

Benefits
are
changing

Welfare Reform Factsheet Discretionary Assistance Fund (Social Fund replacement)

From April 2013, the Discretionary Assistance Fund in Wales replaces 'crisis loans' and 'community care grants' which were previously provided by the Department of Work and Pensions.

Budgeting loans are still administered by the Department of Work and Pensions and you can call them on **0845 6036967** to apply.

You can apply for help from the Discretionary Assistance Fund if you are not able to pay for what you need. Help is given by money or vouchers for goods or services.

What type of help will the fund offer?

Two types of help are available:-

- Emergency Assistance Payments
- Individual Assistance Payments

What is an Emergency Assistance Payment?

An Emergency Assistance Payment is to help you following an emergency or disaster. For example if there is a fire or flood in your home.

Am I eligible for an Emergency Assistance Payment?

To get help, you must be:-

- Aged 16 or over.
- Without money to meet your or your family's needs following an emergency or disaster.
- In serious risk to your or your family's health and safety.
- Without any other means of getting the help you need.

What can I apply for under an Emergency Assistance Payment?

- Money or goods to replace items that have been stolen, damaged, or destroyed.
- Expenses to help you buy essential items.

What is an Individual Assistance Payment?

Individual Assistance Payments are to help vulnerable people live independently. The level of support offered will depend on your needs and current circumstances including whether you have any savings or access to other money. You can apply for help for yourself, your family, or someone you care for or intend to care for.

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www.cardiff.gov.uk/welfarereform



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Am I eligible for an Individual Assistance Payment?

To be eligible you, or the person you care for, must be receiving one of the following:-

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credits

You or the person you care for must also be:-

- Leaving an institution such as a hospital, care home, hostel or prison within the next six weeks after living there for at least three months.
- Intending to care for someone leaving such accommodation.
- Needing help as part of a planned resettlement, after a period of homelessness or leaving supported accommodation.
- Needing help to ease exceptional pressures.
- Needing help with a one-off essential or travelling expense.

You cannot normally apply for more than one Individual Assistance Payment within 4 weeks unless your circumstances have changed.

How do I apply for help?

- Call the freephone number 0800 859 5924 (free from a landline), or 033 0101 5000 (charged at 0845 rate from a mobile). Lines Open: Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm.
- Apply online at www.moneymadeclearwales.org and search for Discretionary Assistance Fund.
- Contact us for a form or download one from www.moneymadeclearwales.org

How long will my application take?

An application for Individual Assistance Payments will take around 3 working days to process. You will be sent a letter about the decision.

Applications for Emergency Assistance Payments will take around 24 hours to process (excluding weekends). You will be told about the decision by text message, e-mail or letter.

To make an application over the phone will take around 30 – 40 minutes.

Alternative Help Available

Cardiff Foodbank provides emergency food aid to individuals and families in short term crisis situations. More information can be found at www.cardifffoodbank.org.uk

Fare Share Cymru helps people struggling to feed themselves and their family. More information can be found at www.fareshare.org.uk

Food co-ops sell affordable fruit, vegetable and seasonal salad bags on a weekly basis. This scheme is run by local volunteers. Bags cost £2.50 - £3 each. Contact Hannah James at Hannah.james@rru.org.uk or telephone 07717 205438 or 02920 232943.

Help is available in many languages at the Hubs.

This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law.

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.