Who is eligible for 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 and the ability to pay.

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.

What benefits has HAP?

- 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.

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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.
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- 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.

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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, Community and Local Government website: www.housing.gov.ie or Citizen’s Information website: www.citizensinformation.ie

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