

**Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
Differential Rent Scheme 2024**

(1) Commencement Date

This Scheme will apply from 6th January 2024. This is the day on which the first weekly rent payment of 2024 is due.

(2) Calculation of Rent

Differential Rent calculated in accordance with this scheme will be based on current household income. This will include the income of Principal and Subsidiary Earners.

Principal Earners -The Principal Earner is the member of the household who is in receipt of the highest assessable income.

The rent on this income will be calculated at 16% of the principal earner's weekly assessable income which exceeds €35.

Subsidiary earners -A subsidiary earner is anyone else in the household with an assessable income.

After the rent of the principal earner is assessed, the same calculation will be applied to the incomes of subsidiary earners in the household, but in this case, the rent calculation for each subsidiary earner will be capped at €20 per person.

Reductions to calculated rent

Under this Scheme the weekly rent will be reduced by €1 per week for each dependent child. A dependent child is:

- a person under 18 years of age who does not have an independent income or who,
- is under 23 and is in full time education

For the purpose of this Scheme, a child or full-time student under 23 years of age is deemed to be mainly maintained by the Principal Earner/Subsidiary Earner if his/her income is less than €100 per week.

(3) Tenancy Types

Rents calculated in accordance with this Scheme will apply to the following categories of tenant:

- Households living in properties owned or leased by the Council
- Households provided with accommodation by the Council under the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)
- Households provided with social housing support by the Council through the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme
- Tenants of Approved Housing Bodies (AHB's) operating within Dún Laoghaire -Rathdown. (The calculation and collection of rent for AHB tenancies is the responsibility of the respective AHB).

The rent of households living in certain types of Traveller Specific Accommodation (such as halting sites) are not charged a differential rent. Instead, they pay a fixed rent.

(4) Categories of Assessable Income

The following are the categories of assessable sources of income under this Scheme.

(a) Income from Employment

An employed person is, in general, assessed on their weekly wage including overtime, net of income tax, universal social charge and P.R.S.I. payments (where applicable).

Occasional lump-sum bonus payments will be excluded from the calculation of rent except in cases where the amount involved is greater than one-third of basic pay. In such cases, the excess will be assessed for rent purposes.

All other regular payments in the nature of pay are assessable.

Current income details for all employed occupants of a household must be certified by the relevant employer and submitted by the tenant/s to the Council annually and/or as requested. Tenants/occupants with zero-hours contracts must also submit a copy of the relevant contract and an End of Year Summary statement of PAYE, PRSI & USC when available, or other appropriate documentation, to assist in determining assessable income.

(b) Income from Self-Employment

In the case of self-employed persons, income will be determined on the basis of the submission of satisfactory documentary evidence of income such as a Notice of Tax Assessment or Certified Accounts.

Failure to submit satisfactory evidence of income will result in rent being assessed on the basis of the assumed incomes listed below.

Occupation	Assumed Net Income
Professionals	€800
Taxi Drivers - Licence Plate Owners	€500
Hackney Drivers and Cosey Drivers	€470
Tradespeople	€540
Non-Trade/Other Businesses	€470

(c) Income from Social Welfare

All social welfare recipients will be assessed as per Section (5 & 6) hereunder. Where details are not supplied, an income based on the maximum Social Welfare entitlements will be assumed.

(d) Other Sources of Income

Other sources of income assessed for rent purposes include:

- Income from any employment related pensions
- Income from the 'Room for a Student – Local Authority Tenancies' scheme'
- Income from Maintenance Agreements

(5) Assessable Social Welfare Income

Income from the following sources will be assessed in full for rent purposes:

- All social insurance and social assistance payments, allowances and pensions, H.S.E. allowances and SOLAS training allowances.
- The full rate of benefit/allowance will be applicable for the purpose of assessment of rent where the unemployed person is in receipt of reduced Jobseekers Benefit, Jobseekers Allowance or Supplementary Welfare Allowance under Sections 7-9 of the Social Welfare Act 2010.
- Family Income Supplement.
- Employment supports such as Community Employment Scheme/Gateway/Tús/JobBridge
- Back to Education Allowance
- Back to Work Enterprise Allowance/Short-term Enterprise Allowance
- Area Partnerships – for 12 months
- Carer's Allowance/Benefit. (**Note:** where the Carer is also in employment, the larger source of income will be assessed for rent purposes.)

(6) Disregarded income

Income from the following sources will not be assessed for rent purposes

- Child Benefit, Orphan's Allowances or Orphans' Pensions
- The first €100 of income of children or full-time students under 23 years.
- Foster Care Allowances
- Scholarships, Higher Education Grants.
- Allowances for domiciliary care
- Allowances or assistance received from any charitable organisation.
- Living Alone Allowance/Fuel Allowance.
- Over 80's Allowance.
- Exceptional Needs Payments.

(7) Assumed income

Where the Council specifically request the return of particular income details, but the tenant does not provide them, we reserve the right to assume an income and/or rely on income details received from other State Bodies such as the Department of Social Protection for the purposes of assessment.

(8) Household Budget & Standing Orders

Tenants must sign a Household Budget deduction form or Standing Order form as appropriate.

(9) Commencement of Tenancy

Tenant/s must pay two weeks rent prior to the signing of a new tenancy agreement. This is not a deposit. It is rent paid in advance to allow time for the setup of household budget or standing order payments.

(10) Maximum Rent

There will be no maximum rent.

(11) Minimum Rent

Any rent charges calculated under this scheme will be subject to a minimum charge of €22.00 which is exclusive of additional charges under Section 12.

(12) Additional Charges

The Council reserves the right to apply additional charges to rent accounts relating to some properties to cover the cost of additional services provided to them. These charges can be general or specific to the development the property is located in and can include:

- A Heating Service Charge (this relates to the servicing of the heating system in the property)
- A Heating Charge (this relates to properties heated with a district heating system that the Council pays the overall bill for. The charge applied to the rent account relates to the energy used by the tenant/s in their property)
- Waste Management Charge (this applies mostly to apartments where the Council co-ordinate and pay for the bin service on behalf of the tenants)

(13) Fixed Rents

Where a historic fixed rent applies, the rent will increase by €1 per week each year. Tenants may, however, opt to pay a Differential Rent that will be calculated in accordance with the provisions of this scheme.

(14) Changes in Income or Family Circumstances

Any increases in income should be notified to the Council immediately as they occur to avoid back-dated rents being applied.

Documentation to support changes in household income should be relevant to the period under review and should be provided to the Council as soon as it is available.

Where tenants wish to include an additional person on their rent account, they are obliged to complete a Permission-to-Reside application form which is available from the Allocations Section.

To allow an adult to move into a Council property without prior written approval from the Allocations Section is a breach of the Tenancy Agreement.

If written permission is granted, rent will then be revised from the date of permission or date of recorded occupancy, whichever is the earlier.

(15) Rent Arrears

Where a rent account falls into arrears, the tenant must contact the Council's Housing Rents Section immediately to discuss the situation. The Rents Section can help put a debt management plan in place that will include paying an additional amount to the normal weekly rent due under this Scheme.

(16) Hardship

Where payment of a rent calculated in accordance with the Scheme would give rise to hardship, the Council may agree to accept a lesser sum from a tenant for a specified period.

A request for Hardship must be made in writing and outline the reason/s hardship is being sought. The Tenant may be required to provide documentation confirming the hardship request.

(17) Termination of Tenancy

On termination of a tenancy, for whatever reason, rent, mesne rates and/or appropriate property charges are applicable up to the date of handover of the property to the Council.