

Mid Suffolk Household Support Fund

Extension Policy 2024/ 2025

Introduction

The Household Support Fund is a discretionary grant which provides one off financial assistance to residents of Mid Suffolk to help with the cost of rent, service charges, and where appropriate, wider essentials.

Eligibility

Residents who meet all of the following conditions are eligible to apply for the Mid Suffolk Household Support Fund:

- Aged 18 and over.
- Experiencing financial difficulty which is affecting their ability to afford essentials items and services.
- Have already attempted to resolve their situation through traditional benefits, and other discretionary assistance such as Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Are resident within the Mid Suffolk District.

Residents without recourse to public funds shall generally be regarded as ineligible for support from the fund. However, the Council may, in exceptional circumstances, consider an award to be prudent where there is a genuine care need, which does not arise solely from destitution, such as where:

- There are community care needs
- They have serious health problems.
- There is a risk to a child's wellbeing.

Objective and priorities

Applications which meet the above criteria will not necessarily be approved, awards shall be determined at the discretion of the Council and based on the merits of each application in line with the identified priorities below:

- Alleviation of poverty and financial hardship.
- Supporting residents through personal crisis and difficult events
- Preventing the build-up of serious debt
- Supporting vulnerable residents in the community to maintain their health and wellbeing.

- Helping residents to manage their household income and improve their financial wellbeing, thereby reducing the risk of future financial crisis.

When considering whether to make an award from the Household Support Fund, the Council will consider what other financial support is available to the applicant to help their situation.

The fund cannot be used to support tenants in unsustainable or unsuitable housing. In the event an application is refused on the basis a tenancy is unsustainable, the applicant will be referred to the Housing Solutions Team for further advice.

Scope

The fund is primarily intended to support tenants with the cost of housing and service charges, however support can be provided for a broader range of essential costs where deemed appropriate by the Council.

Other costs which can be considered within the scope of the fund are:

- Energy, fuel and water
- Food
- Essential household items and furnishings
- Wider essential such as other utilities, clothing and uniform, hygiene products, and transport related costs, including repairs.

This is not an exhaustive list, the Council will ultimately determine whether an expense is essential based on the individual circumstances of each application.

How to apply

Applications for Household Support Fund are made using the online application form available on the Mid Suffolk District Council [website](#). Residents unable to apply online can apply over the phone by calling 0300 123 4 000, option 7, or visiting our customer access point.

The Mid Suffolk Household Support Fund is not an emergency fund, applicants should be aware that applications may take several weeks to process.

Residents in need of urgent essentials such as food are encouraged to contact their local Citizens Advice, or call our Customer Services team on 0300 123 4 000, option 7.

Any residents at risk of homelessness should contact the Housing Solutions Team for advice and assistance as soon as possible on 0300 123 4 000, option 3, or by completing the contact form on our [website](#).

Applicants will be asked to provide supporting information in order to assess their application. These documents will vary depending on the circumstances of the application but are likely to include proof of ID, proof of income and savings, proof

of housing tenure and rent statement (if applying for support with housing costs), and evidence of costings for any other essentials requested.

Applications will not be considered if no/ insufficient supporting evidence is submitted.

If you disagree with the our decision

There is no right of review for unsuccessful applications to the Household Support Fund.

Applicants who are unsatisfied with the decision made are able to contact the Financial Inclusion Team for an informal discussion over why this decision was reached. The team can be contacted by emailing Householdsupportgrant@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk , or by calling Customer Services on 0300 123 4 000, option 3.

Applicants who remain unhappy with the decision can make a complaint as per the Council's [complaints procedure](#).

How we use your data

Any data provided to Mid Suffolk District Council through an application to the Mid Suffolk Household Support Fund will be processed in line with GDPR and the privacy notice available on our [website](#).

In most cases we will not disclose your data without your consent, aside from those exceptions laid out within our privacy policy which include:

- The detection and prevention of crime/fraudulent activity
- If there are serious risks to the public, our staff or to other professionals
- To protect a child
- To protect adults who are thought to be at risk, for example if they are frail, confused or cannot understand what is happening to them
- Where there is a risk to you and the risk is sufficiently serious that the need to disclose your information is more important than protecting your confidentiality

Anonymised data may be used and shared for the purposes of data analytics and for the purposes of undertaking research.

For more information, [click to view the Mid Suffolk Privacy notice](#).