



Briefing: Everyday Needs Grants

About the Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion (RBL) is at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community. We were created as a unifying force for the military charity sector at the end of the First World War and remain one of the UK's largest membership organisations. RBL is the largest welfare provider in the Armed Forces charity sector, helping veterans young and old transition into civilian life. We help with employment, financial issues, respite and recovery, through to lifelong care and independent living.

For further information on this briefing please contact Nick Craker, Public Affairs and Campaigns Officer (South), via ncraker@britishlegion.org.uk

Summary

- RBL has noted a 20% rise in requests for support with urgent needs and has found that some features of the Armed Forces community result in a greater vulnerability to rising costs.
- The Everyday Needs Grants Programme is designed to assist those who need help in a quick and easy way with essentials such as kitchen appliances, clothes, and energy costs.
- Grants are available of up to £2,400 over 12 months.
- Applicable recipients include serving and ex-serving personnel, and the wider Armed Forces community, including families, dependants, and carers.
- Members of the Armed Forces community in receipt of means tested state benefits, such as universal credit, pension credit, or income support, should qualify automatically.
- Those who don't receive state benefits may also be eligible, RBL will assess income and expenditure to measure needs.
- **We encourage anyone who is struggling with increasing costs to apply, as flexibility is in place to consider support for those who do not meet the defined means testing.**
- Any member of the Armed Forces community wanting to access the grants can find out more and apply directly at rbl.org.uk/costofliving or call 0808 802 8080

Background

The Royal British Legion noted a 20% rise in requests for support with urgent needs, such as food and household costs, over the last 12 months. We anticipate that this will increase over the winter.

The increase in cost of living presents challenges across households in the UK general population and is not an issue exclusive to veterans and their families. However, some challenges facing the Armed Forces community may compound the impact of cost increases.

RBL research has found that households containing working-age adults in the ex-Service community were more than twice as likely to receive a sickness or disability benefit than UK adults. Scope has found that disabled households on average face extra costs of £583 per month.

Households containing wounded, injured and sick veterans may also incur unpaid caring responsibilities, for whom employment is more difficult to access.

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Additionally, welfare benefit arrangements that treat Service compensation as income for means testing result in some veterans having to sacrifice compensation to obtain equitable provisions.

Everyday Needs Grants

In response, the Royal British Legion has allocated funding for a record level of grant distribution.

The Everyday Needs Grants Programme is designed to allow us to assist people who need help in a quick and easy way with essentials such as kitchen appliances, clothes, and energy costs.

Providing up to £2,400 a year in £200 monthly instalments, successful applicants receive:

- Vouchers to top-up gas or electricity prepayment meters.
- A virtual credit card you to pay utility bills (the cards are restricted to this use).
- Vouchers for food, clothing, or household items, up to £500.
- New / replacement white goods, including fridges, cookers, washing machines, etc.

Eligibility

RBL is dedicated to supporting not only serving and ex-serving personnel but the whole of the Armed Forces community, including families, dependants, and carers – which can include children, current and former spouses and partners, widows and widowers.

The full definition of eligibility for RBL grants is available at rbl.org.uk/get-support/who-we-help

Means testing

Members of the Armed Forces community in need in receipt of any means tested state benefits, such as universal credit, pension credit, or income support, should qualify automatically.

However, those who don't receive state benefits may also be eligible, RBL will means test income and expenditure to assess needs.

We encourage anyone who is struggling with increasing costs to apply, as flexibility is in place to consider support for those who do not meet the defined means testing.

The Royal British Legion's Position

The Royal British Legion is pleased to be able to offer this broad package of support for the Armed Forces community. It is only through the generosity of our members and supporters that such action is possible.

RBL will continue to work with the government at all levels to ensure that the voice and concerns of the Armed Forces community are attended to in efforts to reduce the impact of rising living costs.

For further information and to discuss potential engagement arising, please contact Nick Craker, Public Affairs and Campaigns Officer (South), via ncraker@britishlegion.org.uk