

HSF4 Winter Energy Scheme - Launch Information

Funded by the UK government, the Household Support Fund scheme supports vulnerable Kent households in need of help with significantly rising living costs. The Scheme is being delivered in two phases, **Phase 1 Summer Voucher scheme & Phase 2 Winter Energy Support scheme.**

The Summer Scheme has now closed but has been successful in delivering nearly £1million worth of support via food vouchers to Kent residents. We now move on to Phase 2 the Winter scheme which will deliver energy support to households.

As with Phase 1 the application route will provide 2 pathways to access either the self-referral or professional referral scheme.

Please feel free to share this information with your own professional networks, or pass on the subscription link, <https://forms.office.com/e/2aKaNrjwBi>, to our HFS4 mailing list to receive the latest news and updates on the scheme.

The winter scheme is open for applications from 12pm Tuesday 9 January 2024. The scheme will close on Thursday 29 February 2024, or earlier if the budget is spent.

Please note that the summer food voucher scheme closed early due to high demand and we expect a similar response for the winter scheme so advise professionals to refer their clients as early as possible.

If successful, support will be provided in one of the following:

- £100 prepaid physical card to be used to pay for energy via PayPoint or Post Office physical locations.
 - Sent to applicant via Royal Mail
 - Full T&Cs found here <https://legal.purecard.com/terms?cctid=fICBryCnN8F1c50558fICBryCnN8FI>
 - FAQs – <https://help.purecard.com/>
- £100 virtual energy card to be used to pay directly to energy providers for electricity, gas or water bills. Energy providers including British Gas, EDF, E.on, Bulb, Octopus and many more
 - Sent to applicant via email
 - Full T&Cs found here <https://legal.purecard.com/terms?cctid=fICBryCnN8F1c50551fICBryCnN8FI>
 - FAQs – <https://help.purecard.com/collection/753-energy-card-cardholders>

This card is issued by GVS Prepaid Ltd, pursuant to license by Mastercard International Incorporated

All applicants will need to complete the card activation process which will require online access and those without internet access will require professional referrer assistance, or they can access their local gateway service.

There is a limited amount of funding available for this scheme and funds will be distributed on a first come, first served basis, with only **one award per household.**

Who is eligible?

There is an expectation for professionals to complete due diligence checks of applications to ensure that beneficiaries meet the eligibility criteria as set out below:

Applicants that self-refer will be required to submit evidence to prove that they are the energy bill payer for the household and a Kent resident, within an eligible Kent district, at the point of application.

Applicants must

- be aged 16 or over
- be a Kent resident, permanently living within one of the 12 local authorities covered by Kent County Council (this excludes Medway, Bromley, and Bexley)
- have a household income less than £40,000 per annum before tax (including any means tested benefits)
- be the named utility bill payer for the household
- **not** have savings above £1000
- ***not** be receiving free school meal support within their household

***Free School Meal eligible families have received an additional energy voucher for each eligible child via their child's school outside of this scheme.** Eligible FSM families have received a voucher per eligible child for the value of £100 direct from their child's school before Christmas and should be referred back to their school for further advice if this has not been received.

Residents with no recourse to public funding are still eligible for the scheme. If a National Insurance number is not available, please email householdsupportfund@kent.gov.uk with circumstances and reasons why the applicant should receive this support (please attach all supporting evidence to the email).

Application link:

If support is required because of the increase in cost of living, apply for the Household Support Fund on the following link:

[Household Support Fund - Kent County Council](#)

Processing timescales

We do aim to send the physical and virtual cards out as quickly as possible, usually within 10 working days of a successful application being made, however we anticipate there will be high demand for support, and this could impact on timescales. The applicant and referrer (if applicable) will receive email confirmation of the application outcome.

Additional Queries

Any additional queries can be directed to householdsupportfund@kent.gov.uk or via our direct contact number 03000 412424

Kind regards,

Household Support Fund Team, Kent County Council

At KCC we are committed to supporting our customers who experience money worries.

Whilst we are doing all we can to help our customers, we recognise that there may be other debts that our customers need help and advice with. The government sponsored MoneyHelper can provide free and independent debt advice. Visit: <https://adviser.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>

