

Household Support Fund: Support available to Individuals with 'No Recourse to Public Funds'

The government announced the Household Support Fund (HSF) on 07 October 2021. The stated objective of the fund is to help a wide range of vulnerable households over the winter months. Liverpool city council has been allocated £6.054M from a £421M fund for England.

The HSF counts as Local Welfare Provision. The council's Local Welfare Provision Scheme is known as the **Liverpool Citizens Support Scheme (LCSS)** and typically provides support to low-income households with essential costs as defined in the HSF guidance.

The main rules governing the usage of the funding are:

- a) At least 50% of the funds must be used to support families with children.
- b) It must primarily help with **food, energy, and water bills**. However, it can also be used to pay for related items; examples given include toiletries, sanitary products, clothing, blankets, boiler repair, and purchasing white goods including fridges, freezers, and ovens.
- c) It can also help with transport costs and the costs of broadband
- d) It can only be used to help with housing costs in cases of 'genuine emergency' and not where other types of support (for example Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Discretionary Housing Payments) could be used. It cannot be used for mortgage costs.
- e) The funding is to be used by end March 2022.
- f) The funding can be used to support people with 'no recourse to public funds' where they are vulnerable.

Government guidance states that '*Authorities can provide a basic safety net support to an individual, regardless of their immigration status, if there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example if:*

- *there are community care needs*
- *they have serious health problems*
- *there is a risk to a child's wellbeing.'*

This means that applicants will need to demonstrate the care need or vulnerability of the person who needs to be supported.

How to apply

You or the service user can call Freephone 0800 456 1523 or 0151 233 3053 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm. To support applicants 'DA language line' facility is used to interpret for customers whose main language is not English.

Some agencies (i.e Crisis) already have access and use the LCSS on- line application process. To complete this application please include details of household and income and expenditure as well as the service user's circumstances. Individual agencies can contact LCSS to secure details of the on-line process by e mailing the LCSS mailbox LCSS@Liverpool.gov.uk requesting to become an approved partner..

Applicants will need to be able to confirm their identity and address. If it is not possible to provide proof of address via normal routes (e.g. a utility bill or Council Tax liability), we would ask that a third party agency supporting the individual provides confirmation that this is known to be the applicants address

Other information

Funding for the HSF scheme is cash limited and time limited until 31st March 20222 and we need to consider the number of people applying for help and what funds are available before making an award.

Where possible, we will let you know our decision within two working days for urgent support.

Following the date of a first award repeat applications can be considered. We know that additional problems or crises can occur and in special circumstances we may consider making another award.

Any personal information provided to support an application will not be shared with any other Government agency.

If you are unhappy with our decision you can ask for a review by mailing LCSS@liverpool.gov.uk or writing to Liverpool Citizen Support Scheme, Revenues and Benefits Service, Cunard Building, Water Street, L3 1AH.

You can also call the Freephone helpline on 0800 456 1523 or 0151 233 3053 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.