Carers Grant – Guidance Notes

Please make sure that you read this guidance before you complete the application form.

1. What are Carers Grants?

- A single payment made of £100 directly to an unpaid Carer to support them in taking a break from caring and help relieve the stress of caring.

Carers may be entitled to receive a Carers Grant if they are providing necessary care. A Carers Grant gives the Carer choice and control over the way that their support is provided.

‘Carer – Somebody who provides support or who looks after a family member, partners or friend who needs help because of their age, physical or mental illness, or disability. This would not usually include someone paid or employed to carry out that role, or someone who is a volunteer.’

Care Act 2014 Glossary

Not all carers will need a Carers Grant. The Carers Grant is not an entitlement for all Carers to receive, but one of a range of possible outcomes to help you in your caring role.

The Carers Team will talk to you about a Carers Assessment, if they feel this would be more appropriate. There may be other support that could help you e.g. replacement care through residential respite, day care or care in the home etc.

2. What can a Carers Grant be used for

Examples of how a Carers Grant might be utilised are as follows:
- Training courses to develop skills for employment
- Courses that improve skills that enable them to carry on caring (that are not already available free of charge)
- Relaxation or therapeutic courses
- Accessing facilities to improve the Carer’s health and wellbeing
- Accessing leisure opportunities or hobbies that provide the Carer with a break from their caring role
- Support to keep in touch with family and friends
• Purchase of goods e.g. laptop to access information and advice or keep in contact with family and friends

These are only examples. The Carer themselves may have other ideas which meet the criteria of enabling Carers to have a break from caring or ease their caring duties.

Carers Grants **cannot** be used to:

• **Cost towards an annual family holiday**
• **Fund holidays/breaks already taken (retrospectively).**
• **Fund an item or activity that would have been purchased anyway.**
• **Pay debts and household bills including grocery shopping.**
• **Fund gambling [including bingo], or buy drugs, alcohol or tobacco.**
• **Fund anything that falls within the remit or services of Community Care or statutory services for the cared for person.**
• **Fund any activity that is illegal.**
• **Purchase of items (clothing, perfume)**
• **Purchase of equipment**
• **Rental payments, mortgage payments or council tax**
• **Services that can be accessed free of charge from other organisations or community services**

**N.B.** Where a Carer wishes to take a break with the person they care for, the Carers Grant **cannot be used** to fund the cost of the break for the person cared for.

**Only one Carers Grant application can be made per year.** If a grant is claimed in September one year, another application cannot be made until the September of the following year.

**All Carers Grants are subject to budget availability.**

3. **Eligibility**

Carers would be eligible for a Carers Grant if:

• Carer must be providing necessary care and support to an adult
• They are an unpaid Carer (Carers allowance is not classed as a payment)
• Carer needs support to assist them in their caring role
• Wirral resident over 18 providing care to an adult over 18 living in Wirral
• The person they care for is NOT in receipt of social care funded services
• Carer is not intending to have a Carers Assessment
• Carer could be helped with the grant
• Not received Short Breaks funding within the last 6 months

Or
• Carer has been assessed as requiring Carers Grant by Department of Adult Social Services through a Carers Assessment

Carers Grants are not payable to people who are supporting a person who is living in permanent nursing or residential home accommodation or supported tenancy or for unpaid volunteers or voluntary workers.

Only one Carers Grant can be issued if the care of an individual is shared between more than one person e.g. a couple sharing the care of a family member.

4. **How to Access a Carers Grant**

If eligibility and need are identified by the Carers Assessment process and a need is determined, the Carers Grant application form should be completed and submitted to the Carers Team at WIRED (see back of application form or enclosed SAE)

The Carers Grant will be approved if the Carer meets the criteria for the service and their physical and/or mental health is at risk of deteriorating. The Carer will need to contact the Carers Helpline on 0151 670 0777 and request an application form at which point they will be offered further support from a Carer Connector.

5. **Carers Grant Application Form**

The Carers Grant Application Form incorporates five short sections.

• Basic information about the Carer.
• Details of the cared for and type of support provided.
• Consent of the cared for.
• **A short statement, establishing how the Carer intends to use the grant and how it will support their health and wellbeing. Failure to complete this full may result in an application being rejected.**
• Signature of the Carer and an agreement to submit receipts etc.

The completed form should be sent to Wired Resource Centre for processing.

**It is important not only to clearly illustrate what the Carers Grant will be spent on but precisely why and how this will address the Carers health and wellbeing**
6. **Payment System and Receipts**

Payment is made into the Carers bank account via a BACS (banks automated clearing system) transfer. Carers who have a Grant approved will be notified by letter. In the case where the grant has been referred from DASS, they will also be notified (via email).

**The Carers Team will endeavour to pay your Grant as soon as reasonably possible. We are unable to give a timescale for payments.**

All Carers are expected to keep a record of spend and a copy of receipts. These must be returned to the Carers Team at Wired within 3 months of the Grant Payment.

If the Carer does not return receipts or has been found to have abused their Carers Grant, future applications will **not be accepted.**

7. **Monitoring Group**

A small group will be established to monitor the progress of the scheme and look at any issues arising. This will consist of the Carers Services Commissioner, The Resource Centre Manager and a Carer Representative. This group will be responsible for drawing up any further guidelines found to be necessary in light of experience as the scheme progresses.

The Carers Team's role is to check that the application forms are correctly completed and to liaise with the Carer in respect of bank details etc.

The Carers Team will also keep records of all Carers Grant’s processed including dates of grants issued and the amount in accordance with Data Protection 1998.

8. **Appeals**

If a Carer is unhappy when an application is rejected on the grounds that it does not meet the criteria for the service, the **Monitoring Group** will look at the issue in dispute and try and affect a resolution.

Experience of other Carers Grant Schemes indicates that guidelines may need to be updated from time to time to reflect operational practice.

If a Carer is unhappy with the way an application is processed, the Wired Senior Management team will investigate this under their complaints processes.