

## Household Support Fund Cost of Living Payment

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is the scheme?

The Household Support Fund Cost of Living Payments Scheme provides eligible households with a payment of £120. This scheme will be available for people to apply between 27 September and 24 November 2023 or until the fund is used up.

#### Who is eligible?

To be eligible, you must meet all the following criteria:

1. Living in Portsmouth City Council's area (PO1 - PO6);
2. Have recourse to public funds<sup>1</sup>;
3. In one of the qualifying income groups listed below;
4. Have submitted a complete application and provided all requested evidence of circumstances before the scheme closes.

#### Qualifying income groups

Households can qualify for HSFCOL by meeting either of the qualifying income criteria below:

1. Receiving Housing Benefit and no other means-tested income benefit (Universal Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support, Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit), OR;
2. Receiving Universal Credit or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit), with the claim starting on 26/09/22 or later.

#### How do I apply?

Applications must be made using the online form - [Household support fund - apply for a cost of living payment](#)

If you are unable to complete your application online and upload copies of your evidence documents, you can get support by calling our Household Support Fund Helpline on 023 9268 8010.

If you apply by phone, you will need to bring your evidence documents to the Civic Offices to be scanned.

If you would like to speak a benefit advisor, you can contact Advice Portsmouth - for anyone who lives or works in Portsmouth: <https://adviceportsmouth.org.uk/>

If you would like to speak to a benefit advisor and you are a Portsmouth City Council tenant, you can contact your local area housing office - <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/contact-us/#housing>

#### What evidence do I need to provide?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/information-and-resources/rights-and-entitlements/immigration-status-and-entitlements/who-has-recourse-to-public-funds>

You will be asked to provide evidence about your circumstances. Please supply clear scanned images, screenshots or photos of the relevant documents.

Proof of identity	Any of the following, clearly showing your name, address and the date of the letter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bank or building society statement</li><li>• Credit card statement</li><li>• Household utility bill</li><li>• Landline phone bill</li><li>• Valid EU or UK driving licence</li></ul>
If you are working	Complete payslips for the last month or 4 weeks, depending how often you are paid. Please make sure the uploaded image(s) is of a complete payslip.
If you are receiving Universal Credit	Your most recent Universal Credit pay statement. We must see the payment breakdown, in full. This <b>must</b> include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name(s)</li><li>• Address</li><li>• The section called "What you are entitled to"</li><li>• Which month the statement is for</li><li>• The number of children in your household</li><li>• The section called 'What we take off (deductions), this must show the full details including the total deduction figure and your total payment for this month, shown at the bottom of the deductions section.</li></ul> <p>We do accept screenshots of the statement. Please ensure you show the full statement. It is likely this will be 3 or 4 images. Alternatively click on 'Print this statement' and you will have the option to 'Save as PDF'. Save the document to your device ready to upload to your application.</p>
If you are receiving any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child Benefit</li><li>• Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance</li><li>• Income-related Employment and Support Allowance</li><li>• Pension Credit</li><li>• Child Tax Credit</li><li>• Working Tax Credit</li></ul>	Your most recent award letter for each benefit or tax credit you are receiving, showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name(s)</li><li>• Address</li><li>• Date of the letter</li><li>• The number of children included in your assessment</li><li>• The amount of benefit or tax credit you are entitled to</li></ul>

If an application is submitted without all the evidence required, you will be contacted via email to request the evidence is provided. You will be given 14 days to respond, or your application will be closed. If you need longer to respond, please reply to the email to let us know the reasons and when you will provide the evidence required.

#### How do I find out if my application has been successful?

You will be contacted by email within 14 days of making your application and providing your evidence documents to tell you the outcome of your application, which will be either:

1. Eligible - details of how you will receive the payment
2. Ineligible
3. Application incomplete - further information and/ or evidence required

There is no right to appeal a decision, but you can ask for the decision to be reviewed if you believe it has not been based on correct information. A review can consider the decision whether to award a payment.

To request a review of a decision, you must reply to the email advising you of the decision on your application, or email [hsfcostofliving@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:hsfcostofliving@portsmouthcc.gov.uk) within 14 days of receiving the decision on your application.

#### How is the payment made?

Eligible recipients will receive a payment into their bank account using the details entered in your application, within 10 days of the decision being made.

We are unable to make payments into certain types of Building Society accounts, that have a roll number. In this case, or if there is another reason why someone cannot receive a BACS payment, the payment will be made by cheque, in the name of the applicant, posted to their address.