

Annexe A

COVID Winter Grant Scheme

- 1 COVID Winter Grant Scheme is provided by City of York Council to support people who require urgent financial assistance as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 2 COVID Winter Grant Scheme will provide assistance to families with children and other vulnerable households.
- 3 COVID Winter Grant Scheme can provide assistance with
 - Food and other household essentials, such as toiletries
 - Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
 - Water bills (including sewerage)
 - Mobile phone and internet connection/data bills
 - Other exceptional emergency costs
- 4 Where possible assistance will be provided in the form of e-Vouchers. Other grant award payments will be made to the applicant's bank account.
- 5 The scheme is discretionary, awards will be assessed on the criteria set out. Applicants who are assessed as outside the criteria will be directed to alternative advice and support as appropriate.

Who can apply?

- 6 The scheme is open to City of York residents who are over 16 years of age, who require urgent financial assistance as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 7 To be considered you must have been financially impacted by the pandemic **and** have savings of less than £2000
And you are
- 8 A family with a child / children
Or
- 9 A person in need of additional support

A family with a child / children is a single claimant or couple claimants who are responsible for

- one or more children who will be under the age of 19 as at 31 March 2021;
- or a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit (for example, Child Benefit) is paid or free school meals are provided;
- or where an eligible child is living on his or her own, they are treated as a 'household'

A person in need of additional support may include, but is not restricted to:

- Anyone suffering severe financial hardship, including people with mortgages arrears and rent arrears in private rented accommodation.
- Someone age 24 or under with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC)
- Someone age 19 or under classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- A person identified as COVID clinically extremely vulnerable
- A person who has a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem¹.
- Elderly, frail or confused older people
- People who are seriously ill or have a severe long term health condition.
- People who are recently bereaved
- Pregnant women or those who have recently given birth
- Recently unemployed people
- Care leaver
- Those fleeing domestic abuse
- Those who have difficulty in understanding, speaking or reading English

Who cannot apply?

10 The following categories of people do not qualify for help:

- People who do not live within the City of York Council boundaries

¹ The Royal College of Psychiatrists and Money Advice Trust's Debt collection and mental health: ten steps to improve recovery provides useful guidance and further definition of what constitutes a mental health problem

What assistance can I apply for?

- 11 COVID Winter Grant Scheme can provide assistance with
- Food and other household essentials, such as toiletries
 - Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
 - Water bills (including sewerage)
 - Mobile phone and internet connection/data bills
 - Other exceptional emergency costs
- 12 Assistance will be considered based on monthly expenses and liabilities for your household.

What information I will need to provide

- 13 We will need to ask you for information and evidence to show
- You meet the criteria as
 - your household includes a child/ren
 - you are a person in need of additional support
 - Your household income, savings, and expenditure, including
 - Earnings
 - DWP benefits
 - Any other income
 - Readily available funds - cash in hand, in the bank or building society accounts;
- 14 We will need to establish why you are applying for financial support. We may ask you about your personal circumstances in depth to make sure that you are seeking all necessary support.
- 15 If you are applying for assistance with
- Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
 - Water bills (including sewerage)
 - Mobile phone and internet connection/data bills
 - Other exceptional emergency costs

we will need to see evidence you are liable for these costs and the amounts owed and how your utilities are paid for e.g. Pre-payment meter, monthly direct debit, quarterly.

- 16 If you are not seeking the support you need we will suggest agencies that may be able to help you. For example this could be getting you some advice and help on how to prepare an income and expenditure budget or by helping you to access more specialist agencies such as, for example, the StepChange debt charity.
- 17 If you apply to the scheme again and you are not getting the support that you need we will refer you to a support agency and often this may be a condition of receiving the second award.

How many times can I apply?

- 18 You can apply for a maximum of 1 COVID winter grant award per month. The funding is ring-fenced and covers the period from 1 December 2020 until the end of March 2021.

How do I apply?

- 19 Applications should be made on-line at www.york.gov.uk.
- 20 If applicants do not have access to the internet or need help making an application on-line the customer service team can complete the on-line application over the phone on the applicants behalf by calling 01904 551550.

Advice and support workers can also complete applications on behalf of residents. See www.york.gov.uk/BenefitsAdvice

How will awards be made?

- 21 Food and other household essentials, such as toiletries
- Awards will be made by supermarket e-vouchers
- 22 Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
Water bills (including sewerage)
Mobile phone and internet connection/data bills
- Awards for monthly bills will be paid direct to peoples bank account

23 Other exceptional emergency costs

- Awards will be made by supermarket e-vouchers where possible
- Where this is not possible, awards will be paid direct to peoples bank account

Reviews

- 24 You have the right to a review if you are unhappy with our decision. The decision will be looked at again by someone who did not make the original decision.
- 25 Where the Council cannot help it will provide you with information about other agencies that may be able to help and where appropriate, make a referral on your behalf. If you remain unhappy you can use the Council's complaints process.

Annexe

Definition of clinically extremely vulnerable groups

- People who are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19. There are 2 ways you may be identified as clinically extremely vulnerable:
- You have one or more of the [conditions listed](#), or
- Your hospital clinician or GP has added you to the [Shielded patients list](#) because, based on their clinical judgement, they deem you to be at higher risk of serious illness if you catch the virus.

[Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#)

Definition of a family with a child /children

A family as a single claimant or couple claimants who are responsible for

- one or more children, or
- one or more qualifying young person
 - someone aged 16 to 19 and in full time non-advanced education or training
 - someone age 24 or under with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC)
 - someone age 19 or under classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET).