

Self-Directed Support

Disabled Facilities Grants - DFGs

Just because someone is disabled doesn't mean they have to leave their own home. Many people make changes and adaptations. Some might pay for the changes. Others might get a grant.

One way is to arrange the work through your local council using a Disabled Facilities Grant – DFG.

This fact sheet tells you about DFGs.



To get more help
contact In Control.
Tel: **01564 821 650**
Email In Control
help@in-control.org.uk

Find more fact sheets at:
www.in-control.org.uk/factsheets



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This fact sheet was produced by In Control and Mencap as part of In control and me, a lottery funded project.
www.in-control.org.uk/incontrolandme

The basic facts

If someone is disabled, or becomes disabled, they might need changes to their accommodation – for example, widening doors, installing a lift or a wet room.

Some people have extended their property to make a new bedroom and bathroom. Others have fitted a simple ramp so they can get in and out in their wheelchair. Some people can get a **Disabled Facilities Grant** for this kind of change.

You can apply for a DFG:

- if you or someone living in your property is disabled
- if this will be your main residence for the next five years
- you are a landlord applying on behalf of a tenant.

DFGs are available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. If you live in Scotland, contact your social services department.

More information about Disabled Facilities Grants

What DFGs are for

You can use a DFG to adapt a home so that:

- you can move around more easily
- you are safe
- you have essential facilities like a wet room or shower room.

DFGs cover work such as:

- widening doors and installing ramps
- creating or improving access to rooms – for example a stair lift, a ground-floor bedroom or bathroom
- installing or updating heating systems that suits your needs
- making it easier to get into and move around your home so that you can care for someone else.

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How much DFG can you get?

The maximum grant is £25,000 in England and Northern Ireland. £36,000 in Wales.

A DFG is means-tested – you may have to pay towards the work. But it is not means-tested if you are applying for a disabled child under 19.

Means-testing:

- takes into account all your income and, if you have a partner, your combined income
- takes into account any savings you have over £6,000
- ignores certain benefits like Disability Living Allowance and Income Support
- makes allowances for things you have to pay out, such as mortgage or rent, council tax, gas, electricity and water.

The means-testing decides how much you have to pay. This can be anything from 0 to 100%.

How the grant is paid

The way the grant is paid varies from one local authority to another.

The council might:

- pay you and ask you to pass the payment to the contractor
- pay the contractor directly
- pay in installments
- only pay when the work is finished and the council is satisfied
- only pay for materials or services bought if a relative carries out the work.

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Applying

Contact an occupational therapist or your housing or environmental health department. Ask them for an application form.

Don't start any work until the council says they have approved your application.

The council tell you the result of your application within six months.

Getting the work done

Each council has its own way of doing things.

Some councils have a 'one stop shop'. They organise plans, planning permission, builders and finances.

In other places there are Home Improvement Agencies run by councils or housing association. These:

- give free advice
- offer support to tenants who want to adapt their home
- can arrange to have small adaptations and equipment installed
- can organise bigger-scale work
- sort out finances
- find a surveyor, architect or builder
- keep an eye on work as it's done.

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More detail about DFGs

There are other ways of getting help with adaptations and changes to your home:

- Some councils offer low-cost loans.
- Some councils can help if you are struggling to pay your contribution. They might offer interest-free loans or 'equity release'. It's best to get financial advice before you sign up to any arrangement.
- Disabled people do not have to pay VAT on some building work – including any tidying up after the main work is finished.
- You might be able to get a one-band reduction on your council tax.
- The Supporting People Programme pays for housing-related support to help vulnerable people live as independently as possible – whether in their own home or supported housing.

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There is a lot of information about Self-Directed Support on In Control's website:
www.in-control.org.uk

Information about Disabled Facilities Grants

Contact the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG):

www.communities.gov.uk

Telephone 0207944 3442

Email disabled.facilitiesgrants@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Or visit:

www.direct.gov.uk

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About the **in Control and me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support.

The project has worked with individuals and families to decide what information should be produced. This information will reach over 11,000 people a year through the national learning disability helpline. The In Control website will also have an online advice area.

More information: Lisa Dunne: 07984 111315.



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The voice of learning disability

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