

APPENDIX

The objective of the COVID Winter Grant Scheme is to provide support to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic throughout the winter period where alternative sources of assistance may be unavailable.

This support will be provided through organisations known to the households and the grant will not be opened out to all members of the public to apply for.

What can the grant be used for?

Supermarket vouchers, contributions to food banks and food clubs, fuel vouchers and support with water bills. Supermarket vouchers can also be used for essential items such as a winter coat, sanitary products etc.

Who is the grant for?

The Grant will be used solely for residents who are struggling financially due to Covid.

The Grant will be used for families with children up to the age of 18.

The Grant will be used for vulnerable households without children (including individuals) so that no vulnerable household is excluded.

Households without children and vulnerable individuals who are struggling to purchase food, utility bills and other essentials between December and the end of March 2021 can access support.

Households with children

The Grant will be used solely for residents of Nottinghamshire County, excluding the City, unless they attend a county early years setting, school or college where they meet one of the following:

- There are children/young people within the household who are eligible for free school meals due to low household income (to cover term time periods). This will be managed by schools and FE Colleges.
- There are children within the household who are eligible for a funded 2-year-old childcare place or the Early Years Pupil Premium (to cover term time periods). This will be managed by early years settings.
- The household is in receipt of or has made an application for Universal Credit or other Income Related Employment or Support Allowance (ESA), Income or Jobseekers Allowance income based.
- The household has no recourse to public funds.
- There is considerable in-work poverty (which may be temporary).
- The household has been assessed by a professional as in urgent need as they do not have the means for essential food, energy or water

Vulnerable households without children/Vulnerable individuals

The Grant will be used solely for residents of Nottinghamshire County, excluding the City, where households without children and vulnerable individuals who are struggling to purchase food, utility bills and other essentials between December and the end of March 2021

- Care Leavers aged 19-24 (to receive support through their Social Worker or Personal Advisor).
- Young People aged 19-24 years old with an Education Healthcare Plan who are eligible for Free School Meals. This will be managed by Further Education Colleges.
- The household is in receipt of or has made an application for Universal Credit, or other Income Related Employment or Support Allowance (ESA), Income or Jobseekers Allowance income based.
- The household has no recourse to public funds
- Referred by a Foodbank or Citizens Advice Bureau after seeking debt advice.
- Verified as Rough Sleeping or Homeless
- There is considerable in-work poverty (which may be temporary)
- The household has been assessed by a professional as in urgent need as they do not have the means for essential food, energy or water

The following considerations and restrictions must be applied

The value of each voucher should not exceed the following allocations:

- No more than £30 per household member. If there are more than 3 members of the household, we can only issue a voucher up to £90. The same applies if preparing parcels of food and essentials, they should be worth no more than £30 for one person and no more than £90 for households with more than 3 people.
- Households can claim vouchers / parcels through this scheme no more than 3 times between now and the end of March 2021.
- Not more than £178 total per household in respect of utilities (up to two fuel payments at £49, one water payment of £80).
- Repeat requests should be monitored in order to signpost to effective long-term support and advice.
- Supporting evidence of need and eligibility should be seen and recorded for audit purposes.

Exclusions:

- Those who live outside of the Nottinghamshire County Council borders will be excluded from this scheme and will need to approach their own Local Authority.
- Housing costs are expressly excluded. The scheme is not intended to cover payment of rent or other housing costs because these are not directly related to food or utility bills and other benefits and support is available to cover these costs.
- The grant will not be used for white goods. If requests are made for the purchase of white goods e.g. cookers, fridges, boiler repair etc, workers will be asked to assist individuals to find alternative support e.g. workers can apply to the Children in Need Emergency Essentials Programme on behalf of households with children, or through Nottingham Energy Partnership for white goods and heating/energy efficiency/home improvement requests.

Assistance with utility payments (administered by Nottingham Energy Partnership (NEP))

Each household can receive up to a total of £178 from the Covid Winter Grant Scheme. This comprises a maximum of two fuel payments at £49 each and a water bill payment of £80. This is dependent on verification by NEP and utility partners.

Clients will be asked to provide proof of a change in their circumstances due to COVID-19, and acceptable documents include any of the below:

- Recent bank statement
- Benefits confirmation letter
- GP letter
- Termination / redundancy letter
- Utility supplier debt notice or disconnection letter
- Energy bill showing arrears

NEP will aim to respond to phone/website enquiries within 2 working days to complete an assessment of the client's circumstances.

Clients will receive their utility payment within 5 working days depending on receipt of their documentation.

A client may claim a utility payment from NEP regardless of their outstanding debts to suppliers.

Referrals have to come *via* frontline members of staff

NEP will also assess whether the client could benefit from additional grant schemes for first time central heating or air source heat pumps as a long-term solution (e.g. Warm Homes Hub, Green Homes Grant).