



Disabled Facilities Grants

Facilities Grants and other funding
For people with polio or
Post Polio Syndrome

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The British Polio Fellowship is a registered charity in England and Wales (1108335) and in Scotland (SC038863).
A company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales No 5294321

A Disabled Facilities Grant is a local council grant to help towards the cost of adapting your home to enable you to continue to live there. A grant is paid when the council considers that changes are necessary to meet your needs and that the work is reasonable and practical.

A Disabled Facilities Grant will not affect any benefits you are currently receiving.

Who is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant?

You can claim if you, or someone living in your property is disabled and:

you, or the person on whose behalf you are applying, are either the owner or tenant (including licensees) of the property

you can certify that you, or the person on whose behalf you are applying, intend to occupy the property as your/their only or main residence throughout the grant period (currently five years).

A landlord may apply on behalf of a disabled tenant.

Disabled Facilities Grants are available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland only. Scottish residents should contact the social services department of their local council for information on any grants that may be available.

What can you use it for?

A grant can be used for essential adaptations to give you better freedom of movement into and around your home and/or to provide essential facilities within it. If you are disabled acceptable types of work include:

widening doors and installing ramps

providing or improving access to rooms and facilities, for example by installing a stairlift or providing a downstairs bathroom

improving or providing a heating system which is suitable for your needs

adapting heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use

improving access to and movement around the home to enable you to care for another person who lives in the property, such as a child

An occupational therapist will look at your circumstances and can recommend the type of adaptation(s) needed.

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How much do you get?

The amount paid is usually based on a means test (financial assessment) of your average weekly income in relation to your outgoings. However, there is no means testing for families of disabled children under 19.

Means testing will take into account savings above a certain limit. Certain benefits, including Disability Living Allowance and/or Income Support are generally ignored.

A range of premiums and allowances is used for all essential outgoing, for example, rent/mortgage and personal expenditure. Actual outgoings are not taken into consideration.

Depending on the outcome of this assessment the amount of financial assistance offered can vary from 0 to 100 per cent of the cost.

How the award is worked out

The award works out as follows:

if your income is less than your assessed needs you will not normally need to contribute to the cost of the works

if your income is more than your assessed needs, a proportion of your income will be used to calculate what size loan you could contribute towards the cost of the works

if this assessed loan amount is less than the cost of the works, the difference between the two is paid as a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Maximum grant amount

The maximum amount of grant that a council is required to pay is £25,000 per application in England and Northern Ireland and £30,000 in Wales, less any assessed contribution from you. If the cost of the eligible works is more, the council can use discretionary powers to increase the amount.

How to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant

Contact the housing or environmental health department of your local council and ask them to send you an application form.

You must apply for a grant before you start work – you won't normally get any grant if you start work before the council approves the application.

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The local council must notify you of the result of your application, in writing, within six months of the date of application.

As with any building works, you'll need to apply separately for any required planning permission or building regulations approval.

It is important to ensure that the work gets done properly. For major work, the council may ask you to employ a qualified architect or surveyor to plan and oversee the work. If you get a grant, you can use it towards the cost of their fees.

Your local council has no responsibility for the standard of work carried out by a builder. If there are problems with the standard of work, you will have to deal with them yourself.

How is the grant paid?

The grant is sometimes paid in instalments and sometimes in full on completion of the work. The council may pay the contractor directly, or give you a cheque to pass on. They will agree this with you at the outset.

Payments are made:

when the council is satisfied that the work (or phase of work) has been completed to their satisfaction and in accordance with the grant approval

on presentation of an acceptable invoice, demand or receipt for payment of works.

If the work was carried out by the applicant or a relative, only invoices for materials or services bought are acceptable.

How to appeal

If you are refused a Disabled Facilities Grant, or are unhappy with the amount you have been awarded, you can appeal against the decision. Ask your local council for their appeals and complaints procedure.

If after having appealed to the council, you are still not happy with the outcome, you may register your complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman.

For general policy enquiries about Disabled Facilities Grants you can contact the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG):

Telephone: 020 7944 3442

Email: disablefacilitiesgrants@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.communities.gov.uk

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