



Disabled facilities grants (DFG)

What are disabled facilities grants?

Disabled facilities grants are grants provided by your council (local authority) to help meet the cost of adapting a property for the needs of a disabled person. The scheme operates in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Who can get them?

To be eligible for a disabled facilities grant, you must be one of the following:

- an owner occupier
- a private tenant
- a landlord with a disabled tenant
- a local authority tenant
- a housing association tenant.
- Some occupiers of caravans and houseboats are also eligible.

If you are one of the above and applying for the grant for someone else who is disabled you need to state this on your application.

Who is a disabled person?

You are treated as disabled if one of the following applies:

- your sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired
- you have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind
- you are substantially physically disabled by illness, injury, impairment present since birth, or otherwise
- you are registered (or could be registered) disabled with the social services department.



What can you get a grant for?

You can get a grant to help a disabled person:

- have easier access to and from the property (such as widening doors or installing ramps).
- make the property safe for the him or her and others living with them (such as a specially adapted room where a disabled person could be left safely unattended or providing improved lighting for a disabled person with sight problems).
- have easier access to a room used or that can be used as the principal family room.
- have easier access to a room used or that can be used as a bedroom.
- have easier access to a room in which there is a lavatory, bath or shower (such as by providing a stairlift).
- by providing a room in which there is a lavatory, bath or shower, and wash-hand basin.
- use a lavatory, bath or shower or wash-hand basin.
- prepare and cook food.
- by improving or providing a suitable heating system
- use a source of power, light or heat (for example adapting heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use).
- have easier access and movement around the home to enable the disabled person to care for someone dependent on them, who also lives there (such as a child, husband, wife or partner).
- have easier access to your garden or make access to your garden safe for you - your garden can include a yard, outhouse or other facility within the boundary of land attached to your dwelling. It can also include a balcony or land next to the mooring of a houseboat.

Applying for a disabled facilities grant

Disabled facilities grants are normally paid by your local housing authority. To apply in Norfolk, first telephone Norfolk Social Services Access Team on 0844 800 8014 for an assessment they will continue the process with the Local Authority if eligible.



You will usually be asked to sign a certificate stating that the disabled occupant will live in the property for at least 5 years after the works are completed, or a shorter period if there are health or other special reasons.

A council cannot refuse to allow you to make a formal application or refuse to give you an application form.

You should not have any work carried out on the property until your council approves the application. If the work is urgent, you should contact the council to discuss this. You will also need to ensure that you separately get any planning or building approval needed.

How much is it?

The maximum grant payable under a mandatory disabled facilities grant is £30,000 in England. The grant will only be paid when the council are satisfied that the work has been completed to their satisfaction and in accordance with the grant approval.

The actual amount of disabled facilities grant that someone can get depends on the income and savings of the disabled person and his or her partner, even if the disabled person has not actually applied for the grant (such as when an application is made by a landlord with a disabled tenant).

Income and savings

The income and savings test is similar, but not identical, to the test for income support (IS), or pension credit (PC) if the disabled person is aged 60 or over. In all cases the first £6,000 of any savings are ignored.

If the disabled person's income and savings are below the test limits there will be no need for him or her to contribute to the cost of the works.

If the disabled person's income and savings are more than the test limits, then a contribution will be required from them towards the cost of the works.

From April 2008 DFG applicants claiming council tax benefit, housing benefit and tax credits for those on low incomes will no longer be required to provide any further financial information in addition to these benefits. Also people in receipt of working tax credit and child tax credit will no longer have these payments counted as income in the DFG means test from April 2008.



Disabled children

Parents income is not taken into account for adaptations for disabled children.

What if the grant isn't enough?

You may be able to get help under other local authority housing grant schemes. See Factsheet - [housing grants in england](#) for more information.

Can my council refuse to give me a grant?

A disabled facilities grant is compulsory but in order to approve an application the local housing authority must be satisfied that the works are both "necessary and appropriate" for the needs of the disabled person, and "reasonable and practicable" in relation to the property.

In order to check whether the works are necessary and appropriate, the local housing authority usually refers you to the social services department first for an occupational therapy assessment.

How long should an assessment take?

There is a 6-month time limit for the local authority/council to give you a decision. This starts from the date of your formal application. Sometimes your local authority may specify a date of payment for the grant but this should be no later than 12 months from the date on which you made your application.

Complaining

If you do not get a decision within 6 months of applying, write and ask why and request that a decision be made. Seek legal advice if you still do not get a decision, or if you have been prevented from applying in the first place. Alternatively, you can make a complaint of maladministration to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

Where can I get more help and information?

DIAL Great Yarmouth

12a George Street

Great Yarmouth

Norfolk

NR30 1HR

Telephone 01493 856900

Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm