

Carers Grants Guidance Notes for Applications

The Carers grants will provide financial support to individual carers aged 16 and over via its four differing Carers Funds.

These 4 areas are: -

Carers Essentials
Carers Time Out
Carers Access
Carers Skills

Below you will find more information on Carers Grants, and how you can best assist a carer in applying.

What you can apply for

Carers Essentials

Carers can apply for grants of up to £300 towards the cost of ONE piece of household equipment which will benefit them in their caring role.

In exceptional circumstances applications for multiple items (totaling no more than £300) may be considered. In these cases, the items should ideally be interdependent (e.g. washing machine and outside ailer) and the exceptional circumstance you would like the assessment team to consider should be outlined in the application.

Tips for writing a good Carers Essentials application:

It is important to show a link between the item being requested and the caring role. Items such as washing machines, cookers and fridge freezers are generally seen as being essential items for any household but if you can link the need for the item to the caring role then the application will be all the stronger for it, e.g.:

A washing machine is essential because:

- It is very difficult for the carer to get to the launderette as they can't leave the person in receipt of care alone.
- The person in receipt of care has continence issues, creating large amounts of washing, making a launderette expensive and impractical.

A cooker is essential because:

- The person in receipt of care has particular dietary needs that cannot be met by microwave meals alone.

Some items that are requested from the Carers Essentials Fund are not generally seen as being essential, e.g. tumble dryers, carpets, home decoration costs. If you are applying for a grant towards one of these items you will need to make a strong case for why the need for them is linked to the caring role. Examples of relevant information to include in the application have been provided below:

- A tumble dryer is needed because:
 - The person in receipt of care is incontinent and the carer is finding the large amount of drying around the house difficult to cope with.
 - There is no outside space in which to hang washing and the carer or the person in receipt of care has a condition which would be negatively affected by damp clothes regularly hanging in the home.
- A new carpet is needed because:
 - The current flooring is unsafe, uneven, has nails sticking up, etc. As a result, the carer or the person in receipt of care has a lot of falls.
- Home decoration is needed because:
 - The carer and person in receipt of care have had to move home due to the person in receipt of care's condition and the house is not decorated.
 - The state of the house is having a very adverse effect on the carer's mental health.

Carers Time Out

Carers can apply for grants of up to £500 to enable them to take a break from their caring role. Up to £250 (or 50% of the total grant awarded) can be used to pay for replacement care if needed. This care can be accessed at the home of the person in receipt of care, in a respite care facility, or on the break itself.

Please note the following:

The grant can include the cost of the person in receipt of care and/or a family member, partner or friend to accompany the carer on the break. The break can be taken in the UK or abroad.

Tips for writing a good Carers Take Time Out application:

It is very important that you show how the need for a break is related to the caring role. Carers can apply for breaks abroad. If the holiday is abroad it is helpful if reasons are given for why this type of break has been chosen. If the carer wants to visit family abroad, please make it clear why this will help them, e.g. if they have very little family support around them in the UK.

Other factors that would support the application in being funded would be:

- If the carer has not had a break for a significant amount of time (3 years or more).

- Demonstrating the emotional impact of caring and the benefit that a break could have on a carer's mental health, enabling them to continue in their caring role.

If the person in receipt of care is going on the break with the carer, it is important to demonstrate how the carer will still have a break from their caring role.

Carers Access

Carers can apply for grants of up to £500 towards the cost of driving lessons or other forms of transport that would benefit them in their caring role. Carers Access aims to remove some of the transport-related barriers to living a full and independent life that may have been placed on a person by their caring role. Up to £200 (or 40% of the total grant awarded) can be used to pay for replacement care if needed.

If the request is for driving lessons the carer will need to demonstrate the following:
The benefit of learning to drive to their caring role and their quality of life in general
How they intend to continue to pay for any additional lessons going forward, if needed.

Carers can apply for a grant towards the cost of other forms of transport if they can demonstrate that it will be beneficial to them in their caring role and/or in improving their independence and quality of life. Examples could include (but are not restricted to) transport to visit the person in receipt of care in hospital/ residential care or transport to partake in an activity with other carers.

Tips for writing a good Carers Access application

It is important to show how the ability to drive will help the carer in their caring role. Examples of this could include:

- The carer cares for someone who struggles with using public transport because they have mobility problems or challenging behavior.
- The carer needs to be able to drive to enable the person in receipt of care to be able to access hospital/ doctor's appointments, school, the local community, etc.
- The person in receipt of care was the sole driver in the household but, due to their condition, can no longer drive.

Sometimes the carer needs to be able to drive in order to pursue something in their own lives, e.g. a job, education, etc. It can be harder to relate this to their caring role so you would need to show that the ability to drive will enable them to continue in employment/ education alongside their caring role. This could be because they can be more flexible due to not having to rely on irregular public transport to get back to the person in receipt of care more quickly if needed.

If there is another driver in the household please show in the application why it is important that the carer you are applying on behalf of can also drive.

Carers Skills

Carers can apply for grants of up to £500 to enable them to learn new skills that will assist them in their caring role, help them to return to work or enable them to have a new interest outside their caring role. Up to £200 (or 40% of the total grant awarded) can be used to pay for replacement care if needed whilst the carer is taking part in the course or activity.

Carers can apply for grants towards the following:

- The cost of courses, training, or tuition. These courses can be educational or vocational. The purpose could be that the carer can return to work or re-train in a career more suited to maintaining their caring role, it could give them skills that will benefit them in their caring role, or enable them to have a new interest or focus outside of their caring role. In the past Carers Trust has funded access to a range of courses such as creative writing, sign language, counselling courses and training for an HGV license.
- Costs associated with course materials (including suitable IT equipment), books and/or any necessary equipment relevant to the activity.
Costs for applicable travel and subsistence costs. If including costs for car travel, please ensure that these do not exceed 45p per mile.

Tips for writing a good Carers Skills application

You should make clear in the application how the course will benefit the carer. The need/desire to do the course should be linked to the caring role in some way, but this does not mean that the course needs to be focused on giving the carer new skills to complete their caring role. It can be (e.g. a moving and handling course or a sign language course) but it could benefit the carer in other ways, e.g.:

- Allowing the carer to find employment that they can fit around their caring role :
 - Enabling them to work from home or to work flexible hours.
 - Giving them a new focus and a break from their caring role – e.g. a creative writing course or a flower arranging course.

In these cases, it is important to show how the carer is impacted by their caring role and how partaking in the course will benefit them. This could be in terms of giving them a break and having a positive impact on their mental health, increasing their confidence, giving them the opportunity to socialise in a learning environment with others, etc.

How to apply: Points to remember

What else do you need to know when completing the application?

The application form has been designed to provide all the information that the decision making panel needs to enable a fair assessment of all of the applications. Please ensure:

- Full contact information has been provided for the person completing the form along with the full name, address and postcode of the carer.
- Relevant information on the caring role and the condition of the person in receipt of care has been provided.

- A breakdown of the cost of the item(s) has been provided, along with a written quote for the cost of the item(s), e.g. a quote from the company website. Applications for general support/ living costs will not be considered.
- A supporting statement from the person completing the form has been provided – please provide an answer to each of the questions in this section. The person should sign the supporting statement in order for us to process the application. Unsigned applications will not be assessed.
- The Data Protection statement has been agreed – in signing the form, the carer is confirming that they understand the implication of submitting their information to us. The Grants Team will not assess any application that has not been signed by the carer.
- Before you send an application to us, use the checklist at the back of the form to ensure you have included all the information needed in order for the application to be put through to the assessment panel. Ask yourself have all sections been completed? Do I have a copy of the application that has been signed by the carer? Is it legible? Have I attached a quote?

Who can complete the form?

- Carer
- Friend
- Relative
- Neighbor
- Medical professional
- Social Worker
- Young Carer Support Worker
- Teacher / Teaching Assistant
- Counsellor
- Representative of Carers Trust
- Carer Support Worker

Please contact us if you feel you need further guidance on who is able to complete this form.

Data protection statement

Please take a moment to read through this as it highlights the legal obligations of us to handle the information provided in a sensitive and secure manner and the declaration that the information provided is true and accurate.

The carer must sign the form in order for us to process the application. Without this signature, we are unable to enter any of the details into the database and unsigned applications will therefore not be assessed. If you are emailing the application to us you can include an electronic signature but please ensure that you have kept a copy of the form with the carer's original signature on it.

Supporting statement

The application contact should complete every part of this section. We see the applying person as acting as the first assessor in all applications received, providing essential information to help guide the final decisions. Please provide us with as much relevant

detail as possible, including any that may not have been highlighted fully in previous sections e.g. extent of caring role.

General points to remember:

Please take note of the following:

Sections 1-5 of the form can be completed by the carer OR the person completing the form on behalf of the carer..

Sections 6 and 7 should ONLY be completed by the person completing the form.

Please ensure that ALL sections of the form have been completed to a satisfactory standard before it is returned.

We cannot fund requests retrospectively where an item has already been purchased.

Carers can be awarded one grant from each section within a 12-month period (from the date of the award). When funding is limited, priority will be given to carers who have not previously been awarded a grant from us.

Applications cannot be considered unless a written quote for the cost of the item being requested is provided.

We cannot provide grants for the following:

- Items/ respite breaks which should be provided via statutory provision. Statutory services should always be approached prior to applying to us if applicable (e.g. social services should be approached regarding funding for respite care and a person's local NHS wheelchair service should be approached regarding funding for a wheelchair).
- The purchase of vehicles.
- Funding towards general living costs e.g. food, bills, rent, debt repayment.

How do you return the completed forms?

Once completed please email with all appropriate attachments to:

grants@ctsew.org.uk

If you need to post the application, please send it to:

Carers Grants Dept
Carers Trust South East Wales
County Hospital
Griffithstown
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 5YA

We would encourage you to send applications by email whenever possible as this will ensure that they are processed more quickly. Signed hard copies of the applications do not need to be sent to us as long as you keep a copy for your own records. You've sent off the completed form – what happens next?

Applications will be assessed by a panel which may consist of Carers Trust South East Wales staff, carers and representative's local authorities and the Health Board. The front page of all applications will be removed before applications are assessed by anyone outside the organisation to maintain confidentiality of the applicant. The panel will assess all applications received by the published closing date against the criteria of the Fund, primarily the demonstrated benefit to the carer of the requested item. Applicants will be informed of decisions on all applications within 2 weeks of the published panel meeting date. If there are outstanding queries on any applications, you will be given 2 weeks to clarify the query. If outstanding information is not received back us within this timeframe, these applications will be withdrawn.

If successful

Recipients will receive a confirmation email or letter within 28 days of the panel meeting confirming they have been successful. The confirmation email or letter will provide instructions on how individuals will then be able to order their goods etc. Carers Trust Grants Team will be responsible for the payment of all items, breaks away etc.

If unsuccessful

You will receive brief information explaining the reason(s) why the application was assessed as unsuccessful. Unsuccessful applications can be resubmitted once and (if applicable) staff should use the feedback provided to amend the application, potentially increasing the possibility of accessing funding.

How you can be involved

If you would be interested in being part of a grants assessment panel, or you know any carers who would, please contact grants@ctsew.org.uk for more information.