



Social Security Scotland Statistics

Young Carer Grant: high level statistics to 30 April 2020

Frequency of publications

The next publication, covering up to 31 July 2020, will be released in September 2020.

Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics¹ we publish a timetable of statistical releases for the twelve months ahead².

¹ The Code of Practice is found online at: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>

² The forthcoming publication timetable is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/official-statistics-forthcoming-publications/>

Introduction

Social Security Scotland began taking applications for Young Carer Grant on 21 October 2019. This publication provides information on applications and payments for Young Carer Grant from this date to 30 April 2020. It therefore includes figures for approximately six months of applications.

As this publication reports on applications and decisions to the end of April 2020, it spans the time period when the Covid-19 pandemic began in Scotland, as the first case was confirmed on 1 March 2020. Social Security Scotland implemented some service changes in March in response to the Covid-19 pandemic but continued to process applications and make payments.

It is possible that the number of people in Scotland who are eligible for Social Security Scotland benefits will increase over the coming months, as a result of an increase in people eligible for qualifying benefits, and that a greater impact of Covid-19 may be seen in future publications.

All tables relating to this publication can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/>.

These statistics are being published as experimental statistics. Experimental statistics are defined in the Code of Practice for Statistics as "*new official statistics undergoing evaluation. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.*" These statistics have not yet been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority. They have not been designated as National Statistics³.

³ For more information on experimental statistics please see:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/experimental-statistics-official-statistics-in-development/>

Main findings

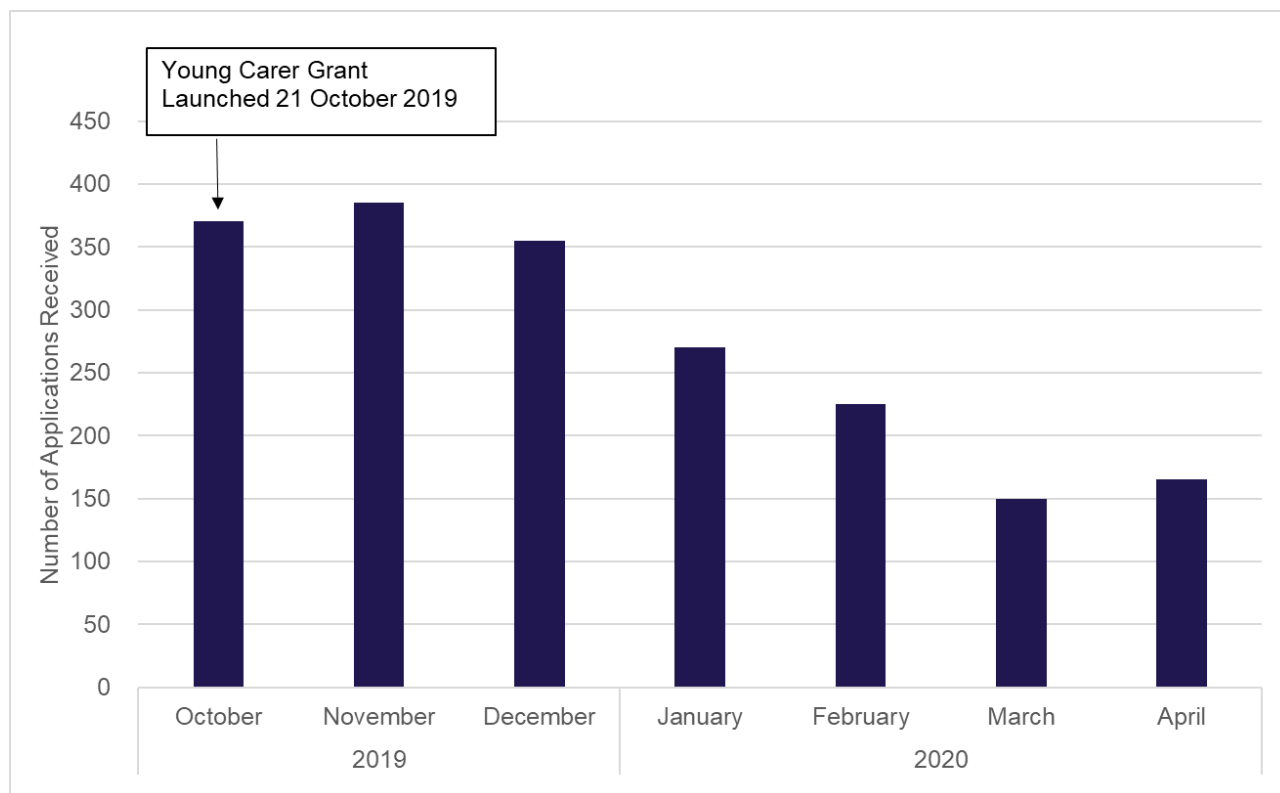
Key Figures

- From 21 October 2019 to 30 April 2020, 1,915 Young Carer Grant applications were received. **[Table 1]**.
- Overall, 1,545 applications had been processed by 30 April. Of these, 83% (1,280) were authorised, 14% (215) were denied, and a small proportion (50, 3%) were withdrawn **[Table 1]**.
- The total value of Young Carer Grant payments issued to clients by 30 April was £372,677 **[Table 7]**.

Applications Received and Processed

- In total, 1,915 applications were received by 30 April. The number of monthly applications received has decreased from 225 in February, to 150 in March and 165 in April **[Table 1, Chart 1]**.
- Overall, 1,545 applications had been processed by 30 April. Of these, 83% (1,280) were authorised, 14% (215) were denied, and a small proportion were withdrawn (50, 3%) **[Table 1]**.
- The percentage of applications authorised decreased from 82% in January and 85% in February, to 71% for both March and April respectively. In March and April, Social Security Scotland processed a number of outstanding applications where requested evidence had not been provided by applicants. This is likely to have contributed to the decrease in the percentage of authorised applications observed in March and April **[Table 1]**.

Chart 1: Applications for Young Carer Grant by month



Application Channel (Method of Application)

- The majority of applications (1,745, 91%) received by 30 April were made online. The remainder were made through telephone (85, 4%) or paper applications (85, 4%) [Table 2].
- From the 24 March, changes were made to the telephony service in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. There were no phone applications received in April.

Applications by Age Group

- Of the 1,915 applications received, approximately 45% (860) were for an applicant aged 16 years, 35% (670) were for an applicant aged 17 years, and 18% (345) were for an applicant aged 18 years [Table 3].

Applications by Local Authority

- Applications were received from people in all local authorities, with the highest number of applications coming from Glasgow City (255, 13%), North Lanarkshire (150, 8%), Fife (115, 6%) and South Lanarkshire (115, 6%) [Table 4].

Applications by Number of Cared for People

- Almost all applications received were for applicants caring for 1 person (1,905, 99%). A small proportion of applications were for applicants caring for 2 people (10, 1%) **[Table 5]**.
- Number of cared for people was calculated using the details provided in applications. It was possible that some applicants may have been caring for more people than they included in their application. See the [about the data](#) section for more information on this.

Processing Times

- In total, approximately 32% (485) of applications processed between 21 October 2019 and 30 April 2020 were processed within 10 working days. Over half (825, 54%) of applications were processed within 15 working days. Around three in ten (465, 30%) applications took 21 days or longer to be processed **[Table 6]**.
- The median average⁴ processing time for applications processed between 21 October and 30 April was 15 working days.
- The median average processing time increased from 16 working days in February to 22 working days in March before decreasing to 11 working days in April. The increase in processing times observed in March may be partly due to the processing of applications where outstanding evidence had not been provided by the client. In addition, changes to the telephony service in response to Covid-19 may have also contributed to longer processing times during this period. In late March, Social Security Scotland launched an online document upload function which provides an alternative method for applicants to provide evidence. The introduction of this system may have contributed to the shorter processing times observed in April **[Table 6]**.
- Processing times were calculated by determining the time between an application being received and a decision being made or the application being withdrawn. This includes the time spent waiting to receive evidence from clients via the post to allow a decision to be made, which should be considered when interpreting these processing times. See the [about the data](#) section for further information on processing times.

Payments

- The total value of Young Carer Grant payments issued up to 30 April was £372,677 **[Table 7 & 8]**.

⁴ The median average is the middle value of an ordered dataset, or the point at which half of the values are higher and half of the values are lower.

- At local authority level, the highest total value of payments were made to people in Glasgow City (£49,520), North Lanarkshire (£30,610), and South Lanarkshire (£23,415) **[Table 7]**.

Redeterminations and Appeals

- Management information collected manually by the Client Experience team at Social Security Scotland indicates that 15 redeterminations were requested by 30 April 2020. This represents 1% of the total number of Young Carer Grant applications processed during this period **[Table 9]**.
- By 30 April 2020, 15 redetermination requests had been decided. Of these, five were allowed or partially allowed, five were denied, and five were withdrawn. **[Table 9]**.
- The median average⁵ response time for redeterminations that were closed up to 30 April 2020 was 15 working days. This excludes redeterminations which were withdrawn by the client **[Table 9]**.
- Fewer than five appeals were received by 30 April 2020. Management information on appeals has therefore not been included in this publication to prevent the disclosure of small cohorts.

⁵ The median average is the middle value of an ordered dataset, or the point at which half of the values are higher and half of the values are lower.

Background to Young Carer Grant

On 20 September 2017, the First Minister announced a new package of support for young carers in Scotland. This package included a cash payment for young carers providing 16 hours or more of care a week to someone normally paid a qualifying disability benefit. In accordance with the powers set out in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018⁶, Scottish ministers set out regulations⁷ for the new Young Carer Grant on 15 October 2019.

Social Security Scotland – the executive agency of Scottish Government responsible for delivering social security benefits for Scotland – began taking applications for Young Carer Grant on 21 October 2019.

Young Carer Grant

Young Carer Grant is a payment that can be applied for annually by young carers aged 16, 17, and 18 who care for someone normally paid a qualifying disability benefit. The payment is a flat rate of £305.10 which can be applied for once a year. The payment is in acknowledgement of the young person's carer role and is intended to help them access life opportunities which are the norm for many other young people. Young carers can spend this money as they choose.

On 1 April 2020, the value of payment for Young Carer Grant was updated from £300 to £305.10. Successful applications received before 1 April will still receive a payment of £300 even if the decision to approve the application occurs after this date.

Further details about the Young Carer Grant can be found at:

<https://www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/>

Eligibility

To qualify for Young Carer Grant, applicants must meet all of the eligibility criteria below:

- Applicants must be 16, 17, or 18 years of age at the time of applying.
- Applicants must be providing care to a person(s) who is normally paid one of the following benefits:
 - Personal Independence Payment - daily living component

⁶ Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/9/contents/enacted>

⁷ The Carer's Assistance (Young Carer Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2019: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2019/324/contents/made>

- Disability Living Allowance (including DLA for Children) - the middle or highest care rate
 - Attendance Allowance
 - Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
 - Constant Attendance Allowance at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension
 - Armed Forces Independence Payment
- The applicant must be caring for an average of 16 hours per week, over a 13 week period. Applicants can combine hours spent caring for up to three people to meet this criterion.
 - The applicant must not be paid for the care they provide or be providing the care as part of a volunteering scheme.
 - The applicant cannot be applying for, or be in receipt of, Carer's Allowance at the time of application.

Application and Decision Making Process

Applications can be made online, by phone, and by paper form ('application channel').

Social Security Scotland processes each application received and makes a decision whether to approve or deny the application. An application will be denied if the client is not eligible to receive Young Carer Grant. An application will be authorised if the applicant is eligible and provides the appropriate evidence to receive Young Carer Grant. Applicants may also withdraw their application before a decision is made.

As part of the application process, applicants are required to provide additional evidence confirming their address. Once an application has been received, Social Security Scotland will write to applicants asking them to either post this evidence or upload it online directly to Social Security Scotland. Applicants can also post or upload evidence proactively when making an application. Once this evidence has been received, Social Security Scotland aims to make a decision as soon as possible with payments following soon thereafter.

In this publication, application processing time is calculated as the number of working days from the application being received by Social Security Scotland to the date that a decision was made by a client advisor or the application was withdrawn. We did not include time to make payments within processing times.

Redeterminations and Appeals

Applicants have the right to ask Social Security Scotland to reconsider a decision if their application is denied, or if they think the amount they are going to be paid is wrong. This is known as a redetermination. A request for a redetermination should be made within 31 calendar days of being notified of the initial determination. This is extended to up to 1 year under extenuating circumstances. Social Security Scotland then has 16 working days to make the new determination. Applicants also have the right to appeal to a Tribunal if they do not agree with Social Security Scotland's redetermination, or if Social Security Scotland is not able to make a redetermination within 16 working days.

Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020⁸

On 1 April 2020, the Scottish Parliament approved emergency legislation to help businesses, public services and people through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Measures include helping to ensure that Social Security Scotland clients are not disadvantaged as a result of the coronavirus outbreak and are able to claim assistance to which they are entitled and which they may have missed out on if late applications were not allowed.

Changes, which came into force on 7 April 2020, include temporarily time limits for Young Carer Grant applications. Where a young carer could not apply before they turned 19 due to COVID-19, they will still be able to apply for Young Carer Grant with their application being treated as made on time. The measures temporarily relax time limits for Young Carer Grant in relation to:

- Making an application for assistance.
- A request by a client for a redetermination.
- A decision on a redetermination.
- Appealing to the First tier Tribunal.

⁸ Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2020/7/contents>

About the data

How the Data is Collected

The data in this publication is sourced from Social Security Scotland's case management system. The system holds information on all applications, outcomes, and payments. Data about the applicant and the person(s) they care for is collected through the online application form, or is entered by client advisors during telephone applications or the processing of paper applications. Information about the application outcome and payments is created in the case management system as an application is processed.

The information is held across multiple tables within the system. 100% extracts of administrative data are taken from this system every day for internal reporting purposes. Data cuts combine information from the different tables in the system into one daily extract which includes details of all Young Carer Grant applications made since 21 October 2019.

To take into account backdating and delays between applications being authorised and payments being made, the data cut from 7 June 2020 has been used to produce statistics on applications received and decisions made up to 11.59 pm on 30 April 2020. Later data cuts may include additional retrospective changes to application details, including corrections to details in the case management system, and changes that have resulted from redeterminations and appeals.

Where a redetermination or appeal has been requested but not decided, decision date, outcome, payment date, and payment value will be updated to reflect information about the redetermination or appeal, rather than the original application. If a redetermination or appeal has been decided, the data in this publication will show the decision date, outcome, payment date, and payment value according to the new decision.

Detailed redeterminations and appeals management information is collected manually by the Client Experience team at Social Security Scotland. This management information has been used to produce statistics on the number of redeterminations received and decided up to 11.59 pm on 30 April 2020. Suppression has been applied to this data to prevent the disclosure of individuals or small cohorts.

Management information regarding appeals has not been included in this publication due to fewer than five appeals being received during the period covered. In future updates to these statistics, information on appeals will be included, subject to the disclosure control of small cohorts.

Quality Assurance

The data used to produce the official statistics are the same as the data extracted from the case management system on a daily basis that is used for internal reporting within Social Security Scotland. As such, the data is checked daily for consistency with previous extracts (i.e. do applications, decisions, and payments figures increase as expected over time, and are they in proportion to each other) and compared to other sources of information such as the number of payment instructions reported by the finance team.

Additional quality assurance and cleaning has been carried out on the variables used in the official statistics:

- Check for duplicate and missing application references
- Check that application dates, processing times, and payment times are within the expected ranges
- Check that payment date is present where a payment value is present
- Check any postcodes that do not match to local authorities – see [Geography](#) section
- Removal of a small number of test applications which were used to test the case management system.

Once the data is aggregated and copied into the publication and supporting Excel tables, the final statistics are quality assured by a different member of the statistics team. The final documents are checked by the lead statistician.

Data Quality

Rounding and Disclosure Control

Application and outcome figures have been rounded to the nearest five for disclosure control. Data has been suppressed where it would disclose fewer than five applications or payments. Due to the short time period covered in the publication, some breakdowns of data have had high amounts of suppression applied due to small numbers. As future publications will be based on a larger number of applications, there will likely be less small cohorts requiring suppression.

Missing and Duplicate Applications

The data comes from 100% data cut of the case management system.

The data cut was checked for applications where the fields relating to application date and the outcome and payment of the application were blank. These applications would represent temporary 'prospect cases', which are created

when clients contact Social Security Scotland without a National Insurance number, and are later replaced once a National Insurance number is received from the applicant. Any such applications are therefore duplicates and would be excluded from the statistics.

Clients may make repeated applications to Young Carer Grant in certain circumstances. For instance, if their initial application is withdrawn or denied. This means that there can be several applications from the same client in the data cut. For this publication we have retained all of these applications.

Unverified Information from Application Form

Information about the client and the person(s) being cared for is taken from the application form completed by the client or by a client advisor over the telephone. This information may contain errors because it has not been verified by comparison to other sources of information such as records held by the Department for Work and Pensions. This means, for example, that it is possible to have authorised applications where the original application form did not include complete details for the applicant but was later amended as the application was processed.

Application Authorisation and Payment

In this publication, the date that applications were processed by client advisors is the date used to produce statistics of processed applications by month. After applications are authorised for payment by client advisors, the decision is approved by a manager, and then a payment is issued. In some cases, payments will be issued on the same day that payments are authorised by client advisors, however in other cases there can be a delay before payments are issued. Clients should receive money in their nominated account within four working days after payment is issued.

In this publication, we report on the value of payments that have been issued by the end of each month and not the payments successfully received by the applicants.

Applications which are initially approved by a client advisor can be declined for payment by a manager due to issues with the information or evidence included within the application. In these cases, the application is re-opened and the client is contacted to resolve the issue. These applications have not been included as processed in this publication if they were still open at the end of 30 April 2020.

A very small number of payments are made manually to clients. These manual payments do not appear in the administrative data extracts used for this publication and are therefore not counted in the payment statistics.

Application Channel

Application channel is automatically entered into the case management system for online applications, and manually entered for applications taken by phone or paper. If ever an application channel has been manually entered incorrectly, the application channel will be classed as 'unknown'.

Number of Cared for People

The number of cared for people is entered into the case management system using the details provided by the applicant. This figure represents the total number of cared for people included in the application. However, it may not be a reflection of the total amount of people the applicant cares for. For example, an applicant may provide care to three people but may only choose to provide details of one of these individuals in their application if they care for that person for 16 hours or more per week.

Geography

Applications are assigned to local authority by postcode using a Scottish Government lookup file. For some applications, the postcode will not match to the lookup file. This can be because the postcode is not in a Scottish local authority, or because the postcode has been introduced too recently to appear on the lookup file, for example if a property is in a new development. For postcodes that could not be matched to a Scottish local authority, the postcode area was used to check whether the postcode was in Scotland or elsewhere. Non-matching postcodes from Scottish border postcode areas (postcodes starting 'DG' and 'TD') were also checked individually and assigned to Scottish local authorities or as 'non-Scottish postcodes' manually.

A very small number of applications did not include address information and therefore could not be matched to a local authority or country.

Redeterminations

Application decision dates, outcomes, and payment amounts are updated to reflect information about redeterminations and appeals as described in the [How the data is collected](#) section. Information in tables should therefore be viewed as the final decision, outcome, and payment value after a redetermination request or appeal has been received and/or decided. This excludes the processing times table, where applications with redeterminations and appeals have been removed from processing time calculations. Due to the small number of redeterminations received during the period this publication covers, it is unlikely that redeterminations will have a significant impact on the data included.

Processing Time

Processing time is the number of days from the application being received to a decision being made or the application being withdrawn. It includes time spent waiting to receive evidence from applicants through online upload or by post, but does not include additional time to make payments. It is calculated in working days. Weekends and public holidays are excluded from calculations, even if applications were processed by staff working overtime on these days. The time of day that an application was received or processed is not taken into account.

Processing times calculated do not include any applications that are flagged as having had a redetermination request because the decision date for these applications will represent the redetermination decision date, which can be some time after the original decision date. The number of applications in the processing times table is therefore lower than the number of applications shown as processed or decided in other tables. Redeterminations are a very small proportion of the total applications processed, and the initial average processing times for applications that go on to redetermination or appeal compared to other applications should not differ from all other applications. Therefore, removal of these should not impact the average processing times shown in the table.

Processing time is only calculated for applications that were decided within the period being reported on. Data is presented by the month of decision rather than month the application was received.

Future Developments

Whilst the publication currently reports the proportion of applications that have been denied, in future we aim to provide further information on the reasons that applications are denied.

We will be seeking users' views on the content of this publication to ensure it best meets their requirements. If you have any comments or suggestions that you would like to provide us please email MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot.

Related Social Security Scotland Publications

Future research and statistics publications will be available through the Social Security Scotland 'Reporting' webpage at:

<https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/what-we-do/reporting>.

Statistics on Young Carer Grant feedback (complaints, compliments and suggestions) will be included in future iterations of the Social Security Scotland feedback statistics published at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/>.

Statistics on Carer's Allowance and Carer's Allowance Supplement for Scotland are published by Social Security Scotland at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/>.

Information on client diversity and equality of application outcomes for clients applying to Social Security Scotland is published at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scotland-client-diversity-and-inequalities-analysis-to-december-2019/>

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Andy King

Social Security Statistics

Telephone: 0141 473 9068

e-mail: MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician, Telephone: 0131 244 0442,

e-mail: statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot

are available via an alternative route. Summary tables are available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/>.

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact SocialSecurityStats@gov.scot for further information.

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