

|  |
| --- |
| Utility Relief Grant Scheme (non-mains) |
| Information for applicants |
|  |

### What is the grant?

The grant provides help to pay a non-mains energy or water bill that is overdue due to a temporary financial crisis.

This can include bills for:

* liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)
* diesel and petrol (for a generator)
* heating oil
* firewood
* metered electricity from an embedded network
* carted water
* cleaning of a septic tank (for homeowners).

### Who can apply for the grant?

An account holder who holds one of the following eligible concession cards:

* Pensioner Concession Card
* Health Care Card
* Veterans’ Affairs Gold Card.

If you don’t have one of these cards but you are on a very low income, you may also be eligible. We will ask you some questions to check if you are eligible before issuing a form.

The grant is available to renters and homeowners.

### What are the criteria for the grant?

You must show that you have no way of paying the account without assistance, **and**

You must meet **one** of the following criteria:

* You or someone in your house has experienced family violence.
* You have had a recent decrease in income, for example, lost your job.
* You have had high unexpected costs for essential items.
* The cost of shelter is more than 30 per cent of your household income.

### How much is the grant?

The amount of the grant is based on the amount you owe at the time of application. It is also based on the reasons you have given for applying in your application form.

You can receive a maximum of $650 on each utility type in a two-year period.

You may also be able to apply if you do not currently owe on a bill but know that you will not be able to afford your next supply bill.

### How do I apply for the grant?

Phone the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521.

### More information

Phone the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521.

## Further information

### How is the grant paid?

The grant is paid to the supplier and the supplier will credit the grant against your outstanding debt or next purchase.

### How long will my application take?

Applications take approximately four to six weeks to process, from the time that a completed form is received by the department.

We will write to you once your application has been considered.

### What information do I need to include with my application?

You will need to include an invoice from the supplier you owe money to with your application. Our staff will tell you what is needed when sending you an application.

Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to include other supporting documents.

Check your application carefully to make sure you have included everything.

For example, you may need to include copies of your payslips, receipts or a statutory declaration.

### I received a grant of less than $650 – can I receive more?

You are not guaranteed to receive a grant of $650.

The amount of the grant is based on the amount you owe at the time of your application and the reasons you have given for applying in your application form.

If you received less than the maximum, you are eligible to apply again for another grant without waiting for two years.

If you want to discuss the amount of your grant, call the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521.

### I am a renter – why can’t I receive a grant for septic tank cleaning?

Your landlord is responsible for maintaining the septic tank in your property.

Contact your landlord to request they clean the tank. You can also contact Consumer Affairs Victoria for advice about maintenance in rental properties.

|  |
| --- |
| To receive this document in another format, phone 1800 658 521, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email Concessions](mailto:concessions@health.vic.gov.au?subject=Water%20and%20Sewerage%20Concession%20accessible%20form) <concessions@health.vic.gov.au>.  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, July 2022.  Available at the [Utility Relief Grant Scheme (non-mains) webpage](https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/utility-relief-grant-scheme-non-mains) <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/utility-relief-grant-scheme-non-mains> |