

Parkinson's UK Personal Grants 2024 - Guidance for applicants

Please read this guidance carefully before you fill in your application form. We've made some changes for 2024 which may affect your eligibility or the information you need to send with your application.

When to send us your application

There will be **two** opportunities to apply for a Parkinson's UK Personal Grant in 2024

Round 1 opens on **8 January** The closing date is **1 July**

Round 2 opens on **29 July** The closing date is **16 December**

Applications received after these closing dates won't be considered for funding in that round and can't be carried forward to the next funding round.

Section 1 Your details

Who can apply?

Parkinson's UK offers personal grants to people living with Parkinson's, their partners and principal unpaid carers. The grants are to provide items or services that will help you live well with Parkinson's or will help you access activities that will increase your physical activity or improve your well-being.

People with Parkinson's or other forms of Parkinsonism are eligible to apply for a grant. Parkinsonism is a general term for neurological disorders that cause movement problems like those in Parkinson's, such as tremors, slow movement and stiffness.

People who care for someone with either condition who are not paid for their caring role are also eligible to apply for a grant. If you receive Carer's Allowance or any other carer's benefit we don't count that as being paid. In any household or family, only **one** carer -usually the principal carer - may apply in any year.

To apply for a Parkinson's UK Personal Grant, your **total combined** household savings must be **less than £6,000** if you are applying for **up to £500**. If you are asking for **more than £500** your **total** household savings must be **less than £16,000**. You can read more about what we mean by 'household savings' in **Section 6** below.

Section 2 Details of a person who is applying on someone's behalf

If you have difficulties with writing or typing or any other problem completing your application form, someone you trust can complete it for you. The person you choose must provide their details in **Section 2**. They must also be prepared to sign the advocate's or representative's declaration in **Section 8**. If someone completes the form for you, you should still sign the applicant's declaration if you are physically able to.

Section 3 What are you asking us to pay for?

Here are the items and services you can ask us to pay for:

- **Activities:** you can receive a maximum grant of £250 if your household savings are less than £6,000.
- **Electrical items:** you can receive a maximum grant of £500 if your household savings are less than £6,000. Grants for electrical items are limited to 1 application per household.
- **Respite care:** you can receive a maximum grant of £1,000 if your household savings are less than £16,000. Grants for respite care are limited to 1 application per household.
- **Specialist equipment or home adaptation:** you can receive a maximum grant of £1,500 if your household savings are less than £16,000. Grants for specialist equipment or home adaptation are limited to 1 application per household.

You can only apply for items or activities in **ONE** of these categories.

What could you apply for?

Electrical items

This can include white goods (e.g. a washing machine or a cooker) and other household items, such as beds or carpets, or technology that will help with communication or mobility problems (e.g. a computer to keep in touch with friends and family or do your shopping online). The item(s) you apply for **must not exceed £500**. We won't contribute to more costly items as this category is intended to supply basic household items and communication essentials for people in financial need.

Respite care

This is a break that relieves someone who cares for a person with Parkinson's of their caring responsibilities. It can include overnight, weekend or residential care for the person with Parkinson's, or regular short sessions to allow someone who cares for them to look after his or her own needs. **We don't fund holidays**, but we may be able to help with the **additional costs** you expect to incur on a holiday because of your condition or your caring responsibilities.

When you apply for respite care we'll ask for evidence that you have asked for help from your local health and social care service and we'll need you to provide evidence from them to tell us why their service couldn't help.

Home adaptations

These include adjustments to your home that will help you maintain independence, reduce the risk of falls or make your caring responsibilities easier to carry out. If you apply for funding to adapt your home, you must provide evidence that you have applied for a **Disabled Facilities Grant**. If you have been turned down for a Disabled Facilities Grant you must send us evidence to explain the reason why you are not eligible to receive one.

Every application for any adaptation to your home **MUST** be supported by a recent report or letter from an Occupational Therapist who has met you and can confirm that the adaptation you are planning will meet your needs fully and offers a long term solution for you. Without this professional advice, our Grants Panel will not be able to consider your application.

It is important that you provide the Grants Panel with enough information about your adaptation to decide whether your plans follow your Occupational Therapist's advice - for example, drawings and plans of the proposed works and a detailed quote for the works.

Specialist equipment

We can fund specialised mobility furniture such as profiling beds and riser-recliner chairs that enable you to maintain independence or reduce the level of care you need. This includes powered wheelchairs, mobility scooters and walking aids.

Every application for specialist mobility equipment **MUST** be supported by a recent report and/or a recommendation from a suitably qualified health professional who has met you and understands your condition, e.g. an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist. A letter from a General Practitioner (GP) will not be sufficient.

If you are applying for a wheelchair or powered wheelchair, you will also need to provide evidence that you have asked your local health service to provide a wheelchair for you and why they weren't able to help.

If you're applying for a mobility scooter you **MUST** also provide a full specialist mobility assessment. Our Grants Panel needs to know you have taken expert advice to find the most suitable mobility scooter for your needs and that you can manage a mobility scooter safely and confidently. Some specialist mobility suppliers, for example, **AbleWorld** and our product partner **TGA Mobility**, are able to offer you a detailed assessment by trained and accredited staff and will arrange for you to test a mobility scooter at your home before you decide on the model you would like us to help you buy. Without this level of supporting information our Grants Panel won't be able to consider your application for a mobility scooter.

TGA Mobility offers their 'Zest' compact car-boot scooter with a special reduction for Parkinson's UK Personal Grants applicants. You can contact **TGA Mobility** on **01787 882244** for further details and to arrange an assessment and home visit. If you choose an alternative mobility supplier, they must be able to match the assessment and the opportunity to try a scooter that is offered by **TGA Mobility**.

If you are applying for a riser-recliner chair, you must supply a supporting statement or recent report from a specialist health professional who knows you, for example, an Occupational Therapist or a Physiotherapist. **Our Grants Panel will also need evidence that you've been assessed for the chair you want us to fund and that it is suitable for your needs.**

Things to consider when choosing a riser-recliner chair include where it is to be placed as it takes up more space than a standard armchair and needs to be near an electric socket. A riser-recliner chair should be measured to fit you, which will make it much easier to get in and out of it and above all it will be comfortable. More user-friendly chairs will have two motors to operate the reclining and rising movements separately. It's best to try what's on offer before deciding and any good mobility supplier will offer this service, for example, **HSL** and **Accora**. If you invite a salesperson to your home, it's always a good idea to have someone else with you to guard against pressured selling.

Activities

We'll fund physical or recreational activities that help you to keep active, stay connected and think positively. This could include activities that allow you to socialise or meet new people or activities to improve your fitness and wellbeing. You can include the associated costs of your activity in your application, e.g. the cost of equipment and/or transport costs.

Transport costs include taxi fares, public transport fares or petrol costs for accessing the activities. If your application for transport costs is successful, we do not pay money directly to your bank account. If you have applied for funding towards petrol costs a £250 Supermarket Gift Card will be awarded to enable you to repurpose the costs of food for petrol costs. For funding towards public transport or taxi costs, we will pay the supplier directly. Most Supermarket petrol stations do not allow for fuel to be paid for using a Supermarket Gift Card, however Tesco's states in their terms and conditions that they do.

People living with Parkinson's who have young families and require support with childcare to allow them to attend hospital appointments or Parkinson's related activities can also apply.

Our Grants Panel may also consider applications for items or activities not mentioned here, if you can explain how the item or activity will significantly improve your quality of life.

Section 3 Providing quotes

In Section 3, we ask you to provide quotes for the item or service you want us to fund. It is your responsibility to confirm that the supplier or service-provider you choose is appropriate, reliable and able to supply the item or service you want. Parkinson's UK is unable to accept any liability for any loss, damage or future problems with, or connected to items or services funded or part-funded by a Parkinson's UK Grant.

For an **activity** we only require **one** quote. Your chosen service provider or therapist should be happy to provide this and for recreational activities, a standard scale of charges, highlighting the one that applies to you is sufficient.

If you are applying for transport costs for getting to an activity we will need information on the activity you will be using the transport costs to attend and how many sessions you will be able to attend with funding for transport costs. If you are a member of a Parkinson's UK Local Group and are applying for funding to attend a Parkinson's UK Activity or Group we will need to know that you have spoken the your Local Group about funding for transport costs and provide written confirmation of this.

For a quote for petrol costs, we will need to know how many miles it is to and from the activity and how many sessions you will attend. You will then need to calculate the **miles for a round trip x how many sessions**, and times this by the 45p per mile mileage rate. For example, if it is a 20 mile round trip to and from an activity, and you will be attending 25 sessions, this will be $(20 \times 25) \times 0.45 = \text{£}225.00$.

For **respite**, we'll require a quote from your chosen service provider. The quote **MUST** be on the service provider's headed notepaper and should be specific to you. An hourly rate alone will not be enough. If your provider sends you a quote by email, the email **MUST** include the service provider's full details, with the name of the person providing the quote and their job title.

For **home adaptations** that may involve minor works to your home, we'll require two quotes which must be from suitable professionals. This is in addition to the letter of support from your Occupational Therapist. If your Occupational Therapist recommends a specific contractor, or if we are contributing to works undertaken by your Local Authority as part of a Disabled Facilities Grant, we're happy to accept one quote.

We ask for **two quotes** for electrical and household items. These can be as simple as print-outs from a website or pages from a catalogue or price list. We have a supply arrangement with Currys and if you are applying for electrical, white goods or technology items, we ask that at least one of your quotes is from Currys.

We need to know the **exact** item you have chosen, and we need to be sure that you have thought about value for money. We will make a discretionary contribution towards any delivery or installation costs over the £500 limit for electrical and household items. We are raising the upper limit to up to £600 including all associated costs (installation, delivery and recycling costs). This is to reflect the increase of the cost of items with inflation, and to ensure you are able to select a better quality item within the £500 limit.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have a personal connection with the supplier or service provider who is providing quotes for your application, or a financial interest in any business providing quotes, you must tell us so that the panel is aware of that relationship before making an award.

What we won't fund

We don't fund holidays, long-term financial commitments or daily living costs.

We won't fund items or services that you have already paid for or for which you've paid a deposit or payment has been committed. We won't fund items or respite where funding for them is available to you from the Government or your Local Authority.

Section 4 How will a Parkinson's UK grant help you?

This is the most important section of your application. Our Grants Panel wants to know what difference a Parkinson's UK Grant will make to your life with Parkinson's. You don't need to write a long explanation. Tell us simply how the item, activity or service you want us to fund will improve your daily life or what it will help you do.

Section 5 How much do you need?

In section 5, we ask for details on how much the item or activity you are requesting costs, and how much you are requesting from us. If the item or activity you are requesting is more than the maximum we can provide, please explain how you will fund the difference.

Section 6 Your finances

Savings and investments

To apply for a Parkinson's UK Grant your **total** household savings must be **less than £16,000** if you are applying for more than £500 or **less than £6,000** if you are applying for up to £500 .

You must tell us the total sum of any savings or investments you have, including your partner's savings if you are married or living together. Total savings means money held in bank accounts and/or building societies, stocks and shares, gilts, bonds, ISAs or any other savings. If you've no savings, you must confirm this by putting £0. Please don't leave this question blank as it will delay your application.

Other financial support

Some Parkinson's UK Local Groups offer their own financial assistance schemes. They may offer financial help with respite or other items which are covered by Parkinson's UK Grants. We need to know if you've received or have applied to receive financial help from any of our local groups. We won't contact the local group about your application, but we may need to ask you for more details about any financial help they plan to give or have given you in the last year.

Section 7 Information to support your application

Every application **MUST** be supported by a recent letter (preferably dated within the last six months) from an appropriate health or social care professional who knows you and understands your condition or your caring responsibilities.

If you are applying for funding towards fuel costs within the Activity Category, we will need a supporting letter which states the activity you will be attending and also the number of sessions. We will also need information on fuel costs.

If you are applying for help with a home adaptation or an item of specialist equipment, you must provide a letter from a specialist health professional who knows you, such as your occupational therapist, your physiotherapist or your speech and language therapist, as appropriate to the equipment or adaptation you are asking us to fund.

For mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs, you **MUST** provide a full specialist mobility assessment and be able to send us evidence that you've tried the mobility scooter or powered wheelchair you want us to fund. Our Grants Panel needs to know you've taken expert advice to find the model of scooter or wheelchair most suitable for your needs and that you can manage the mobility scooter or wheelchair safely.

For riser recliner chairs you must provide a seating and transfer mobility assessment from the supplier to evidence that you have tried the chair and that it is suitable for your needs.

If you are applying for help with respite care or any other item or activity, a letter from your Parkinson's Local Adviser or from your GP, Parkinson's Nurse, social worker or other professional who knows you and understands your condition or your caring responsibilities would be suitable.

Any letter from a professional to support your application should include:

- relevant background information about you and your condition
- details about why the item or activity is suitable for you
- their view on how it will improve your daily living with Parkinson's

It might be helpful to show these guidance notes to the person you ask to write the letter.

Although you must include a letter of support, your own thoughts (**see Section 4**) are still a very important part of your application.

Section 8 Declaration

If you complete the application form yourself or complete it with help from a social care professional or other support worker, you must sign the declaration to confirm that all the information you've provided is accurate and complete.

If someone who cares for you, or a relative, friend or advocate completes the application on your behalf, they must sign the advocate or representative's declaration. This is to confirm that all the information they have recorded for you is accurate and complete and that you've given your permission for them to apply for you.

Section 9 Monitoring questions

Please help us to monitor the reach and impact of Parkinson's UK Grants by completing the monitoring questions. The information you provide in this section will help us to check that we're reaching out as widely as possible in communities. Any information you provide in this section will be separated from other sections of your application and will remain confidential.

The monitoring information is not shared with the Grants Panel and will not affect the outcome of your application.

Funding from the Government or from your Local Authority

If the funding you need might be available from the Government or from your Local Authority, you must check this before you apply for a Parkinson's UK Personal Grant. You can find out more by visiting <https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/money-grants-and-benefits> or calling our free, confidential Helpline on 0808 800 0303.

Your local social care services may be able to help you with home adaptations, wheelchairs and other equipment or with funding for respite care. If you've asked the Government or your Local for funding and been told you aren't eligible, please send us any documents or letters you have to show this.

What happens next?

You'll receive a letter or an email from us to tell you that we have received your application form. We try to use email whenever possible to keep costs down. Our letter or email will tell you when you can expect a decision from us.

We aim to tell you whether you've been awarded a grant within **twelve weeks** of receiving your complete application but if we receive a high number of applications it can sometimes take longer than this. We'll write to you with a date by which you'll hear from us, please bear with us as we process your application. If your circumstances change or you've more information that will help support your application, please contact us.

If your application doesn't have all the information our Grants Panel needs, we'll contact you by letter or email and ask you to provide the additional information. We'll try to advise you on how to find the information you need and we'll give you time to send us the information - usually four weeks.

Our Grants Panel is made up of people with Parkinson's, people who care for someone with Parkinson's and health and social care professionals with relevant experience of Parkinson's. They are all trained volunteers. The Financial Assistance programme aims to provide people with solutions which are suitable for their needs and will continue to benefit them in the long term. The Grants Panel reviews all requests in line with this criteria and has the right to decline funding if a requested item does not meet the requirements.

Members of the Grants Panel will not know your name or your address when they consider your application. We remove this information from your application form and conceal all your personal details completely in all the supporting information you send us. The information you supply in your application form and any letters or documents you send us will only be used by the Grants Panel to make their decision and for no other purpose.

We'll contact you to let you know whether your application has been successful within one week of the Grants Panel making their decision. If your application is successful we'll ask you to sign a grant acceptance form. We may discuss arrangements for the award with you before we ask you to sign the form.

We do not make cash or cheque payments to you if you are successful. We arrange the purchase of items and services for you and payments are made directly to the supplier or service provider. You shouldn't pay for any goods or services that you want us to fund, even when you know your application has been successful. You shouldn't pay a deposit or agree to pay for any goods or services that you want us to fund. If you do, unfortunately, it may mean that we have to withdraw our offer of funding.

In cases where we are unable to make a payment directly to the supplier (for example, when funding petrol costs towards getting to an activity) we will award the grant by issuing a Supermarket Voucher of the same value of the award in order for the money to be re-purposed.

Successful applicants may not apply for another Parkinson's UK Personal Grant until a full calendar year after the date of their acceptance of any award. In the event of our funds being over-subscribed, priority may be given to applicants who have not previously received a Parkinson's UK Grant.

What if you are not happy with the grants panel's decision?

The Financial Assistance Programme aims to provide people with solutions which are suitable for their needs and will continue to benefit them in the long term. The Grants Panel reviews all requests in line with this criteria and has the right to decline funding if a requested item does not meet the requirements.

The Financial Assistance Programme Manager welcomes your feedback on **020 7963 3765** or by email to grants@parkinsons.org.uk . We'll use all the feedback we receive to help us improve our procedures. However, the decision of the Grants Panel is final.

General data protection

At Parkinson's UK we want to be very clear about how we use, store and protect your personal data, which you can read about at www.parkinsons.org.uk/privacy

Any questions?

If you have questions about the scheme or your application, please contact the Personal Assistance Grants Officer at Parkinson's UK on **020 7963 3765** or email grants@parkinsons.org.uk .