

A Brief Guide to Disabled Facilities Grants

1. What are Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants?

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are sometimes called DFGs. Mandatory DFGs are Grants given under the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. In simple terms they are means tested grants to provide essential facilities, adaptations or access within the home.

2. Who is eligible for a DFG?

Owner occupiers, long lease holders and private sector tenants who are registered or eligible to be registered as disabled. Disabled adaptations for tenants of a Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord are dealt with by the Association/ Social landlord in the first instance. All tenants must get full consent from their landlord to approve any proposed adaptations to the property. In some cases, it may be more feasible to move to a similar property that is already adapted.

The applicant must be aged over 18 and have an owner's or tenant's interest in the property where the works are to be carried out. The applicant may or may not be the disabled person for whom the works are being carried out.

Should the DFG be for a disabled child or disabled dependant young person, or where certain benefits are in receipt, the application will qualify automatically for a mandatory grant without the requirement for a means test.

3. How much is the Grant?

The maximum allowance for a mandatory DFG is £30,000. The level of Grant is determined by a means test, although if you are on certain benefits such as Income Support, you will automatically receive a Grant for the full cost of the eligible work up to the maximum allowance.

4. What sort of work might qualify for DFG?

Although the DFG is given by Maldon District Council, we can only give a DFG for work that has been specifically recommended for you by an Occupational Therapist from Adult Social Care and Community Wellbeing at Essex County Council.
(See Question 8 below for contact details)

Examples of such works are bathroom conversions to provide level access showers, door widening, handrails, stairlifts, hoists or ramped access. This list is by no means exhaustive so please ask if you would like to know whether any other piece of work at your home is likely to qualify.

5. What happens if the grant doesn't cover the full cost of the work?

You would normally be expected to pay the cost of any work not met from the grant from your own resources. Our Private Sector Housing Team may be able to help you apply for other funding, equity release or charitable funding to meet the shortfall.

6. Are there any conditions attached to a DFG?

The person for whom the work is being requested must live in the dwelling as their main or only residence. On certain types of work the Council will also recover costs (up to a maximum of £10,000) on any completed DFG for more than £5,000 if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of the date of the completion of the work. Repayment will not be required for the costs of providing stair lifts, through floor lifts or removable equipment such as hoists.

7. Is there any help available to assist with the application?

We recognise that applying for the Grant and organising the works can be a worry and a daunting prospect for many applicants. We offer an in-house Agency service to assist you with the following;

- Completing the application for approval;
- Preparing plans and specification of work and getting any consents;
- Sourcing reputable and vetted contractors;
- Inviting estimates for the works;
- Dealing with Contractors and inspecting works to satisfactory completion;
- Dealing with Grant payments on completion.

A reasonable fee is charged and is included within the approved Grant.

8. How can I apply for a DFG?

If you don't currently have an Occupational Therapist, you can contact Essex County Council via Adult Social Care Connects and ask for a referral for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Specialist Customer Advisor
Adult Social Care Connects
Essex County Council
T: 0333 013 5139
F: 0345 601 6230
www.essex.gov.uk

The Occupational Therapist will visit you in your home to assess you for the adaptation you are requesting and outline other services that might help you maintain your independence. If they feel that it is necessary and appropriate for you to have the work carried out they will make a referral for a Disabled Facilities Grant and contact Maldon District Council.

If you would like help with making your application, the Council's In House Private Sector Housing Agency Team can guide you through the process. Your Occupational Therapist will ask you if you would like the Council to help and if you would, the referral will be sent to them.

9. Please note: This is provided as brief guide to Disabled Facilities Grants. Full details are available in the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended which can be obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

The Council's Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy is currently under review. In summary this Policy will provide for a range of discretionary financial assistance in the form of means tested repayable loans. For further details and information on anything provided in this guide please contact as below.

**Private Sector Housing Assistance
Maldon District Council
Princes Road,
Maldon,
Essex, CM9 5DL**
Privatesectorhousing@maldon.gov.uk
www.maldon.gov.uk