Sheffield City Council’s Short Break Grant 2016/17

SCC3COL

Guidance Notes – **Please read before completing the application form.**

What is a Short Break Grant?

A Short Break Grant is a one-off payment, **up to a maximum** of £400 **per family**, designed to give parent/carers of disabled children and young people (aged 0 – 19) a break from their caring responsibilities. The grant is for the parent or carer.

What can I use it for?

A Short Break Grant is designed to be flexible and you can use it in a variety of different ways, for example you could:

* Buy a gym membership for you or for the disabled young person
* Pay for family days out or day trips – including travel and food costs
* Pay for cinema trips or a yearly cinema pass
* Pay for a host of other leisure activities
* To pay for additional support to enable your child to access an activity
* Access to a holiday or weekend play scheme
* Childcare to allow you (and your partner) to have a day or nights out
* Contribute to a family holiday

All of the above are just examples, what is most important is that the grant helps to reduce your stress by having a break from your caring responsibilities.

Is there anything I can’t use it for?

Although the use of the grant is flexible, there are some things we cannot fund, such as:

* Buying electronic equipment e.g. smart phone, tablet, laptop etc.
* Decorating
* Buying furniture
* Buying toys or clothes etc

How do I know if I can apply?

You will automatically be eligible if:

* You care for a child or young person who receives **high rate** Disability Living Allowance in either the **care or mobility** components

**Or**

* You care for a young person who receives **enhanced rate** Personal Independence Payment for either the **care or mobility** components

**Or**

* You already receive another form of assessed short break e.g. residential provision, SNIPS, direct payments etc

Can I still apply if I don’t meet these criteria?

Yes, you may still qualify if:

* You are a new applicant - you can submit an ‘**Additional Information Form**’
* You received the grant last year as a result of submitting an **Additional Information Form** and that form is still less than 12 months old, you can apply without submitting a new **Additional Information Form**
* You received the grant last year but the **Additional Information Form** is more than 12 months old, you can apply but will need to submit a new **Additional Information Form**

The **Additional Information Form** should be completed by a professional who knows your family e.g. GP, Health Visitor etc. and can provide evidence of how your child/young person’s disability **impacts** upon the whole family. For example, does it affect any siblings, are there any night time behaviours or disturbed sleep patterns, are there any other family members with health concerns, what are the stresses and pressures for the family?

I have more than 1 child with a disability; can I claim more than 1 Short **Break Grant?**

No, we are only able to offer one grant per household

When can I claim the grant?

You can submit the claim any time before **31st January 2017,** applications received after that date will **not** be considered.

When must I use the grant by?

The activities the grant is funding must have taken take place **by 31st March 2017.**

How and when will I know if my application has been successful?

We will write to you as soon as we have made a decision either by post or by email if you have provided your email address. We will try to process applications as quickly as possible but, at times of high demand, it may take a little longer. It would be appreciated if you would allow **at least 6 weeks** after submitting your application before enquiring about progress.

I need the money quickly; can I fast track the application?

No, to make the process fair, all applications are processed strictly in the date order in which they have been received. Whilst we make every effort to make the payment as quickly as possible, you must not rely on receiving these funds by a certain date.

Can I claim for activities or breaks taken earlier in the year before I received confirmation I would get the grant?

No, the funds cannot be used retrospectively; they have to be used for future activities that take place **before 31st March 2017**. Please try to allow **at least 6 weeks** between the date you apply for the grant and the date you want the activities to take place.

Do I have to send in receipts to evidence how I have used the grant?

On the application form you need to provide details about how and when you plan to spend the money. You may be asked to produce receipts after the activity has taken place as part of an audit.

What can I do if my application is not successful?

If you disagree with the decision we make about you’re application, you have the right to appeal. The letter you receive will tell you how and where to make your appeal.

Where can I go to find out more or for help with my application?

If you have any further questions or need more information, please contact **Sheffield SEN & Disability Information, Advice and Support on 0114 273 6009 or email disabilityinformationservices@sheffield.gov.uk**