

Scottish Welfare Fund Consultation

Easy Read

The Scottish
Welfare Fund

About Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants

If you are on a low income or benefit you might be able to get help from the Scottish Welfare Fund even if you get other benefits.

A **Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant** can help if you have an emergency or are in a crisis and need to pay for things.



A **Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant** can help a person or family to stay at home instead of going into care.



It can also help people leaving care. You may be able to get some important things like a cooker or a bed.



You may also be able to get this help if you have been in prison.



The Fund can give out money or vouchers or things like a cooker or a bed.



We are planning to make some changes to how the Scottish Welfare Fund works. We would like to ask you some questions about this.

Who can get a Scottish Welfare Fund grant?



The Scottish Welfare Fund grants should only be for people who have very little money.

The council will look at what it says in the grant application form and what they already know about the person from the benefits system. This saves a lot of time and money.



Different councils have different ways of deciding if someone does not have enough money. One council might decide that a person should get a grant and another council might decide that the same person should not get it.



We want to find the best way for councils to decide if a person can have a grant or not.

Question 1 - What is the best way for a council to decide if a person doesn't have enough money?

Please tick one box:

Keep things the same as they are now. Councils will make their own decisions about whether a person does not have enough money. This means councils will make different decisions from each other.

Make a list of the ways that councils can use to decide if a person does not have enough money. Different councils might make different decisions from each other.

Ask councils not to give grants to people who have a certain amount of money. This means all councils will make the same decisions as each other. This would also mean that councils cannot give grants to people who have more than this amount of money.

Are there any different ways that councils could use to decide if a person does not have enough money? Please tell us about this or any other comments in the box below:

People who ask for more than one grant

People on benefits may need more help because of changes to the benefits system. We think that the Scottish Welfare Fund should help as many people as possible.



How many Community Care Grants should a person have in a year?

A person can apply for any number of Community Care Grants. We want to change this.

Some people move house a lot and ask for more than one grant for the same item, like a cooker or washing machine.

We think that each person should only have a certain number of Community Care Grants a year. This will mean we can share the money out between more people.

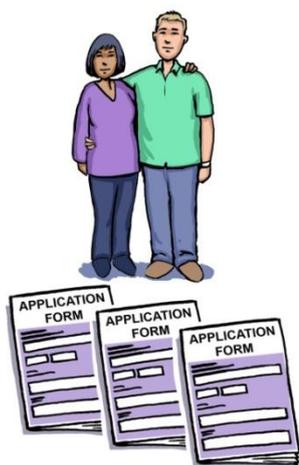
Only three Crisis Grants a year for couples

A person can only have three Crisis Grants a year.

This means that couples might be given up to six Crisis Grants a year because both people can get three grants each.

We think this is unfair to single people.

We think that each couple should only have three Crisis Grants a year.



Question 2 - Do you think it would be fair to say that a person can only have three Community Care Grants a year?

Please give your answer in the box below:

Question 3 - Do you think it would be fair to say that each couple can only have three Crisis Grants a year?

Please give your answer in the box below:

Question 4 - Should there be a set number of Community Care Grants given for the same item in a year, like a bed, cooker or washing machine?

Please give your answer in the box below:



Families who suddenly need a lot of extra help

The Scottish Government thinks that it is very important to give help to the families who need it most. We have made it a rule that councils have to put these families first when deciding who should get a grant.

Question 5 - Do you think families who suddenly need a lot of extra help should be put first in decisions about Crisis Grants?

Please give your answer in the box below:



How you get the money from a Crisis Grant



We want to make sure that councils pay Crisis Grants in the best way for the people who get them.



If the council pays grants in cash, people can choose where to shop and what to buy.



Councils sometimes pay grants in different ways, like vouchers or gas and electricity cards. This can be best for people because they can get what they need more quickly.

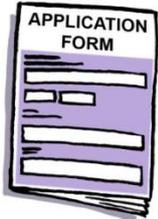
Question 6 - What kind of payments do you think would be best?

Put a tick next to your choices. You can choose as many as you like:

Cash	
Shopping vouchers	
Store cards	
Gas and electricity Cards	
Payments to your mobile phone	
Travel tickets	

Please tell us about your choices and any other way in which grants should be paid in the box below:

The time it takes to make decisions about Crisis Grants



The rules say that:

- Councils must make a decision as soon as they are given all the information they need.
- Applications handed in after 4.45pm will not be looked at until the next day when the Grants Office is open.
- Even if the council is waiting for more information at the end of the next day, they have to make a decision then. The decision will be based on the information that they already have.

Question 7 - Do you think these are good rules?

Please give your answer in the box below:



Things that grants will not be given for

There is a list of things that grants are not given for. This includes education, training, medical services, or paying off debts.



We are thinking about adding two new things to the list:

- Big changes to houses people own, like roof repairs or putting in central heating.
- Travelling to other countries. This might be because people came here to look for work but they couldn't find any.

Question 8 - Do you think grants should be given for big changes to houses people own?

Please give your answer in the box below:

Question 9 - Do you think grants should be given so people can travel to other countries?

Please give your answer in the box below:

Question 10 – Are there any other things that councils should not give grants for?

Please give your answer in the box below:



Vulnerable people

Some people may need more help than others. This includes old people, single parents, people with disabilities such as deafness or blindness, and people who struggle with drugs or alcohol. We call these **vulnerable people**.

Councils have to think about a person's background when they decide if they should have a Crisis Grant or a Community Care Grant.

What sort of things should councils think about when they are deciding if a person should have a grant?

Question 11 - What makes a person vulnerable?

Please tell us about it in the box below. You don't have to fill the box.

Is there anything else you would like to say about the plans for the Scottish Welfare Fund?

If there is, please tell us about it in the box below. You don't have to fill the box.

Thank you for taking the time to answer our questions.

Your answers will help us make decisions on the Scottish Welfare Fund.

Please send your answers to us by 21st August 2015.

By e-mail: swfregsandguidance-consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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