instrument proving ownership. Must be in date and include landlord's name and property address

ENSURE THE NAME ON DOCUMENTS MATCH THE LANDLORD'S NAME IN THE APPLICATION FORM

2) Property Details

- Address
- Local Property Tax Identification number
- Confirmation of who is receiving payment
- Confirmation of all owners of property (if it's not a joint bank account between all owners - written permission for money to go to designated landlord will need to be included in uploads section)

3) Tenancy Details

- Name of tenants
- Relationship between tenant and landlord
- Number of bedrooms
- Property type

- Is property shared?
- Monthly rent amount
- Is there Tenancy Agreement or Rent Book in place?
- Date tenants moved into property
- Date rent is paid up to
- Deposit on property (provide evidence of payment)

4) Landlord Signatures
- Review Terms and Conditions
- Signatures

5) Uploads
- Upload valid Tax Clearance Certificate
- If applicable, upload Rent Pressure Zone Calculation: https://www.rtb.ie/calculator/rpz
- If proof of ownership is in the names of joint owners but the bank account is in the name of one owner, a letter from the joint owner authorising the HAP payment to be made to one owner must be submitted

Most common reason for rejection is related to proof of bank account. With landlord's bank statement header, ensure it is a clear, legible copy and includes:

- Bank header / logo and address
- Must be a bank statement and show the words "Statement" and dated within 2 years
- BIC, IBAN and name of account holder receiving HAP payments (and matches what was submitted on the application). It must be the *account name* that matches, not the person the letter was addressed to
- Name on bank account must match name on HAP application, match tax reference number, and match PPSN

!! **NOTE** !!

If you start your tenancy before your HAP application is approved, you will have to pay the rent until your payments start. Rent paid by tenants to landlords is NOT REFUNDED by HAP.

The most HAP will be backdated, is to the date the LA receive a complete and valid HAP application form from both tenant and landlord.

If you need help filling in application forms you can contact the Housing Section of your Local Authority or a Citizens Information Centre.

RESOURCE: HAP Information Booklet for Landlords: https://hap-cdn-prod.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/02094305/Landlord-booklet-English-2018.pdf

RENT SUPPLEMENT

Rent Supplement is a means-tested payment for certain people living in private rented accommodation who cannot pay the cost of their accommodation from their own resources.

It is a short-term income support for people in the private rented sector.

Beneficiaries of the Humanitarian Admissions Programme *do not* meet the conditions as published, however it's advisable to talk to your local Intreo office to initiate a 'Hardship' case due to the specific situation of your beneficiaries and their inability to meet the requirement of living in private rented accommodation for at least 6 months prior.

Before proceeding with this application, have the following prepared:

1. Proof of application for social housing support
2. A record of your daily expenses, over the period of one month (e.g. food shop, travel)
3. Proof of income details (e.g. bank statement or social welfare statement)
4. Tenancy agreement
5. Additional document(s) requested in the Rent Supplement application
6. A hardship case explanatory letter, detailing the family's legal status, arrival date, the program under which the family arrived, financial circumstances, and the risks the family face, including the potential inability to cover rent from their own resources, leading to the risk of poverty and homelessness.

RESOURCE: https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social-welfare/supplementary-welfare-schemes/rent-supplement/

TENANCY RIGHTS

After living in a property for 6 months, a tenant gains the right to stay for up to 5.5 more years. This is called a 'Part 4 tenancy'. The landlord can still end the tenancy, but only for specific legal reasons as set out in the Residential Tenancies Act — such as if the tenant breaks the lease, the landlord wants to sell the property, or the landlord or their family needs to move in.

FUNDAMENTALS OF HOUSING LAW

RESOURCE: Watch this useful training video on the Fundamentals of Housing Law in Ireland. The video was developed in partnership with the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA) and delivered by the Mercy Law Resource Centre: https://www.supports-theopencommunity.com/housingguidance

Key Points:

- Two relevant laws:
  a) Housing Act 2009
  b) Housing Assessment Regulations 2011
- For non-Irish Nationals, there is no law on determining who may or may not access social housing supports. There is Circular 41/2012 that Local Authorities have discretion in applying and as such has received criticism with a recommendation to update it, to align with

current Irish and EU law: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/circulars/circular-housing-412012-access-to-social-housing-supports-for-non-irish-nationals/

- If you own property abroad, get some legal advice (Local Authorities assess this "alternative accommodation" to see if the proceeds are sufficient to secure suitable accommodation for yourself in Ireland).
- If you have refugee status, you are eligible for Social Housing supports (you must have your Irish Residence Permit to evidence this).
- Each Local Authority / County Council has their own housing scheme. They all are obliged to follow basic criteria, by law, but their schemes can differ (they are not allowed to add criteria that isn't published, so if you research your specific Local Authority, you can get accurate information).
- You have to apply for Social Housing with your specific Local Authority / County Council. Research their specific scheme and what are deemed "priority applications" or how they deal with homeless applications.
- There is a specific form to complete for a "medical priority" – not only must you have a medical professional verify your condition, you need to demonstrate the correlation between the condition and your housing needs (e.g require single story accommodation)
- You are eligible for Social Housing if your income is under the stipulated threshold and you have a need for housing (don't have other options).
- If approved for Social Housing, you go onto a "housing list" (waiting list) for a council house.
- If approved for Social Housing, you are eligible to apply for Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to financially support your rent.
- If approved for HAP, you can ask to remain on the Social Housing list. You will then go on to the "transfer list" for social housing, not remain on the "main housing list" anymore (as you no longer have a *need* for housing, you are accommodated, but still eligible to wait for social housing).

  ** if you inform your Local Authority within 2 weeks of getting HAP, that you wish to remain on the waiting list, you get to keep your current wait time.
- Landlords can not legally refuse to accept HAP – that's discrimination.
- A huge benefit of HAP is that you can work and earn money. If you go above the threshold, your HAP will NOT be withdrawn, however you must still inform your Local Authority of your increased income.
- If, down the line you are allocated a Social House, they will check your income and if you are over the threshold at that time, you will be removed from the list.

APPROXIMATE HAP AND RENT CALCULATOR - TEMPLATE

INCOME

1	**Beneficiary Composition**		2 parents, 2 minor children
	Adults		2
	Dependents over 18 years old		0
	Dependents under 18 years old		2
2	**Weekly Social Welfare (Jobseekers Allowance)**	**2025**	
	Adult aged 18 - 24 yrs	€244.00	
	Adult aged 25 yrs and over	€244.00	€244.00
	Increase for child dependent (under 12 yrs)	€50.00	€100.00
	Increase for child dependent (12 yrs and over)	€62.00	
	Increase for adult dependent (18 - 24 yrs)	€153.70	
	Increase for adult dependent (25 yrs and over)	€162.00	€162.00
	One parent family payment	€244.00	
3a	**Total weekly income**		€506.00
3b	**Total monthly income**		€2,192.67

EXAMPLE

LOCAL AUTHORITY

4	**Local Authority / County**	Carlow County Council
5	**HAP rate**	€600.00

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/renting-a-home/help-with-renting/housing-assistance-payment/#f60791

6a	**Add 35% discretionary allowance to HAP rate**	€810.00
6b	**Add 50% Homeless HAP to HAP rate - DUBLIN ONLY**	€900.00

HAP PAYMENTS

7	**(Average weekly contribution) = 17% PAID WEEKLY**	€86.02
7b	**(Average monthly contribution) = 17%**	€372.75
8a	**Remaining weekly income**	€419.98
8b	**Remaining monthly income**	€1,819.91
9	**Receiving Social Welfare, the maximum you can pay in rent contribution and top up is 30% of your net monthly income**	
	30% of total monthly income	€657.80
	30% total monthly income less 17% weekly contribution	€372.75
	Amount you can top-up your rent by	€285.05
10a	**HAP + 35% discretion + 30% = max allowable rent**	€1,095.05
10b	**HAP + 50% discretion + 30% = max allowable rent**	€1,185.05