

South Tipperary County Council

Housing Section

Re: **Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes – Priority Needs Scheme**

Introduction

Statutory Instrument No. 670 of 2007 sets out details of the specific housing grants in relation to people with disabilities and the elderly as follows:

- Housing Adaptation Grant for people with a disability
- Housing Aid for Older People scheme
- Mobility Aids Grant scheme

These grants replaced the Disabled Persons Grant and the Essential Repairs Grant operated by local authorities and the Special Aid for the Elderly operated by the Health Service Executive.

The statutory instrument and subsequent guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government outline the qualifying works and the applicant's eligibility under each of the schemes together with the implementation policy adopted by this Council in 2008 in relation to the Housing Aid for Older People scheme. The above grant schemes as summarized in appendix 1 attached.

Due to the high level of demand, the existing commitments on hand and the limited funding likely to be available, it is necessary in order to deal with the grants equitably to adopt a priority scheme applicable to the 3 grant schemes. The priority scheme as set out hereunder was developed on the basis of being such that no matter what level of funding is received, that the funding allocated will be directed to the most serious and highest priority need cases.

Housing Grant Schemes – Priority Needs Scheme

The total funding allocation to be assigned as follows:

55% - Mobility Aids Grant scheme & the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability scheme. (It is proposed that these would be treated collectively for funding purposes)

35% - Housing Aid for Older People scheme

10% - Emergency Cases,

(It is proposed to retain 10% of the allocation in any given year in an attempt to deal with cases that arise after all of the above funding has been allocated.)

Priority Needs Categories

Emergency Cases

Criteria:

- *Housing Aid for Older People*
 - Where alterations/adaptations would alleviate the immediate need for emergency accommodation.
- *Mobility Aids Grant and Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability*
 - Where alterations/adaptations would facilitate immediate discharge from hospital to their home or alleviate the immediate need for hospitalization following an immediate change in the applicant's circumstances arising from a car accident, stroke, heart attack.

Qualifying Works: Grab Rails/Ramps/Level Access Showers/Stair Lifts/Roof repair/Rewiring

Timescale for Completion: Works must be completed within 15 working days of approval unless exceptional circumstances prevail & subject to the approval of the Council.

Priority 1

Criteria:

- *Housing Aid for Older People* – namely
 - Allowable works required immediately due to medical grounds of which the condition of the house is a significant contributing factor;
 - Works which if not undertaken will lead to immediate deterioration of house;
 - Works which if not undertaken could endanger occupants.
- *Mobility Aids Grant and Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability*
 - Where applicants' are terminally ill, or fully/mainly dependant on family or carer; or
 - Where alterations/adaptations would facilitate discharge from hospital to their home or alleviate the need for hospitalization within the immediate 12 month period.

Priority 2

Criteria:

- *Housing Aid for Older People* – namely
 - Allowable works which will eliminate future deterioration of dwelling.
- *Mobility Aids Grant and Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability*
 - Where applicants' are mobile but need assistance in accessing washing, toilet facilities, bedroom etc; or
 - Where without the alterations/adaptations the disabled person's ability to function independently would be hindered.

Priority 3

Criteria:

- Housing Aid for Older People – namely
 - Allowable works which will improve the general appearance/living conditions for the occupants.

- Mobility Aids Grant and Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability
 - Where applicants' are independent but require special facilities to improve the quality of life, e.g. separate bedroom/living space.

Qualifying Works:

Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a disability:

Access ramps, Stair Lifts, Accessible showers/Toilet facilities, adaptations for wheelchair access, extensions and other works which would render a House suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability.

Mobility Aids Grant Scheme:

Grab rails, Access ramps, level access showers, Stair lifts and other minor works as may be necessary to facilitate mobility needs of applicant.

Housing Aid for Older People:

Works which are considered Priority 1 are as follows;

- Where works are considered necessary due to the medical requirements of the applicant. (Doctors Certification required).
- Where the dwelling would become uninhabitable if the works were not carried out.
- Where a fire hazard might result if the works were not carried out.
- Where the works are required to maintain the structural fabric of the house.
- Where works relate to radon remediation (back up documentation/test results required).
- Where the installation of water and sanitary services are required (this may include bathrooms).

Works which are considered Priority 2 are as follows;

- Replacement of windows and doors.
- Attic and wall insulation.

Works which are considered Priority 3 are as follows;

- Provision or replacement of central heating system.
- External painting only.
- Contract cleaning.

Timescale for Completion: From the date of notification of the grant, the applicant will have 6 months to arrange for the completion of the required works otherwise, except in exceptional circumstances, grant approval will be withdrawn. In such instances, South Tipperary County Council will confirm this withdrawal in writing to the applicant.

Prioritising works also necessitates timescales to be put in place and with a view to improving equity between the different categories, it is recommended that the following timescales are applied with the exception of applications categorised as emergency, which will be processed throughout the year.

- All applications received prior to the 30th April will be processed and prioritised in accordance with the Council's priority needs scheme and date of application.
- At 1st July and ***providing a sufficient budget is available***, Priority 1 applications received up to and including 30th April of the given year will be approved and notified to proceed with the works.
- At 1st September & assuming there is still a budget remaining; Priority 2 grant applications previously received up to 30th April 2010 will be approved and notified to proceed.
- At the 1st October in any given year Priority 3 grant applications received up to the end of April will then be approved in the context of any remaining budget for that year.
- Emergency applications received throughout the year will be immediately assessed and approved subject to sufficient funding being available.

Adopted by South Tipperary County Council at its meeting held on Monday 7th February 2011

Chairman

Appendix 1 Grants Scheme Details

Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a disability

Maximum Grant €30,000 or up to 95 % of the cost of the work where gross maximum Household income is up to €30,000 p.a. tapering to up to 30% of the cost where income is between €54,001 and €65,000 p.a.

Qualifying works Access ramps, Stair Lifts, Accessible showers/Toilet facilities, adaptations for wheelchair access, extensions and other works which would render a House suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability.

Recoument 80% of the Grant paid is recouable from the Department of Environment.

Mobility Aids Grant Scheme

Maximum Grant € 6,000 or 100% of the cost of the works for applicants with annual Household income of up to €30,000.

Qualifying works Grab rails, Access ramps, level access showers, Stair lifts and other minor works as may be necessary to facilitate mobility needs of applicant.

Recoument 80% of the Grant paid is recouable from the Department of Environment.

Housing Aid for Older People scheme

Maximum Grant €10,500 which may cover up to 100% of the cost of the works where gross household income is up to €30,000 p.a. tapering to 30% of the cost of the work where income is between €54,001 and €65,000 p.a.

Qualifying works Essential works based on priority needs scheme as follows; Structural repairs, Roofs, Chimneys, Re wiring, Heating, Water and Sanitary services, other works which are considered essential.

Recoument 80% of grant paid is recouable from Department of Environment.