

Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund Policy

This policy document sets out the rules of the Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund scheme and is intended to act as guidance for staff in making decisions. Where there is any ambiguity between this policy and guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC), the department's guidance will apply.

The scheme will start on 1st April 2022 and awards will be made until 30th November 2022, or funding for the scheme is exhausted, whichever occurs soonest.

Amount of awards

The amount of each award under this scheme will not exceed £150, unless guidance from DLUHC states otherwise.

Only one award should be made per property.

Awards will be made by bacs transfer to the bank account of the applicant. In exceptional circumstances where it is not reasonable to pay the award to the applicant's bank account the council may make the payment into the account of a third party.

Process of applications

Applications for support can be made through the council's specified web-form and must include full supporting evidence or they may be refused. Supporting evidence includes evidence of liability for energy costs and evidence of earnings and pensions and where the council cannot obtain details direct from DWP, evidence of benefit entitlement. The council will also provide a paper application form to residents if requested.

The council may also make awards direct to residents where it holds sufficient information to confirm eligibility to the scheme, and it would result in efficient administration of the scheme.

Eligibility

Residents will be eligible for this scheme where the following conditions are met.

1. They do not qualify for the Main Energy rebate scheme, for example, because they are not liable for council tax, or they live in a property with a council tax band of E or above

AND

2. They are on a low income or receive Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Income Support, Income based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Related

Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, Universal Credit. Alternatively, they or a Household member receives Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance

AND

3. They are directly liable for energy costs, for example their name is on the electricity or gas bill.

This scheme is primarily intended to support residents who do not qualify for the Main Energy rebate scheme, however in exceptional circumstances, where residents are significantly exposed to energy costs and are in financial hardship an award may be made to a resident who also qualifies for the Main Energy rebate scheme. In these circumstances the council can ask that the resident completes a financial means form and provide further supporting evidence to show that they are in financial hardship.

For the purpose of this policy “low income” means combined earnings and pensions of less than £500 per week. Where the applicant forms part of a household as a member of a couple, combined income of both parties will be assessed to determine their level of income.