

Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992

1992 CHAPTER 4

PART VIII

THE SOCIAL FUND

138 Payments out of the social fund.

- [F1(1) There may be made out of the social fund, in accordance with this Part of this Act—
 - (a) payments of prescribed amounts, whether in respect of prescribed items or otherwise, to meet, in prescribed circumstances, maternity expenses and funeral expenses; [F2 and]
 - [F3(b) payments by way of community care grant, crisis loan or budgeting loan [F4to meet—
 - (i) other needs, and
 - (ii) in the case of payments by way of budgeting loan, those needs for which provision is made by paragraph (a),]

in accordance with directions given or guidance issued by the Secretary of State.]]

- (2) Payments may also be made out of that fund, in accordance with this Part of this Act, of a prescribed amount or a number of prescribed amounts to prescribed descriptions of persons, in prescribed circumstances to meet expenses for heating which appear to the Secretary of State to have been or to be likely to be incurred in cold weather.
- [F5(3) The power to make a payment out of the social fund such as is mentioned in subsection (1)(b) above may be exercised by making a payment to a third party with a view to the third party providing, or arranging for the provision of, goods or services for the applicant.]
 - (4) In this section "prescribed" means specified in or determined in accordance with regulations.

[^{F6}(4A) This section has effect in or as regards Scotland as if—

- (a) references in subsections (1)(a) and (2) to the making of payments out of the social fund were to the making of payments by the Scottish Ministers,
- (b) the reference in subsection (2) to the Secretary of State were to the Scottish Ministers, and
- (c) the reference in subsection (4) to regulations were to regulations made by the Scottish Ministers.
- (4B) Where regulations are made by the Scottish Ministers under this section—
 - (a) sections 175(2) and (7) and 176 do not apply, and
 - (b) the regulations are subject to the negative procedure (see section 28 of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010).
- (4C) The power to make an Order in Council under section 30(3) of the Scotland Act 1998 is exercisable for the purposes of this section as it is exercisable for the purposes of that Act.]

[F7]F8(5) In this Part—

"budgeting loan" means a loan awarded in circumstances specified in directions issued by the Secretary of State for the purpose of defraying an intermittent expense;

"community care grant" means a grant awarded in circumstances so specified for the purpose of meeting a need for community care;

"crisis loan" means a loan awarded in circumstances so specified for the purpose of meeting an immediate short term need;

and any reference in this subsection to meeting a need or defraying an expense includes a reference to helping to meet the need or to defray the expense.]]

Textual Amendments

- F1 S. 138(1) substituted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), ss. 70(1), 87(2); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a) (with art. 3)
- Word in s. 138(1) repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), s. 150(3), Sch. 14 Pt. 8; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(d) (with art. 3)
- F3 S. 138(1)(b) repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), ss. 70(1), 150(3); S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(a) (with art. 3)
- F4 Words in s. 138(1)(b) substituted (8.5.2012) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), ss. 71, 150(2)(c)
- F5 S. 138(3) repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), s. 150(3), Sch. 14 Pt. 8; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(d) (with art. 3)
- **F6** S. 138(4A)-(4C) inserted (17.5.2017 for specified purposes) by Scotland Act 2016 (c. 11), **ss. 23(5)**, 72(4)(b); S.I. 2017/455, reg. 2(b)(iii)
- F7 S. 138(5) inserted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), ss. 70(2), 87(2); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a) (with art. 3)
- F8 S. 138(5) repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), s. 150(3), Sch. 14 Pt. 8; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(d) (with art. 3)

[F9139 Awards by social fund officers.

- [F10(1) Whether a payment mentioned in section 138(1)(b) above is to be awarded, and how much it is to be, shall be determined by an appropriate officer, that is to say, an officer of the Secretary of State who, acting under his authority, is exercising functions of the Secretary of State in relation to payments so mentioned.]
 - (2) [FIIAn appropriate officer] may determine that an award shall be payable in specified instalments at specified times.

$F^{12}(3)$.																															
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- (4) An award [F13 of a crisis loan or a budgeting loan] shall be repayable upon such terms and conditions as before the award is paid the Secretary of State notifies to the person by or on behalf of whom the application for it was made.
- (5) Payment of an award shall be made to the applicant unless [F14the appropriate officer] determines otherwise.]

Textual Amendments

- F9 S. 139 repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), s. 150(3), Sch. 14 Pt. 8; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(d) (with art. 3)
- **F10** S. 139(1) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 72(1**); S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F11** Words in s. 139(2) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 72(2)**; S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F12** S. 139(3) repealed (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), Sch. 7 para. 72(3), **Sch. 8**; S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(b)(c) (with art. 3)
- F13 Words in s. 139(4) substituted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), Sch. 7 para. 72(4); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(b) (with art. 3)
- **F14** Words in s. 139(5) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 72(5)**; S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)

[F15140 Principles of determination.

- (1) In determining whether to make an award [F16 of a community care grant or a crisis loan] to the applicant or the amount or value to be awarded [F17 an appropriate officer] shall have regard, subject to subsection (2) below, to all the circumstances of the case and, in particular—
 - (a) the nature, extent and urgency of the need;
 - (b) the existence of resources from which the need may be met;
 - (c) the possibility that some other person or body may wholly or partly meet it;
 - (d) where the payment is repayable, the likelihood of repayment and the time within which repayment is likely;
 - (e) any relevant allocation under section 168(1) to (4) of the Administration Act.
- [F18(1A) Subject to subsection (2) below, in determining whether to make an award of a budgeting loan to the applicant, or the amount or value to be awarded, an appropriate officer shall have regard to—
 - (a) such of the applicant's personal circumstances as are of a description specified in directions issued by the Secretary of State; and

- (b) the criteria specified in paragraphs $[^{F19}(b), (d) \text{ and } (e)]$ of subsection (1) above; F20]
- (2) [F21An appropriate officer] shall determine any question in accordance with any general directions issued by the Secretary of State and in determining any question shall take account of any general guidance issued by him.
- [F22(3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2), the Secretary of State may issue directions under that subsection for the purpose of securing that allocations under section 168 of the Administration Act are not exceeded.]
 - (4) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2) above, the power to issue general directions conferred on the Secretary of State by that subsection includes power to direct—
 - (a) that in circumstances specified in the direction [F23 an appropriate officer] shall not determine an application and, without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph, that [F23 an appropriate officer] shall not determine an application which is made before the end of a specified period after the making of an application by the same person for a payment such as is mentioned in section 138(1)(b) above to meet the same need and without there having been any relevant change of circumstances since the previous application;
 - [F24(aa) that in circumstances specified in the direction an application for an award of a community care grant may be treated as an application for an award of a crisis loan, and vice versa;]
 - (b) that for a category of need specified in the direction [F23 an appropriate officer] shall not award less than an amount specified in the direction;
 - (c) that for a category of need specified in the direction [F23 an appropriate officer] shall not award more than an amount so specified;
 - (d) that payments to meet a category of need specified in the direction shall in all cases or in no case be made by instalments;
 - [F25(da) that the amount or value of a budgeting loan is not to exceed a sum specified or determined as specified in the direction;]
 - F26(e)
 - (f) that a payment such as is mentioned in section 138(1)(b) above shall only be awarded to a person if either—
 - (i) he is in receipt of a benefit which is specified in the direction and the circumstances are such as are so specified; or
 - (ii) in a case where the conditions specified in sub-paragraph (i) above are not satisfied, the circumstances are such as are specified in the direction.

and the power to issue general guidance conferred on him by that subsection includes power to give [F27] appropriate officers] guidance as to any matter to which directions under that subsection may relate.

- [F28(4ZA) A direction under subsection (4)(da) may require the sum to be determined by applying, or by a method that includes applying, a multiplier specified in the direction in circumstances specified in the direction to the most recent relevant sum published by the Secretary of State.
 - (4ZB) A relevant sum is a sum determined from time to time by reference to so much of any relevant allocation under section 168(1) to (4) of the Administration Act as is available for making payments.]

(5) In determining a question [F29an appropriate officer] shall take account (subject to any directions or guidance issued by the Secretary of State under this section) of any guidance issued by [F30the appropriate officer nominated for his area under section 36 of the Social Security Act 1998].]

Textual Amendments

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- F15 S. 140 repealed (1.4.2013) (with savings relating to budgeting loans and relating to community care grants and crisis loans applied for before 1.4.2013) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), s. 150(3), Sch. 14 Pt. 8; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(d) (with art. 3)
- **F16** Words in s. 140(1) inserted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), **ss. 71(1)**, 87(2); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a) (with art. 3)
- F17 Words in s. 140(1) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), Sch. 7 para. 73(1); S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F18** S. 140(1A) inserted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), **ss. 71(2)**, 87(2); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a) (with art. 3)
- F19 Words in s. 140(1A)(b) substituted (3.7.2007) by Welfare Reform Act 2007 (c. 5), ss. 54(a), 70(1)
- F20 Words in s. 140(1A) repealed (3.7.2007) by Welfare Reform Act 2007 (c. 5), ss. 54(b), 70(1), Sch. 8
- **F21** Words in s. 140(2) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 73(2)**; S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- F22 S. 140(3) substituted (3.7.2007) by Welfare Reform Act 2007 (c. 5), s. 70(1), Sch. 7 para. 2(3)
- **F23** Words in s. 140(4) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 73(4)(a)**; S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F24** S. 140(4)(aa) inserted (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), **ss. 71(3)**, 87(2); S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a) (with art. 3)
- F25 S. 140(4)(da) inserted (8.5.2012) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), ss. 72(2), 150(2)(c)
- **F26** S. 140(4)(e) repealed (5.4.1999) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), ss. 71(3), 87(2), **Sch. 8**; S.I. 1999/1055, art. 2(a)(c) (with art. 3)
- **F27** Words in s. 140(4) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), **Sch. 7 para. 73(4)(b)**; S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F28** S. 140(4ZA)(4ZB) inserted (8.5.2012) by Welfare Reform Act 2012 (c. 5), ss. 72(3), 150(2)(c)
- **F29** Words in s. 140(5) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), Sch. 7 para. 73(5)(a); S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)
- **F30** Words in s. 140(5) substituted (29.11.1999 subject to specified exceptions) by Social Security Act 1998 (c. 14), s. 87(2), Sch. 7 para. 73(5)(b); S.I. 1999/3178, art. 2(1)(a)(2), Sch. 1 (with Schs. 21-23)

Changes to legislation:

There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

View outstanding changes

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

- Act applied (with modifications) by S.I. 2010/875 reg. 16Sch. 2 (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S.I. 2010/875 revoked (27.8.2010) before coming into force by S.I. 2010/1906, regs. 1(2), 2)
- Act restricted by S.I. 1995/471 art. 32(4)

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- Pt. 8ZA inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 16(1) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Ss. 16-21 repealed (1.4.2013) by 2012 c. 5, s. 73; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(b))
- Pt. 12ZE inserted by 2023 c. 20 Sch. para. 5
- s. 1(6)(aa) inserted by S.I. 2024/377 reg. 5(1)
- s. 4(1)(a)(viii) and word inserted by 2023 c. 20 Sch. para. 11(b)
- s. 4C(5)(i)(j) repealed by 2007 c. 22 Sch. 4 para. 42(3)(c)Sch. 7 Pt. 7
- s. 11A(eb) inserted by 2021 c. 26 Sch. 27 para. 12
- s. 16(1)(f) and word inserted by 2021 c. 26 Sch. 27 para. 13
- s. 30B(4)(aa) inserted by 2012 c. 5 Sch. 9 para. 4
- s. 35(1)(e) and word inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(2)(a)
- s. 35(3)(za) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(2)(b)
- s. 45(2A)(a) words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 2(3)(b)
- s. 45(2A)(b) substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 2(3)(c)
- s. 46(5)(6) inserted by 2008 c. 30 Sch. 4 para. 6(3) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Sch. 4 para. 6(3) repealed (1.10.2014) without ever being in force by 2014 c. 19, Sch. 12 para. 96(c); S.I. 2014/2377, art. 2(1)(a)(ii)(3)(c))
- s. 46(5)(a) words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 3
- s. 47(4A) inserted by 2008 c. 30 s. 102(6) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. S. 102 repealed (1.10.2014) without ever being in force by 2014 c. 19, Sch. 12 para. 96(a); S.I. 2014/2377, art. 2(1)(a)(ii)(3)(c))
- s. 124(1)(ea) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 59(2)(a)
- s. 124(1)(ga) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 5(1)(a)
- s. 124(1C) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 59(2)(b)
- s. 124(6A)(6B) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 5(1)(b)
- s. 124A inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 59(3)
- s. 130C(2)(za) inserted by 2016 asp 19 Sch. 4 para. 5
- s. 138(2A) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 17 (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Ss. 16-21 repealed (1.4.2013) by 2012 c. 5, s. 73; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(b))
- s. 138(2B) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 19(2) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Ss. 16-21 repealed (1.4.2013) by 2012 c. 5, s. 73; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(b))
- s. 140(4)(ca) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 19(6) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Ss. 16-21 repealed (1.4.2013) by 2012 c. 5, s. 73; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(b))
- s. 140(4A) inserted by 2009 c. 24 s. 19(7) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Ss. 16-21 repealed (1.4.2013) by 2012 c. 5, s. 73; S.I. 2012/3090, art. 2(1)(b))
- s. 164(2)(aa) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(3)(a)
- s. 164(9)(da) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(3)(b)
- s. 171ZA(2)(ba) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(4)(a)
- s. 171ZA(3A) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(4)(b)

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s. 171ZB(2)(ba) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(5)(a)
s. 171ZB(3A) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(5)(b)
s. 171ZE(2A) inserted by 2014 c. 6 s. 123(3)(b)
s. 171ZE(2B) inserted by 2014 c. 6 s. 123(3)(c)
s. 171ZL(2)(ba) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(8)(a)
s. 171ZL(8)(za) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(8)(c)
s. 171ZEA(2)(ba) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(6)(a)
s. 171ZEA(3)(za) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(6)(b)
s. 171ZEB(2)(ba) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(7)(a)
s. 171ZEB(3)(za) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(7)(b)
s. 173A inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(9)
s. 176(3A) inserted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 5(2)
Sch. 4 Pt. 1 para. 2A applied by S.I. 1995/310 reg. 18(1)(a)
Sch. 4 Pt. 1 para. 6 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 154(2)(a)
Sch. 4 Pt. 1 para. 2 repealed by 2007 c. 5 Sch. 8
Sch. 4 Pt. 1 para. 2A repealed by 2007 c. 5 Sch. 8
Sch. 4 Pt. 5 para. 7 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 154(2)(d)(e)
Sch. 4 Pt. 5 para. 12 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 154(2)(d)(e)
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 1 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 150(3)(a)151
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 2 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 150(3)(a)151
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 4 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 150(3)(a)151
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 5 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 150(3)(a)151
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 6 power to amend conferred by 1992 c. 5 s. 150(3)(a)151
Sch. 4 Pt. 3 para. 5 sum substituted by S.I. 2024/247 reg. 6
Sch. 4 Pt. 4 para. 2 applied by S.I. 1995/310 reg. 15(7)
Sch. 4 Pt. 4 para. 1A repealed by 2007 c. 5 Sch. 8
Sch. 4 Pt. 4 para. 2 repealed by 2007 c. 5 Sch. 8
Sch. 4B para. 1(1)(a)para. 1(1)(b)(2) words inserted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 6(2)
Sch. 4C inserted by 2008 c. 30 s. 102(5)Sch. 3 (This amendment not applied to
legislation.gov.uk. S. 102, Sch. 3 repealed (1.10.2014) without ever being in force by
2014 c. 19, Sch. 12 para. 96(a)(b); S.I. 2014/2377, art. 2(1)(a)(ii)(3)(c))
Sch. 4C para. 7(2)(c) inserted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(7)(b)
Sch. 4C para. 7(3) inserted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(8)
Sch. 4C para. 3 omitted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(3)
Sch. 4C para. 7(2)(b) words inserted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(7)(a)
Sch. 4C para. 1 words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(2)
Sch. 4C para. 2 words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(2)
Sch. 4C para. 5(b) words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(4)
Sch. 4C para. 6 words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(5)
Sch. 4C para. 7(1) words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(4)
Sch. 4C para. 7(1) words substituted by 2011 c. 19 Sch. 3 para. 7(6)
Sch. 11 para. 2(i) inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(10)(a)
Sch. 11 para. 9 inserted by 2012 c. 5 s. 63(10)(b)
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