

Household Support Fund - Grant scheme

Medway Council will support by way of supermarket vouchers that can be used for groceries and fuel vouchers or energy cards for energy payments. Vouchers can only be used for the purpose they are provided for. Cash payments will only be made where voucher payments cannot be made. Applications can be made by residents directly on Medway Council's website.

To be eligible for a payment you must;

- Be aged 16 or over
- Be in demonstrable hardship. This will be demonstrated by completion of an income and expenditure statement and by the household providing their latest two months' bank statements for all accounts held. The statements must show transactions of income in and out.
- Not have access to any funds that can be relied on to meet the need you are applying for, and where you would be left with insufficient resources which would cause serious risk to your own, or your family's, health, or safety
- Have less than £500 in your bank account
- Be ordinarily resident in Medway.
- A household is as defined within Section 8 of Medway's Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Any resident making regular applications will be expected to engage the Council's Welfare and Debt Advice Team

There is an internal application process for Medway Council Officers who, in the normal course of their work have identified a household needs support through the fund. The officer will declare the household is eligible to receive a payment from the fund.

- Be aged 16 or over
- Be in demonstrable hardship verified by a council officer in the normal course of their work (Verified by Medway Council Officers)
- Not have access to any funds that can be relied on to meet the need you are applying for, and where you would be left with insufficient resources which would cause serious risk to your own, or your family's, health, or safety
- Have less than £500 in your bank account (verified by Medway Council officers)
- Be ordinarily resident in Medway

There will be a third route into the scheme via a professional referral scheme application process for Medway Council's partner organisations who, in the normal course of their work have identified a household needs support through the fund. The organisation's nominated officer(s) will declare the household is eligible to receive a payment from the fund.

- Be aged 16 or over,
- Be in demonstrable hardship verified by the organisation in the normal course of their work,

- Not have access to any funds that can be relied on to meet the need you are applying for, and where you would be left with insufficient resources which would cause serious risk to your own, or your family's, health, or safety,
- Have less than £500 in your bank account (verified by the professional)
- Be ordinarily resident in Medway.

The fund is available for those who are considered not eligible for public funds.

The fund can be used for:

- Food and home essentials
- Energy
- Water
- Essentials linked to energy and water such as white goods (Internal or specific applications only)
- Housing costs in exceptional circumstances but not mortgages.

Awards will be fixed as follows:

Food and household essentials vouchers

Single person	£65
Household with two people	£85
Household with three people	£115
Household with four people	£155
Household with five people	£190
Household with 6 or more	£225

Fuel for those with prepayment meters

A referral will be made to the Fuel Bank Foundation who will send a voucher for the value of £49(Winter rate) or £30 (summer rate) to prevent self-disconnection. They will also help to prevent the emergency occurring again.

Fuel for those without prepaid meters

Will be met by providing customers with an energy card to the value of £100.00. Additional amounts may be provided at the discretion of the Benefits and Financial Welfare Section

Water

Will be met by providing customers with an energy card to the value of £100. These cards are ring fenced to energy and water suppliers.

Customers will be able to apply for assistance with three items when they claim however, their application must show the need for the support.

What will not be awarded:

- any application made that is felt to be not an immediate need
- applications from those with sufficient income or savings
- clothing (except in exceptional circumstances where someone is fleeing their home e.g. flood, fire, domestic violence)
- Mortgages
- personal debts
- phone costs or associated expenses
- Help with Council tax, this is met through either:
 - The Council Tax Discretionary Relief scheme, or
 - The Council Tax Extreme Hardship Scheme (for those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction)

Essentials for energy, white goods and housing costs will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The scheme is administered to a fixed budget and the terms of the scheme could change during the year.