

Extraordinary Care Fund Application Guidelines

If you are in receipt of the **Unsupported Child Benefit** or **Orphan's Benefit** for the support of a child in your care, you may apply to the Extraordinary Care Fund for funding to help the child reach their potential.

Applications can be made for up to \$2,000 in each financial year (1 July to 30 June)

An Extraordinary Care Fund Grant of up to \$2,000 is designed to help you meet the additional costs of supporting a child who is:

- showing promise through high achievement in a particular area, or
- experiencing difficulties that are significantly impacting on their development.

You will need to provide proof of this to support your application.

If the cost is over \$2,000 you'll also have to show how you're going to pay the extra.

If you're caring for more than one child, you can apply for a grant for each child.

NOTE: The following guidelines have been collated by GRG from advice provided by the Ministry for Social Development and Work and Income.

Checklist of Information to Accompany Every Application

The following information is required for **every** child for whom an application is made:

- Support letter for the child stating:
 - the name of child
 - the child's needs and why
 - An explanation of the child's difficulties; or
 - An explanation as to how and in what way the child is showing promise through high achievement in a particular area
- The caregiver can write an overview of the child, but that is NOT counted as a support letter
- Support letter must have a letter head and date.
- Supply any certificates that child may have received.
- Provider Quotes:** Must be supplied from the provider. Please note: a provider is not a Support letter writer. If you are applying for an activity (e.g. ballet, music, swim lessons etc) make sure you apply for a whole year, not just for one term.

Tips for the Application Process

- Please 'paint' a picture of the child. Clearly explain their needs, difficulties and their background and why a grant from this fund would assist them.
- Include a photo of the child participating in their extracurricular activities. E.g. Ballet e
- There are no guarantees that funding will be granted, so do not book the child into anything or purchase anything until you have been notified.
- **Get your ducks in a row, well before the fund opens.** Download or get application form, fill it in, gather Support letters/quotes. As soon as the fund opens make an appointment with Work & Income to take in all the paperwork.
- Get Work & Income to stamp the forms and give you a copy for your records.
- This fund is only open for four (4) weeks and appointments at Work & Income can be difficult to get.
- **Keep receipts of payments you have made with this fund money.** MSD may ask you to provide these.
- Once you have been granted this fund you cannot apply until the same date the following year.
- If you are declined you can reapply during the next round.

Decisions about whether to award a grant are **based on the needs of the child** rather than their family's financial situation. Some costs that might meet the criteria are:

Showing promise

- Selection for participation in an art, science, innovation, technology or academic programme or event
- Attendance at a New Zealand sporting competition
- Attending the Royal New Zealand Ballet's mentoring programme
- Private music lessons and instrument hire or purchase for a child who's progressed well beyond their peers in a group lesson setting

Experiencing difficulties

- Extra tutoring (not funded through the Ministry of Education) for a child who's unable to keep up at school because of long-term absence
- Orthodontic work (not funded through the Ministry of Health) that would lessen difficulties faced by the child
- Speech therapy that can't be funded through the Ministry of Education
- Courses or activities to develop a child's self-esteem, physical capability or social skills
- Courses or activities to improve a child's ability to learn where they have learning difficulties
- Private counselling that can't be funded through another agency
- Swimming lessons where the child hasn't learnt to swim through school lessons

Further Guidelines and Notes on Costs Covered or Excluded

Costs covered by ECF Grant

- Orthodontic work
- Psychologist fee's
- Glasses
- Special needs children: for riding lessons/specialist equipment.

Electronic's

Maximum:

Laptops.

- Secondary school level – up to \$1,400
- Intermediate school level – up to \$1,200
- Primary school level – up to \$750

Ipads/tablets

Up to \$800

You can only apply once per child until they move into the next school age group. Documentation from the child's school confirming their BYOD policy is helpful, as well as the benefits the electronic device will provide i.e. the child being able to do homework, access school programmes at home etc. It is important for caregivers to identify an electronic device that is compatible and reliable for an extended period, as these costs are *generally* funded only once, if at all.

Should a previously funded device no longer be compatible for what it is needed for, or it has broken or been stolen, this would need to be clearly outlined within the application. As previously mentioned, there are no guarantees that previously funded electronic costs will be funded again.

Extra-Curricular Activities

- You **can only choose two activities** per child, i.e. Learn guitar and netball.
- Swimming lessons are NOT considered an extra-curricular activity.
- You can apply for sports gear/boots etc.

- If the child is chosen for representative sports; airfares, accommodation (within NZ) and fees can be applied for, but a grant does not cover the caregiver's travel and/or accommodation costs.

Tuition

- Any application applied for, for the first time requires the usual paperwork.
- If you are applying for a second + time, a quote must include the improvement the child has made and a recommendation that further progress can be made.
- Letter(s) from the child's school are a must. The Panel need to know the exact learning problems faced by the child and what strategies have been implemented by the child's school. The Panel need to know that the child's school is on board with addressing any difficulties the child is facing.
- If applying for repeat extra tuition costs – progress reports from either the school or the service provider (ideally both) are imperative.
- Repeat applications for tuition costs are greatly strengthened by any supporting letters from the Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) service.

Music

- You can apply for musical instruments to be purchased.

School related Costs

- Boarding school/school fees/books/exam fees/uniforms are NOT covered.
- School holiday programmes/ pre-or afterschool care are NOT covered.

Dental

Supporting letters from the Orthodontist are a must. The supporting letter should outline the treatment that is required, how long the treatment will take and the total cost of the treatment. Any additional supporting documents from the child's school or someone from within the community that can shed light on any potential emotional harm the dental issues are causing the child are of great benefit.

Repeat applications for dental costs will need to confirm all payments made so far and the balance owing. This can be confirmed in writing from the orthodontist or via a bank statement.

Teacher Aide

A supporting letter from the child's school is imperative. The letter(s) would need to specifically outline the child's difficulties and how the teacher aide can best address this.

What also needs to be clear within the application is how long the Teacher Aide will work with the child, the hourly rate, and the total costs.

The school will need to shed light on why they cannot provide this assistance from its own resources.

Costs that will NOT be considered or covered by an ECF Grant

- Court fees for the young person including reparation costs.
- Purchase of motor vehicles.
- Home adjustments/renovations.
- Overseas travel.
- Petrol mileage to and from activity.
- Every day clothing/food.
- Anything not related to child. i.e. caregiver supervision or gear/equipment for same.
- Costs that are covered by the **Establishment Grant** or **School Year Start-up Payment** or by other agencies
- Health and medical costs (e.g. treatment or medication)
- Payments related to access visits.