

Grants and Funding for Senior Citizens of UK

Grants and funding for senior citizens are a necessary factor towards financing the retirement years especially if there is little income from a personal pension. It is a fact that four in ten people in the UK leave work with only around £10,000 with which to buy an annuity, and this is why state pensions are so important for a great number of senior citizens.

State Pensions

At the moment the state pension age for women is 60 and for men it is 65. Men cannot claim for their state pension until they have reached 65 but may be able to claim for other benefits after the age of 60. From 6 April 2020, the State Pension age for women will be the same as that for men (65). Women's State Pension age will start to change gradually from 2010.

State retirement pensions are based on your national insurance contributions but you do not have to stop working in order to claim a retirement pension. You can also defer the pension if you are working and take a lump sum or higher increase of pension at a later date.

The state retirement pension is paid in addition to a basic pension, which is a set pension rate, and both are dependant on factors such as national insurance contributions, spouse's contributions, and dependants. Additional pensions may also take the form of graduated pensions, pension credit, savings credit, or extra pensions paid on top of your basic pension. If you are over 80 you will receive a pension regardless of any national insurance contributions.

For your full pension rate and advice on the different types of pensions you should contact an advisor at your local Citizens Advice Bureau or check with www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

Council Related Benefits

If you are over 60 and on a low income there are a number of benefits that you can apply for. Your eligibility for these benefits will be based on a means test, and if successful you may receive funding towards council tax and housing costs. The means test will be different from the tests that would have taken place before you were 60, so even if you were refused these benefits before the age of 60 you may now be eligible receive the benefits.

Winter Fuel Payments

If you are over the age of 60 you will get a winter fuel payment every year. At the moment the winter fuel payment is a tax free lump sum of £200, £300 if you are over 80. This money can be spent anyway you choose and does not have to be spent on heating

costs. Most people do not have to make a claim for this payment, although there are exemptions as to who will get a fuel payment such as those over 60 claiming job-seeker's allowance and certain exemptions for those in care homes.

Christmas Bonus

Senior citizens over the age of 60 who are in receipt of retirement pension or pension credit will be eligible for a £10 Christmas bonus.

Help with Transport

Most people at retirement age will receive funding towards public transport costs. Local buses and some national coaches will be free to senior citizens, and senior citizens can get discounts on national rail travel with a senior citizen rail card.

The Social Fund

If you are looking for alternative grants and funding for senior citizens you can try your local council's social fund. They may be able to offer community care grants to help with the purchase of household items such as beds, cookers, removal costs and travel costs. They may also be able to help with crisis loans and budgeting loans. The eligibility for these loans and grants will depend on your circumstances and income.

Other Benefits

Common benefits that apply to senior citizens will be free television licences and help with health costs including free prescriptions and eye tests. There are also a number of concessions that apply to senior citizens such as reduced prices on adult education classes and discounts on many leisure and entertainment activities.

Grants and funding for senior citizens may not be something that you think about when you are imagining your retirement years. However, when it comes to planning financially for your retirement, these benefits can make a large difference towards an adequate standard of living, and a decent source of income.

Courtesy: <http://www.financingretirement.co.uk/grants-and-funding-for-senior-citizens.html>