

CABINET STATEMENT

Written Statement: Self-Isolation Support Scheme for parents and carers

Julie James, Minister for Housing and Local Government

First published:
7 December 2020

Last updated:
7 December 2020

The Welsh Government launched the £500 payment scheme last month to support people who have been asked to self-isolate by the Test, Trace Protect service.

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Today I am expanding the Self-Isolation Support Scheme to include parents and carers of children who have been asked to self-isolate.

We committed to keeping the scheme under review to ensure that we provided support to those asked to self-isolate and in danger of financial hardship as a result of being unable to work. Since the launch of the scheme local authorities have reported applications from parents and carers whose children have been asked to self-isolate as a result of a school-based outbreak of COVID-19. It is clear that a significant number of people are losing income because they are unable to work while looking after children who cannot go to school or their normal childcare setting because of Covid-19.

This extension will enable parents and carers to apply for the £500 payment to help ease any financial hardship and support them to care for their children. It will also support the wider efforts of schools and other services to control the spread of the virus.

I am extending the scheme to parents and carers under the following criteria:

- The child attends a school or childcare setting up to and including Year 8 (or up to age 25 if the learner has additional complex needs);
- The child has been asked to self-isolate as a result of an outbreak in a school, childcare or further education setting and has received a formal notification from the school, childcare or further education setting; and
- parents or carers meet the criteria of the main scheme, namely they:
 - are employed or self-employed;
 - are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
 - (the applicant or their partner) are currently receiving, Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.
 - The application has been accepted under the discretionary element of the scheme.

Local authorities will be able to process applications from Monday 14 December and payments will be backdated from 23 October in line with the main scheme. I will continue to keep the scheme under review to ensure that those most in need receive the support they need to self-isolate and reduce transmission.

First published

7 December 2020

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