

Winter fuel grants 2019 - 20

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What are UNISON There for You Winter Fuel Grants?

In addition to our normal range of services and in response to the growing difficulty many members on low income are experiencing paying their fuel bills, a programme has been put in place that will assist our most vulnerable members.

How much are the Grants?

They are one-off grants of up to £40 per household.

Am I eligible?

- You must be a member who has paid 4 weeks subscriptions before the launch date of this programme (02/12/19)
- **Either** receive Housing Benefit (or the housing element of Universal Credit)
- **Or** have a total net annual household income of £18,000 or less. (Note: By 'net income' we mean all salary including your partner's after tax, national insurance, superannuation and trade union subscriptions only. Your calculation **should include** any Tax Credits, Universal Credit or child maintenance received. **Do not include** Child Benefit, the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.
- You are responsible for meeting the household fuel bills and are struggling financially.

Is there anything else that may affect my application?

- Members and their partners must not have combined savings or, rolling bank balance, of more than £800. (Savings of any other adults in the household do not apply).
- You must not have received financial assistance from UNISON There for You during the previous six months (excluding School Uniform Grant)
- Applications are limited to one per household and priority is given to those who have not previously applied for the Winter Fuel grant
- **Please ensure that you include your membership number and send in all the requested paperwork with the form**

Note: The £18,000 net income **applies only** to the There for You small grants programme. Any member who is struggling financially due to an unexpected crisis should either contact their branch welfare officer, call us on 020 7121 5620 or visit www.unison.co.uk/thereforyou for more information.

How do I apply?

To apply for a Winter Fuel Grant:

- Print out and complete the short 1-page application form
- Download forms from our website www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/
- Contact UNISON Direct on 0800 0857 857 for a form to be posted to you
- Contact your local UNISON branch for a form.

Then provide us with evidence of your entire household income by sending copies of the supporting paperwork depending upon which statement is applicable to you:

Please ensure you send all requested paperwork with the form or the application cannot be processed

EITHER

You currently receive housing benefit (or the housing element of Universal Credit) – then enclose all of the following paperwork*:

- Proof that housing benefit is paid (or the housing element of Universal Credit)
- If you were receiving Housing Benefit and have moved onto Universal Credit you will need to send us your full Universal Credit letter as you may still be eligible for a grant
- Most recent payslip **
- Last month's full bank statement** detailing all income and outgoings

OR

Your net household income is £18,000 or less – then enclose all of the following paperwork*:

- Most recent payslip**
- Tax credit award letter showing element given towards childcare costs if appropriate
- Last month's full bank statement** detailing all income and outgoings

Note 1: *Please **ONLY** send copies as we cannot return any paperwork

Note 2: **If you live with a partner, don't forget to include their payslip/bank statement if applicable

Note 3: If you experience difficulty obtaining any documents requested please explain why in a covering letter

Post to UNISON There for You, (Winter Fuel Grant), UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY

If we need to contact you about your application we will usually contact you by email so you may want to check your email and junk mail folders.

Deadline

We must receive your application by 14 February 2020.

Applications will then be processed and decisions communicated over the following weeks.

Where can I go for further help or advice?

There is a limited amount in the Winter Fuel Grants programme and once it has been exhausted no further awards for the year can be made. However if you are facing unforeseen hardship it may be possible for you to apply to our general grants programme. We will let you know if this applies to you.

There for You has produced an information and advice guide called "Help with Winter Fuel Costs"
https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2018/10/25221_fuelcosts.pdf

For further information:

- please see our web pages at www.unison.org/thereforyou
- contact the Welfare Officer at your local UNISON branch or the There for You Support Team on 020 7121 5620 or email thereforyou@unison.co.uk
- UNISON Debtline on 0800 389 3302 if you are struggling to meet your debt repayments.



There for you is the working name of UNISON Welfare, a registered charity supported by UNISON the trade union. Registered charity no.1023552/SCO38305