

## **Tenant Grant Fund for tenants in social housing and the private sector**

### **What is the Tenant Grant Fund?**

The Scottish Government has set up a Tenant Grant Fund to give financial help to tenants in social housing and in the private sector who are at risk of becoming homeless because they have fallen behind with rent payments during the pandemic.

The grants will help tenants who have struggled financially as a direct result of the pandemic, allowing them to reduce or pay-off any rent arrears they have built up. The money does not have to be repaid and is available to tenants in Council, housing association or privately rented accommodation.

Payments are being administered by local authorities and Moray Council has received an allocation of funding which is only available until 31 March 2022. There will be no further allocation to local authorities.

### **Is there any eligibility criteria?**

The Tenant Grant Fund is designed to be flexible, however there is an eligibility criteria set by the Scottish Government:

- The grants are limited to helping with rent arrears that built-up between 23 March 2020 and 9 August 2021 to a maximum of 12 months within this period.
- Grants will be targeted towards current tenants who are at risk of becoming homeless and do not have any other way of clearing the arrears.
- Grants can be used to make a full or partial payment of arrears, depending on individual circumstances.
- Private sector landlords should be registered on the Scottish Landlord Register (or have submitted an application).
- Landlords should have carried out steps to resolve the issue in line with pre-action requirements
- Payments will be made to landlords rather than tenants on the strict condition that the payment will be used to credit the tenant's rent account and that any ongoing proceedings to end the tenancy will stop. Payment can't be made to the tenant as this may affect their benefit entitlement.

Our aim is to ensure funding is targeted towards supporting households who are at the greatest risk of becoming homeless.

### **Is any tenant who accrued rent arrears during the Covid-19 pandemic eligible?**

Although there will be tenants who have accrued arrears during the Covid-19 pandemic, this will not automatically mean that they will be eligible. A tenant must be in extreme housing crisis and their tenancy is at risk. A tenant should have approached our Housing Options Team and / or submitted a homeless application because they are threatened with homelessness due to the build-up of rent arrears due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We would expect the tenant to have been served with a legal notice, such as a valid Notice to Quit, or a Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession, or for a landlord to have issued a Section 11 Notice, giving us advance notification that a tenant may be at risk of homelessness due to proceedings for possession being raised.

**How do tenants, landlords or organisations apply?**

There is not a formal application process. Initial enquiries can be made by tenants, landlords or third party organisations that are supporting either a tenant or landlord. Enquiries should be emailed to the address below. On receipt of an enquiry, an Officer will respond as soon as possible to collect the information needed to assess eligibility for the Fund and to explain how the process will work. Please note that we may not be able to respond to your enquiry immediately but we will make contact as soon as possible.

**Enquiries**

If you have an enquiry regarding the Tenant Grant Fund please email us at [housing.needs@moray.gov.uk](mailto:housing.needs@moray.gov.uk).