



Guidance on the Distribution of Grants

Who is eligible for a grant?

Grants are made to Irish persons and persons of Irish descent who are in need and resident in Greater London. The purpose of the grant scheme is to relieve financial hardship. If an applicant is not on a means-tested benefit, they must demonstrate that they are otherwise on a low income and are without the means to support their needs with savings or investments.

The funds available to the Society are limited and can only be awarded to those in most need, and as the resources of the Society allow. It is generally expected that the applicant is unable to have their needs met from another source, such as a local welfare scheme.

Please note:

We are unable to make payments directly to individuals.

What does the grant scheme cover?

Grants will be given for the following purposes

- To provide essential items of clothing and footwear
- To fund Passport, Birth Certificate, and Identity applications
- To provide essential items of household equipment
- To provide emergency special educational support
- To provide interim living costs to individuals whose statutory entitlements have been delayed as a result of system error
- To provide short term emergency accommodation for up to three nights
- To meet the cost of medical reports required to support welfare benefits claims and challenges
- To provide emergency support for winter heating costs
- To support convalescence
- To support moves to new accommodation
- We are also able to contribute to the payment of charges for the preparation of medical reports to support challenges to negative welfare benefits decisions.

In exceptional circumstances applications that do not meet the criteria set out above may be considered, within the charitable objectives of the Society.

How is "need" assessed?

The overall nature of a potential beneficiary's circumstances will be assessed when considering applications. Key indicators of need include financial status, age, number of dependents, physical and mental health status, and condition, plus security of accommodation.

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How much can be requested?

The maximum standard grant award is £250. In exceptional circumstances a grant can be considered up to the value of £500. Normally, only one application can be made per year in respect of a given individual.

Who can make an application?

Individual applications must be made to an agent of the Society, in this instance Southwark Irish Pensioners Project. Applications by third-party organisations are also accepted, usually charities. Applications by public bodies, such as Social Services departments, will also be considered, with the proviso that statutory funding to meet the identified need is not available.

How to apply

Individuals are required to:

- Complete an application form where possible
- Sign and date the form
- Provide relevant supporting documentation (see below)

Organisations are required to:

- Complete an application form in full
- Provide relevant supporting documentation (see below)
- Sign and date the form, and ensure that the beneficiary also signs the form where possible

Application forms and supporting information should be emailed to **BSOSPGGrant@irishinlondon.org**

Or post to:

The Administrator
The Benevolent Society of St Patrick
Southwark Irish Pensioners Project
6 Market Place
London SE16 3UQ

What supporting information needs to be provided?

- Proof of the beneficiary's entitlement to/receipt of means-tested benefits, dated within the last three months.
This can either be in the form of a DWP letter or a bank statement itemising the benefit payment.
- If a client is not in receipt of such benefits, please provide details and documentation of income.
- A bank statement dated within the last three months, with the beneficiary's name, address, and statement balance clearly present.

What about savings?

An application will not automatically be rejected if a potential beneficiary has a small amount of savings. The applicant's circumstances will be considered in the round.

Local welfare schemes

It is generally expected that an unsuccessful application has already been made to a local welfare scheme funded through a local authority, or that information is provided on the form that costs cannot be supported by such schemes. Please provide copy of refusal letter.

How payments are made

Payments are not made directly to beneficiaries. Where individual applications are accepted vouchers will be provided for the items

A BACS payment (bank transfer) will be made to the applicant's organisation. If the application is successful. We will ask for an organisation's bank details in order to make the payment.

How long will an application take to be processed?

Applications will usually be processed within 2 weeks of receipt of a correctly completed application form and all supporting evidence. In cases involving emergency costs, we will be able, subject to advance agreement with us, to make retrospective payments.

Keeping track of applications

If you need to contact the Administrator while the application is in process, please call 020 7237 5841 and ask for the Manager, or email info@irishinlondon.org

Providing receipts Applicant organisations must provide the Administrator with receipts, as evidence that monies awarded were spent on the items to the value of the amount requested. Failure to provide this evidence may lead to the applicant organisation having to repay the grant in full. Equally, if agencies do not comply with this requirement, the Society may decide not to accept further applications in the future.

Demonstrating impact

On occasions, the Society may request that an applicant /organisation provides case study information to demonstrate the impact of the Society's grant awards.