

I am unsure whether I am eligible for Cold Weather Payments. What are they and how can I claim them?

Cold Weather Payments help people on a low income with fuel costs during periods of cold weather. It does not matter what you spend the money on, and they do not have to be repaid.

Each postcode area of the country is linked to a weather station and payments are made for periods of cold weather. When the weather station forecasts or records an average daily temperature of 0 degrees centigrade or less for seven consecutive days, a payment will be made.

Cold Weather Payments are different from *Winter Fuel Payments* which are made every winter to people aged 60 or over regardless of the temperature.

You may be eligible for a Cold Weather Payment if you get Pension Credit or income-related Employment and Support Allowance with a support or work related activity component in the main phase.

You may also be if you are getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance in the assessment phase.

If you are entitled to Cold Weather Payments, you will automatically be sent a payment for each period of cold weather.

You do not have to make a claim for a cold weather payment, but if you think you should receive one and you are not paid, you can make a written claim to your local benefit office.

More information on the scheme can be found at www.direct.gov.uk or go to www.adviceguide.org.uk for advice and contact details of your nearest CAB.