

Know your rights: Disabled Facilities Grants

We want to ensure that everyone with arthritis lives in a home that is accessible. We know that for some, major adaptations can make a really positive difference.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) is a means tested grant that is designed to help you make your home more accessible. They do this by covering some of the costs of major alterations and adaptations (costing over £1000), for example widening doorways, installing ramps, adapting heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use, installing stairlifts or building a downstairs bathroom or wet room.

You can apply for a DFG through your local council.

Country	Available grant	How to apply
England	Up to £30,000	Find your local council by visiting https://www.gov.uk/apply-disabled-facilities-grant and entering your postcode.
Wales	Up to £36,000	Find your local council by visiting https://www.gov.uk/apply-disabled-facilities-grant and entering your postcode.
Northern Ireland	Up to £25,000	Find more information here: https://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/hig_home/grants_available/disabled_facilities_grant .
Scotland	Disabled Facilities Grants are not available	Find out about support for equipment and adaptations .

Even if you are unsure whether you qualify for a DFG, have a look through the following advice to make sure you know your rights.

Do I qualify?

In order to qualify for a DFG, you must be considered disabled. For example, if:

- you are physically substantially disabled because of an illness, injury or impairment that you have had since birth or otherwise
- your sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired
- you have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind.

If you are considered disabled, you will then need to meet the following criteria in order to qualify for a DFG:

- you must be 18 or over at the date of application (N.B. Disabled children can receive a DFG without needing a means test. To find out more information on this [please see here](#).)
- you must be either the owner, or the tenant of a dwelling and be able to provide an owner's certificate or tenant's certificate (owners may apply on behalf of a tenant)
- you must satisfy the means test (see below)

The means test

Your local council will carry out a means test, to see if you qualify for a DFG based on your financial circumstances. Here is a breakdown of what they will look at, and a little bit of information about each one.

	What that means
Allowable income	This is how much they calculate you need to live. It is calculated on a set of standard allowances for living costs using basic levels of pensions support/pension credit and a flat rate allowance for housing costs.
Surplus income	They calculate this by comparing your 'allowable income' to your actual income. They look at whether this could be used to pay off a loan for an adaptation if you were asked to contribute.
Tariff income	This means any savings you have above £6000.

What will I get?

The loan amount the local council thinks you can afford (based on the means test) is then compared to the cost of the work that needs to be done. They will also look at whether you are on any means-tested benefits.

	What you will get
If the loan amount the local council thinks you can afford is equal to or more than the cost of the work.	You will not be entitled to a DFG.
If the loan amount the local council thinks you can afford is less than the cost of the work.	The amount of DFG you are entitled to will be calculated as the total cost of work minus the loan amount you can afford . <u>Example</u> The total cost of the work = £5000 The loan amount you can afford = £2000 DFG = £3000
You are receiving any means-tested benefits.	You will automatically be 'passported through' and receive 100% of the grant, even if you have a small 'surplus income'. <u>Example</u> The total cost of the work = £5000 DFG = £5000

Appealing a decision

If you're unhappy with decisions made regarding your care and support needs, you can appeal directly to your local council and ask them to review their decision.

If you do appeal to your local council, and you're still not happy with their decision, you can complain to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

For more information and advice, you can contact our helpline: **0800 5200 520**

Help us improve the system

We are campaigning to improve the DFG and ensure that more people with arthritis know about it and benefit from it. If you'd like to be involved in helping us do this, you can join our [Campaigns Network](#) where you will receive approximately one email a month letting you know what we're up to and how you can get involved.

If you've had experience of applying for a DFG and would like to share your story with us, you can email campaigns@versusarthritis.org