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| This factsheet gives general legal information. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information is correct, this cannot be guaranteed. It is not a substitute for legal advice. You should always seek legal advice for a legal matter.  You can contact Suffolk Law Centre by phone on (01473) 408111, by email at [office@suffolklawcentre.org.uk](mailto:office@suffolklawcentre.org.uk), or at 46a St. Matthews Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 3EP.  This Factsheet was updated on 06/04/2020 | The Coronavirus Act 2020 gives little protection to people who rent their properties. If you start to get into rent arrears because you have lost your job, or you have had your hours cut please don’t ignore the problem.  If you are a **social tenant** and rent your property direct from a local authority or housing association they should be able to help you if you are having problems paying your rent. Contact your housing officer as soon as you can.  Further information can be found on the Citizens Advice website:  <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/social-housing/during-your-tenancy/you-cant-afford-the-rent-for-your-council-home/>  If you rent from a **private landlord** you should let them know your situation and start to discuss how best to manage the rent arrears. Your landlord cannot start possession proceedings because of the rent arrears until September 2020. Talking to your landlord is vital – they will be expected to consider your situation and not make unreasonable demands for repayment before issuing possession proceedings (see Fact Sheet 4 – Possession Proceedings)  Further information can be found on the Citizens Advice website:  [**https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-privately/during-your-tenancy/dealing-with-rent-arrears/**](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-privately/during-your-tenancy/dealing-with-rent-arrears/)  **Discretionary Housing Payments**  A Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) could be available if you are struggling to pay your rent or other housing costs.  To apply for a DHP you must be receiving Housing Benefit or the housing costs element of Universal Credit. (see Fact Sheet 2).To apply for a DHP you need to contact your district or borough council.  **Legal Aid** Housing advice and assistance is available to help you if you are financially eligible – find out at:  <https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid> |