



For more information on the Adur and Worthing Councils response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) go to <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

FAQs - Social Housing Tenants

Rent and Service Charge

Q. Do I still need to continue to pay my rent and service charge

A. Yes, you need to continue to pay your rent and service charge in full.

If you are worried about falling into arrears because you cannot pay your rent, it is important that you contact your landlord immediately. If your landlord is Adur Homes, please send an email to tenancy.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk and an officer will contact you and do all they can to help you. It is important that you explain your situation, so the right support can be given. Please provide your address and a telephone number on which we can contact you.

Q. Are you going to stop charging me rent?

A. You will still be charged rent.

The rent paid by all Adur Homes tenants goes into a separate account called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This account is used to fund repair and maintenance to your property, maintaining and cleaning common areas including open spaces and green spaces and other obligations we have as a landlord. By law this account is separate from the 'General Fund' that councils use for other financial purposes.

Most social landlords will already have sent you a letter telling you how much rent you will have to pay from April 2020. If you pay by direct debit please ensure that the correct amount is paid and that you do not stop your direct debit without first contacting your landlord. If you are in receipt of Universal

Credit, please notify the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of your new rent.

If you are finding it difficult to pay your rent, you need to make a claim to Universal Credit for help to pay your rent. You can only make a claim for Universal Credit online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

Q. What if I can't pay all of my rent or service charge? Can I just pay some of it for now?

- A. It is important that you continue to pay your rent or service charge in full where possible. Paying as much as you are able to is better than paying nothing at all. However, if you are not able to pay your full rent, it is important that you contact your landlord as soon as possible. Any unpaid rent will accumulate as rent arrears which you will still need to pay off. Unpaid rent arrears may eventually put your tenancy at risk. If you are worried about falling into arrears because you cannot pay rent or service charge in full, please contact your landlord. Adur Homes tenants should send an email to tenancy.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk. Please provide your address and a telephone number on which we can contact you.

Financial difficulties

Q. I will have no income because my employer has told me to go on leave without pay (furlough).

- A. If you and your employer both agree, your employer might be able to keep you on the payroll if they're unable to operate or have no work for you to do because of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is known as being 'on furlough'.

You could get paid 80% of your wages, up to a monthly cap of £2,500 through the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

[Check if you could be covered by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.](#)

If your salary is reduced as a result of these changes or you are out of work, you may be eligible for support through Universal Credit. You can only make a claim for Universal Credit online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

Q. I don't want to make a claim to Universal Credit, I am on Tax Credits, can't I just make a claim for Housing Benefit instead?

A. There has been no provision made for you to be able to do this. The advice is that you will need to make a claim to Universal Credit who have put special rules in place to deal with Coronavirus in relation to face-to-face consultations and medical assessments.

If you have been placed in temporary accommodation by the Council, you may be able to claim Housing Benefit. You can contact the Council by sending an email to housing-accommodation@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Q. Can I apply for help with my Rent and Council Tax if I have lost my job?

A. Council Tax should be made directly to the Council even if the customer is also claiming UC from the DWP

If you currently pay your Council Tax over ten months and want to request that your instalment dates are changed so that you pay in February and March 2021 instead of April and May 2020 (or May and June 2020) please email the Revenues & Benefits Service at revsbens@adur-worthing.gov.uk with the following information and we will consider your request:

- Type 'coronavirus instalment change' in the subject heading of your email and include the following.
- Your name
- Your address
- Your Council Tax account number (this is shown on your bill)
- Confirm that you are up to date with your payments but you would like to delay your first payment until June or July 2020
- If you are currently due to pay over twelve months (from April 2020 to March 2021) you can request that your first instalment is delayed until June or July 2020 but please be aware that the new instalments will be higher than if you keep to your existing twelve months.

Eviction

Q. I am worried about being evicted

The government has passed emergency legislation so that landlords will not be able to start proceedings to evict tenants for at least a 3 month period.

All court proceedings for eviction are on hold until at least 25 June 2020, regardless of whether an application has been made to the court.

This means most tenants can not be evicted before the end of June at the earliest. You should stay in your home if your landlord gives you notice or asks you to leave. If you receive a notice of eviction from your landlord or if you think you may be evicted, the Council can provide you with advice and assistance. You can contact the Council by sending an email to housing-needs@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Q. Will my landlord be able to evict me after the emergency legislation period for rent or service charge arrears.

A. Your landlord will not be able to evict you during the emergency legislation period, including any period covered by an extension of the legislation. However, your arrears will continue to increase if you do not pay your rent or service charge.

Your landlord will be able to evict you at the end of the emergency eviction period by following the correct process.

At the end of this period, landlords and tenants will be expected to work together to establish an affordable repayment plan, taking into account tenants' individual circumstances. It is important that you seek advice if you are in arrears or if you think your landlord will evict you for any reason. You can contact the Council for housing advice by sending an email to housing-options@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Adaptation

Q. I am disabled and require an adaptation in my home. How is Covid 19 affecting this?

A. There have been some changes to the process, especially since a lot of people requiring such adaptations are vulnerable in some way.

You still need an assessment of your needs to be carried out by an occupational therapist. They can be contacted at West Sussex County Council on 01243 642121.

If you have been assessed and then referred to Adur & Worthing Councils, your application will be progressed as far as possible. You will be helped with forms and questionnaires over the phone by our Home Improvement Assistance team and any plans and tenders for work will be completed on a sight-unseen basis to take the application as far as being approved.

No actual works can be started in order to protect the health and safety of the contractors and the customer, but we hope that by completing a lot of the paperwork beforehand, we can arrange the adaptation with as little delay as possible.