

**Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council**

Record of Executive Business and Chief Executive's Orders

Differential Rent Scheme 2024

The Council is responsible for rent assessments and collections in respect of all social housing tenancies in Council owned, Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and Leased properties. Rent assessments in respect of tenancies in Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) properties in South Dublin County are conducted by the National HAP Shared Service in accordance with the terms of the Council's Differential Rent Scheme.

Chief Executive's Order HS/ 105 /2021 authorised the current Differential Rent Scheme which commenced on 1st April 2021. The Differential Rent Scheme as outlined below is applicable to tenancies of all Council rented, Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), Leased and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) properties.

1. Commencement Date

This Scheme will apply with effect from 1st January 2024.

2. Method of Calculation of Rent

The weekly differential rent is calculated on basis of the assessable income of all members of the household. All tenants of all Council rented, RAS and Leased properties are obliged to notify South Dublin County Council of any changes in circumstances, including the household income, or persons moving in/out of the house.

The weekly Differential Rent is calculated based on 10% of the total household aggregated assessable income plus €3 (three euro).

Households whose net income is in excess of the relevant social housing income eligibility thresholds for their family size will pay 10% differential rent on all of their net income plus a further 10% differential rent on any income in excess of the relevant social housing income eligibility thresholds for their family size. The current social housing income eligibility thresholds are as follows:

Category	Net Income
1 adult	€40,000
1 adult & 1 child	€41,000
1 adult & 2 children	€42,000
1 adult & 3 children	€43,000
2 adults	€42,000
2 adults and 1 child	€43,000
2 adults and 2 children	€44,000
3 adults	€44,000
4 adults	€44,000

*Plus €1,000 for each additional child. * Plus €2,000 for each additional adult capped at €44,000

3. Minimum Rents

A minimum weekly rent of €26.20 (twenty-six euro and twenty cent) will generally apply to all tenancies in respect of rented dwellings.

Certain tenancies, where all occupants are aged sixty-five or over and are in receipt of an income less than or equivalent to the State Pension contributory rate of €277.30 will be eligible for a €10 (ten euro) weekly discount.

4. Income included in rent assessment

Income from the following sources is assessed in full for differential rent purposes:

- (a) Income from employment, including self-employment.
- (b) All social insurance and social welfare payments, allowances and pensions.
- (c) Income from any pensions or other sources not included at (a) or (b) above including approved / agreed maintenance payments from another person.
- (d) Income received from the 'Room for a Student – Local Authority Tenancies' scheme'

4.1 Income of an employed person

The assessable income of an employed person is in general, the nett average weekly wage i.e. Employee Pay Related Social Insurance contributions (where payable) and any statutory deductions on such income is excluded.

Nett overtime payments, shift allowances, bonuses, commission, etc., are included for calculation of differential rent.

4.2 Income of a self-employed person

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

Where the tenant(s) fails to provide satisfactory evidence of income the following assumed nett incomes apply:

Occupation	Assumed Nett Income Weekly
Taxi Drivers – Licence Plate owners	€500
Hackney drivers and Cosey Drivers	€500
Trades/Crafts person	€560
Non-Trade/Other business	€500

5. Income excluded from rent assessment.

Income from the following sources is disregarded for rent purposes:

- (a) Child Benefit, Orphans' Allowances
- (b) Scholarships, Higher Education Grants.
- (c) Allowances payable for fostering children.
- (d) Allowances for domiciliary care of disabled children.
- (e) Any income accruing to a member of a household as a result of the payment of a Carer's Allowance.
- (f) Allowances or assistance received from any charitable organisation.
- (g) Extra allowance for people aged 80 or over payable under certain categories of Social Welfare income.
- (h) Fuel allowance/ Living alone allowance.
- (i) Court approved maintenance payments to another person.
- (j) Working family payment.

6. New Tenancy

Tenants are requested to pay their first weeks rent at the time of signing a new tenancy agreement. This is to allow for the first rent charge while the rent account is being set up.

7. Rent Review

It is the tenant's responsibility to notify the Council immediately of any change to their financial or household circumstances. The Council will review the differential rent account of each tenant and inform the tenant(s) of the revised weekly differential rent.

Tenants can appeal the revised differential rent by completing the Rent Assessment Form and providing all supporting documentation.

Where the Council specifically requests the return of particular income details, it reserves the right, in the event of failure on the part of a tenant to supply that information, to assume an income for the purposes of differential rent assessment. In the case of tenants in receipt of Social Welfare income, the Council will assume a minimum income of €300 per week and for employed/self-employed tenants we will assume a minimum income of €500 for household members over 18 years of age.

Where a tenant wishes to include an additional person on the rent account, the tenant is required to seek prior approval from the Council in writing. The tenant is obliged to complete a formal Inclusion on Rent Form. Where approval is given, the revised rent will be assessed from the date of approval, or date of recorded occupancy, whichever is the earlier in accordance with the Differential Rent Scheme.

If an occupier leaves a property, it is the tenant's responsibility to notify the Council in writing and to provide documentary evidence of the occupier's new address. Occupiers are removed from the date the evidence is received to the Rents office.

8. Hardship

Where a weekly debit calculated in accordance with the Scheme may give rise to undue hardship, the Council may amend the rent if deemed appropriate.

9. Household Budget

Where appropriate, tenants must sign a Household Budget or a Standing Order deduction form in respect of all new tenancies.

10. Rent Arrears

Where a rent account falls into arrears, the tenant must contact the Council's Debt Management Unit immediately to discuss the situation. A Debt Management Plan may be put in place that will entail paying an additional amount to the normal weekly rent due under this Scheme. Debt will be managed in line with the Council's Debt Management Policy.

11. Refunds

Refunds will be granted upon request where a credit is due, including following a reassessment of the household income.

12. Additional Charges

The Council reserves the right to apply additional charges to cover the cost of additional services (for example, property management fees, waste collection services, communal area maintenance etc.) provided to certain properties. Any such charges will be communicated in advance to tenants of the relevant properties before being applied to the rent account.


I recommend that the foregoing terms of the proposed Differential Rent Scheme be approved with effect from 1st January 2024.


A/Senior Executive Officer

ORDER:

The Differential Rent Scheme, with the terms as outlined above, applicable to tenancies of all Council rented, Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), Leased and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) properties, with effect from 1st January 2024, is hereby approved.

20/5/24
Date


A/ Director of Housing, Social and
Community Development

To whom the appropriate powers have been delegated by order number DELG 624 of the Chief Executive of South Dublin County council.