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# Discretionary support scheme

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The Blackpool discretionary support scheme can provide assistance to vulnerable people who need:

- Short term emergency support
- Help to become established or maintain independence in the community

We are unable to give cash.

## Short term emergency support

### Assistance for gas and electricity pre-payment customers

Energy firms have put in place measures to help pre-payment customers who are struggling or unable to top up.

Suppliers will deal with issues on a case-by-case basis, but if you can't top up your meter or are struggling to buy credit, please contact your provider directly before making an application to discretionary support.

[Details of the help energy suppliers have made available, including contact telephone numbers](#)

## Other support

Support may be given to people who, in an emergency situation, do not have the resources to meet the basic needs of themselves or their family and who:

- Have a local connection (see below)
- Are over 16 years old
- Don't have access to sufficient income, savings or credit
- Have not had an award of this kind in the last 12 months

## Available help

No cash payments will be made.

The type of help available may include:

- Referral to a food bank for a food parcel
- Referral to a local children's centre
- Arrangement to top up emergency supply of gas or electric
- Non-refundable travel warrant for emergency travel
- Referral to another agency

## Help to become established or maintain independence in the community

Support may be given to people who need assistance to move to, or maintain their own home, or where there are exceptional family circumstances. To be eligible for the scheme residents must:

- Have a local connection (see below)
- Are over 16 years old
- Receive a qualifying means tested benefit
- Need help to move to their own home, to stay in their own home, or where the family is under exceptional pressure and needs practical help

## Available help

No cash payments will be made.

The type of help available could include:

- Beds or bedding
- Essential furniture items
- Essential kitchen equipment
- Referral to another agency or fund, for example Discretionary Housing Payments

## Local connection

This is where a person has lived in Blackpool for at least 6 of the last 12 months, or lived in Blackpool for at least 3 of the last 5 years, or have close or immediate family, e.g. mother, father, brother, sister, adult son or daughter who live in Blackpool and have lived in Blackpool for more than 5 years, or have permanent employment in Blackpool.

## Application process

There is no face to face service and applications are not normally completed over the phone.

**Make your application now**

Applications for help to become established or maintain independence in the community should be supported by one of the following:

- Housing options
- Blackpool Coastal Housing
- Blackpool social services
- Any professional providing support to a member of the household

The service is available for general enquiries from Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm on 0800 6940 100. If there is a real risk to health or safety or for services out of hours you can call the social services emergency duty team on 01253 477600 or 01253 477678.

Please read the [Blackpool Discretionary Support Scheme policy](#) for more information about the scheme and about who may be offered extra financial support.

Blackpool Discretionary Support Scheme **does not** cover any of the following:

- Short term advances - If you have recently made a claim for benefit and are experiencing a period of financial need before your first payment speak to your local Jobcentre Plus office to see if you qualify
- Regulated Social Fund (Funeral payments, Sure Start maternity grants, cold weather payments, winter fuel payments and budgeting loans)

[Find out more about the qualifying criteria for a short term advance or a regulated social fund.](#)

You can apply for a [Short Term Advance or a Budgeting loan online](#) or by calling 0800 169 0140.

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## Blackpool Council

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