



DISCRETIONARY
TEST & TRACE SUPPORT PAYMENTS
POLICY

2020/21

1. General

From 28 September 2020, individuals are entitled to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment (main award) **or** discretionary support payment of £500. This is to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and will lose income as a result.

These payments are designed to help ensure people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts self-isolate for the required period to stop the onward spread of the virus. They are also designed to encourage individuals who are eligible for this payment to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions.

The scheme starts from 28 September 2020, and local authorities should have arrangements in place to administer payments by 12 October 2020. Someone told to self-isolate on or after 28 September will be able to make a backdated claim for payment. The scheme will last until 30 September 2021.

The purpose of this discretionary scheme is to facilitate awards to those residents who do not meet the criteria for the main award because they **are not** currently receiving one of the qualifying benefits, and are on a low income and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work whilst they are self-isolating.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the latest guidance issued by Department of Health of Social Care.

2. Eligibility for the main award

Eligibility for a £500 Test and Trace Support Payment is restricted to individuals who:

- have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
- are employed or self-employed;
- are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
- are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

3. Eligibility for a discretionary payment

Eligibility for a £500 discretionary payment is restricted to individuals who:

- have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
- are employed or self-employed;
- are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result.
- are **not** currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit;
- have savings of less than £5,000,
- are on a low income (average gross weekly pay of less than £500.00 per week but more than £95.85 per week), and
- will suffer financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.

4. Assessment Process

All applications will be assessed on a case by case basis. The application form will set out particulars of the evidence that will need to be included with the application for the payment.

There will be no right of appeal against a decision not to award a payment.

5. Fraud

The Government will support the Council to carry out post-event assurance work. Where checks discover that payments have been made in error or have been claimed as a result of fraud, the Council has the right to recoup any payments made.

6. Funding and demand

The Department of Health and Social Care has provided the Council with funding of **£23,560.16** to support residents under our discretionary scheme. Payments will be made within 3 days of receiving the required information.

The drawdown of the funding amount will be kept under constant review and no further payments will be made once the allocation is exhausted unless further funding is provided.

