

MONTHLY GATESHEAD HEALTH STAFF ADVICE BULLETIN

ISSUE 13: COST OF LIVING AND ENERGY CAP UPDATE FOR 2023

- **Has the energy cap changed?**
 - **Will there be new Cost of Living payments?**
 - **When will the payments happen?**
 - **Who qualifies for these payments?**
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Energy Cap Changes

From 1 January to 31 March 2023, the Ofgem Energy Price Cap level will increase to £4,279. This is not what a typical household will pay for their energy but does mean energy bills are set to change from the end of 2022. The Energy Price Guarantee should still see the average family paying around £2500 per annum for their fuel.

The energy price guarantee is a temporary additional measure to protect consumers from the recent significant increases in wholesale gas prices. It was put in place on 1 October 2022 and will last until April 2024. Remember, it is not a hard cap on what you pay – it is a cap on the unit price that you can be charged for fuel.

What are the new Cost of Living Payments?

As we move into 2023, the Government has announced [further Cost of Living Payments will be made](#) between spring 2023 and spring 2024, for those that qualify.

These payments include:

- A Cost of Living payment, of up to £900 for people on a qualifying low-income benefit or tax credits.
- A Pensioner Cost of Living payment of £300 for those entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023.
- A Disability Cost of Living payment of £150 for people in receipt of a disability benefit.

If you, or someone you know, qualifies for multiple Cost of Living payments, each payment will be paid in full. These payments are not taxable and will not affect the

benefits or tax credits received.

When will these payments be made?

The exact dates that these will be paid out, or the benefit qualifying dates for each, has yet to be confirmed. Keep an eye on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website for more information. What we currently know is that they are scheduled to be released around these times:

- £301 – First Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2023
- £150 – Disability Payment – during Summer 2023
- £300 – Second Cost of Living Payment – during Autumn 2023
- £300 – Pensioner Payment – during Winter 2023/4
- £299 – Third Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2024



Remember, you do not need to apply for these payments – they will be paid automatically. If you receive a call from anyone asking for your details to help with payment, or offering to aid you in a claim for these payments, it is a scam, and should be [reported](#).

What are qualifying benefits?

The Cost of Living Payment will be made to people in receipt of any of the following benefits on the qualifying date.

- Universal Credit
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

The payment will be made separately from any benefits the recipient currently claims, and will not be combined with a benefit payment

A payment will not be made to those in receipt of New Style Employment and Support Allowance, Contributory Employment and Support Allowance, or New Style Jobseeker's Allowance, unless the claimant also receives Universal Credit.

To find out more about the circumstances that entitle someone to a Cost of Living payment, you can visit the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) page

Who qualifies for a Disability Cost of Living payment?

To receive this lump sum payment of £150, the claimant must be in receipt of :

- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance for adults
- Disability Living Allowance for children
- Personal Independence Payment
- Adult Disability Payment (in Scotland)
- Child Disability Payment (in Scotland)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- War Pension Mobility Supplement

To receive the Disability Cost of Living payment, the recipient must have been getting a eligible benefit on the qualifying date. These have not yet been confirmed for 23-24 support payments

Remember you can get in touch with your Citizens Advice Gateshead team for impartial advice, information, and guidance.

Email gestaffswa@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk or call 0191 490 4231 and we'll be back in touch with you within 1 working day Monday to Friday.