



What is HAP?

HAP is a form of social housing support provided by all local authorities. HAP means that local authorities can provide housing assistance for households who qualify for social housing support, including many long-term Rent Supplement recipients.

Under HAP, local authorities will make a monthly payment to a landlord, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a tenant's behalf. In return, the tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the local authority. This 'rent contribution' is based on the household income. It is calculated in the same way as the rent paid by a tenant of a local authority owned property.

Why is HAP being introduced?

HAP provides a more integrated system of housing supports and aims to:

- allow recipients to work full-time and still keep their housing support, and
- allow all social housing supports to be accessed through one body – the local authority.

Who is eligible for HAP?

- Any household that qualifies for social housing support can apply for HAP.
- Current Rent Supplement recipients who qualify for social housing support will be transferred from Rent Supplement to HAP on a phased basis.

How does HAP work?

- To qualify for HAP, a household must be qualified for social housing support by their local authority, which means the household must qualify to go on the local authority housing waiting list.
- HAP recipients must find their own accommodation in the private rented market. (This is the same as the current Rent Supplement scheme.)
- The landlord must agree to rent their property to the HAP recipient.
- The local authority will make a monthly payment to the landlord. This payment is made on the last Wednesday of each month. This covers the tenant's stay in the property for that calendar month. The payment is subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, and that the tenant pays their rent contribution to their local authority.
- The HAP recipient pays their rent contribution to the local authority. Rent contributions will generally be made through An Post's Household Budget Scheme. If the tenant does not pay this rent contribution, HAP payments to their landlord will be suspended and eventually stopped. The tenant is then responsible for paying the full rent themselves.

What benefits has HAP?

For HAP recipients



- HAP allows recipients to work full-time, while still receiving housing support.
- The rent contribution payable by the HAP recipient will be based on the 'differential rent scheme' for their local authority. This scheme links the rent contribution a household must pay to the household income and the ability to pay.

- HAP will help to regulate the private rental sector and improve standards of accommodation. Local authorities will inspect the rental property to make sure that it meets the required standards.
- HAP recipients can, if they want, avail of other social housing supports and options through the local authority's transfer list.
- Local authorities will be the single point of contact for all social housing supports.

For landlords



- The landlord will be paid electronically, on the last Wednesday of each month; this covers the occupation of the property by the HAP tenant for that calendar month, subject to the HAP recipient paying the local authority their weekly rent contribution.
- There will be no need for rent collection from tenants who are HAP recipients leading to administrative savings for landlords.
- All payments are made electronically.
- Since 1 January 2016, landlords who rent to tenants in receipt of social housing supports such as HAP may avail of increased tax relief. This allows property owners to claim 100% relief on their mortgage interest, as an expense against rental income.

To qualify for this tax relief, the landlord must undertake to make the accommodation available to qualifying tenants for at least three years, and this undertaking must be registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (www.rtb.ie).

Further information on increased tax reliefs is available on www.revenue.ie



Who will continue to receive Rent Supplement?

Rent Supplement will still be available from the Department of Social Protection for people who don't qualify for social housing support – for example, someone who is temporarily unemployed. Contact the Department of Social Protection for more information at www.welfare.ie

How can HAP recipients transfer to other housing supports?

HAP recipients who want to access other social housing supports through the transfer system, operated by local authorities, can apply to transfer to other forms of social housing support. This type of support includes local authority housing.

As a HAP recipient, your chance of getting a different form of social housing support is not affected by accepting HAP.

Where can I find more information on HAP?

Contact the Housing Section of your local authority.

For further information about HAP, visit www.hap.ie or The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government website: www.housing.gov.ie or

Citizens Information website: www.citizensinformation.ie



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Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

www.hap.ie