

# *What is the Winter Fuel Payment?*

It is a yearly tax free payment to help people pay for their heating in the winter. Getting the Winter Fuel Payment will not affect any other benefits you may get. This is different to Cold Weather Payments which you may get for each week of very cold weather in your area.



## **Are you eligible?**

You may get a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2010/11 if:

- you have reached the qualifying age (born on or before 5 July 1950)
- you normally live in Great Britain or Northern Ireland on any day in the week of 20–26 September 2010

You won't qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment if, during the week of 20–26 September 2010:

- you were in hospital for more than 52 weeks previously, getting free treatment as an inpatient
- you were subject to immigration control and did not qualify for help from the Department for Work and Pensions
- you lived in a care home, an independent hospital or Resettlement Home (and had done so for the previous 12 weeks or more) and you were on Pension Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Once you have qualified for a Winter Fuel Payment, you may be able to continue to receive future payments if you move to another European Economic Area country.

## **How to apply**

If you think you qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment, then you will need to apply.

To apply you can:

Get a claim form sent to you by calling the Winter Fuel Payment Helpline on 0845 915 1515

## **Changes to the qualifying age**

The qualifying age for Winter Fuel Payment for both men and women is rising in line with the increase in women's State Pension age.

## *What are Cold Weather Payments?*

You don't need to apply. If you can get a Cold Weather Payment, you'll be paid it automatically. Cold Weather Payments can help people who are in receipt of certain benefits with their additional heating costs during winter.



A payment will be made for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

A network of weather stations covering the whole of Great Britain will gather temperature information. Payments will be made when the local temperature is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days.

### **How to apply**

You don't need to apply. If you can get a Cold Weather Payment, you'll be paid it automatically. Cold Weather Payments are usually paid into the same bank or building society account as your benefit payments. After each period of very cold weather in your area, you should receive a payment to your account within 14 working days.