



June
2020

► ILF Scotland

External Newsletter



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Coronavirus (Covid-19)

We at ILF Scotland understand that these are very challenging times and we want to reassure all of our recipients that your wellbeing during this time is our first priority. We will be flexible and supportive of any issues that you might face and we don't want anyone to worry about their ILF Scotland funding at this time. Therefore, our day-to-day work will carry on as usual, we will continue to make payments and if you have a change in circumstances, we will still be able to process this. We are happy to agree to temporary arrangements until things get back to some level of normality.

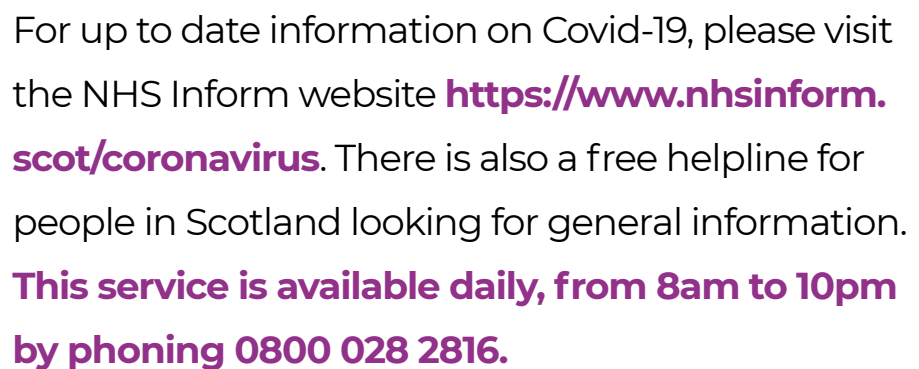
In addition, in light of the latest Covid-19 developments and in our best efforts to protect health and minimise disruption, we have taken the decision to suspend home visits to our recipients. Instead, we will carry out 2015 Fund reviews through a combination of telephone calls, email and video calls. If you are due to have a review visit soon, one of our assessors will be in touch to advise further. In the meantime, we are contacting our recipients by telephone to check that your support is okay at this time so if we haven't spoken to you already, we hope to do so soon.

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the next page.**

**Coronavirus
Covid-19 story
continues here.**



If you think we might be able to help you, with anything at all, please don't hesitate to get in touch. You can reach our operations team on **0300 200 2022** or through email at **enquiries@ilf.scot** and they will be more than happy to help. You can find more information on our website **www.ilf.scot**, including our most up to date opening hours. We have reduced these because most of our staff are working from home, but we are answering telephone calls and emails every day of the working week. If you get our voicemail, don't worry, just leave your name and telephone number and we will call you back as quickly as we possibly can.



For up to date information on Covid-19, please visit the NHS Inform website **<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>**. There is also a free helpline for people in Scotland looking for general information. **This service is available daily, from 8am to 10pm by phoning 0800 028 2816.**



ILF Scotland Policies

We are applying our award policies more flexibly to help support our recipients during this difficult time and have summarised some of these below. We will post any updated information on the front page of our website when it becomes available.

ILF Scotland Awards

With effect from the 1st March and for a 4 month period initially, **ILF Scotland can continue to pay all awards to allow recipients / award managers to continue to pay their PAs and care providers.**

Where a recipient wishes to self-isolate and has asked their PA or care provider not to provide support to them in their home, they can, if they wish, retain their PA or care provider and continue to pay them. They can ask their PA or care provider to support them in other ways, for example, to collect prescriptions, do their shopping, etc. Recipients can, at this time, use their ILF Scotland awards in flexible ways to meet their independent living outcomes.

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ILF Scotland
Awards story
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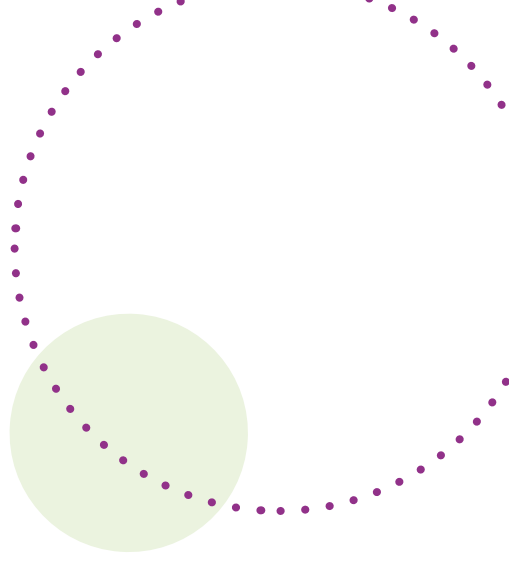
Where their PA is self-isolating or shielding, or where the care provider is not able to provide a full service, the recipient can, if they wish, retain the PA or care provider and continue to pay them.

If a recipient's PA is self-employed, ILF Scotland can consider the same arrangement as for a directly employed PA above, subject to satisfactory evidence that the existing self-employment status is recognised by HMRC.

ILF Scotland will continue to pay the award to allow this, unless the recipient clearly asks us to suspend or reduce the award.


ILF Scotland can also agree to pay additional, reasonable, costs for replacement care for a temporary period, including to family members.

If ILF recipients need to purchase alternative support because their PA or care provider cannot provide this, they can do so from another agency or PA and fund this from contingency (we have lifted the 7-day limit at this time) or unspent monies. If sufficient funds are not



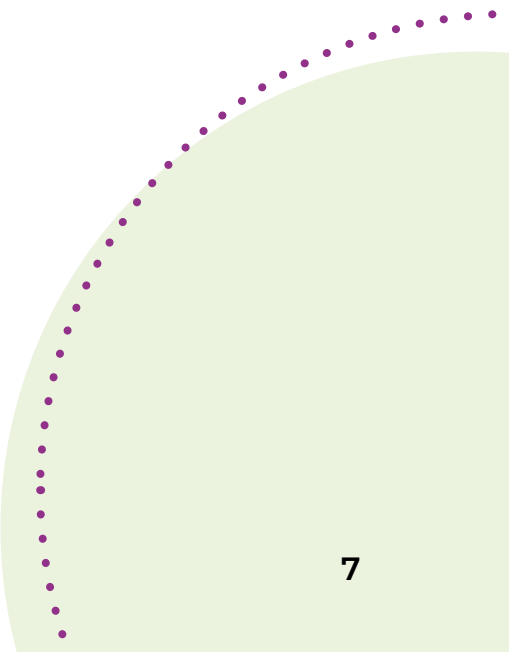
available, ILF Scotland can consider, on a case-by-case basis, funding the cost of replacement care from 1st March 2020 until the end of June 2020 initially, with the option of extending this further if required.

ILF Scotland expects recipients to pay PAs the



Scottish Living Wage rate of £9.30 from 1st April 2020 (£9.00 prior to that).

With prior agreement from ILF Scotland, recipients can also employ a friend or family member (including those living in the same household if this is the only option and subject to discussion with an ILF Scotland Assessor). These arrangements will be on a temporary basis only to replace the support that ILF Scotland currently pays for and existing support arrangements should be reinstated as soon as possible and ILF Scotland advised of this. The recipient must place the new person recruited to provide the temporary support on payroll to comply with HMRC.





Personal Protective Equipment

The Scottish Government has provided support and guidance around Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) for unpaid/family carers and Personal Assistants (PAS). You can find the relevant information for unpaid/family carers here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-unpaid-carers-providing-personal-care/> and for PAs here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-ppe-for-personal-assistants/>.



Potential scam activity

As a result of Coronavirus (Covid 19), there has been a significant rise in scam activity. We want to make our recipients are aware of useful tips and information around this to ensure they stay safe. More details can be found on the National Cyber Security Centre's website here:

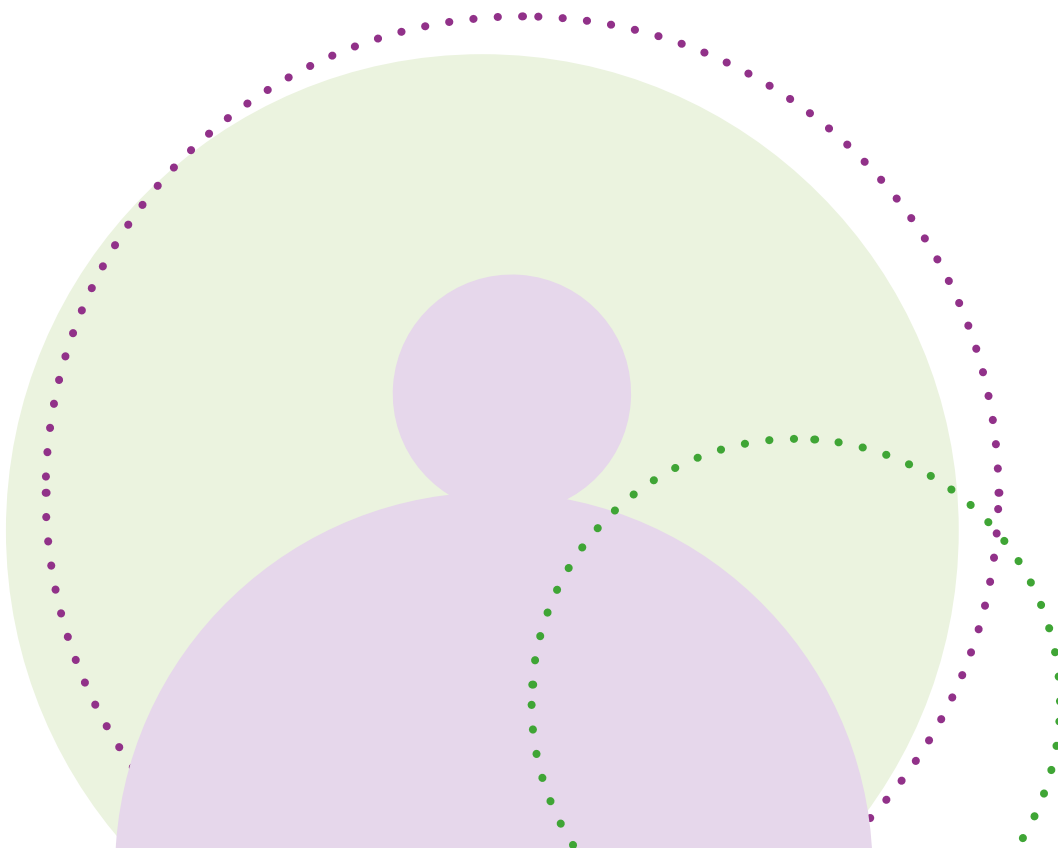
<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/advice-guidance/all-topics>.

Personal Assistant Identification Letter



We have put together a PA identification letter to confirm that PAs are Key Workers and should be able to access priority shopping, pharmacy or childcare so that you continue to receive the support you need. We want to make our recipients aware of useful tips and information around this to ensure they stay safe. You can download this from our website.

<https://ilf.scot/ilf-scotland-coronavirus-update-2/coronavirus-personal-assistant-identification-letter/>



Information

Employers Liability Insurance

If you directly employ Personal Assistants, you need to take out Employer's Liability Insurance. You can find further information on Employer's Liability Insurance at <https://www.gov.uk/employers-liability-insurance>. We recommend that you take out the 'enhanced' level rather than the basic level because this will help provide some cover for redundancy, for example. ILF Scotland may meet the cost of this insurance.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

In line with guidance from the Scottish Government, we have published our Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement. You can view the document on our website <https://ilf.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ILF-Scotland-Modern-Slavery-Human-Trafficking-Statement-April-2019.pdf>

Forum

ILF Scotland has always encouraged recipients to be involved in the future of the Fund. As a way of bringing ILF Scotland closer to recipients, we have developed an online forum where you and your support network can get involved in all of the things that matter to you.

On our Forum, you can chat to other ILF Scotland and Northern Ireland recipients about anything you like! Some popular topics are:

- **Support guidance**
- **Assistive technology**
- **Employing personal assistants**
- **Getting out**
- **Information on training and further education opportunities shared by site users.**

We welcome all recipients, their support team and family to sign up to the forum site and communicate with each other. You can find out more on our website at

www.ilf.scot/ilf-scotland-forum



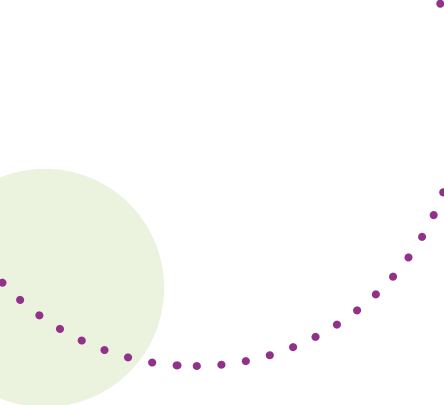


Benefits Update

ILF Scotland is aware that not all ILF recipients are receiving the correct level of Income Related Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and are missing disability premiums. If this is the case, indefinite backdating should be due. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau or welfare rights service can offer advice and support.

As a rule of thumb, most ILF recipients living in the parental home should be in receipt of **£130.65 per week ESA** (which includes the Enhanced Disability Premium of £17.10).

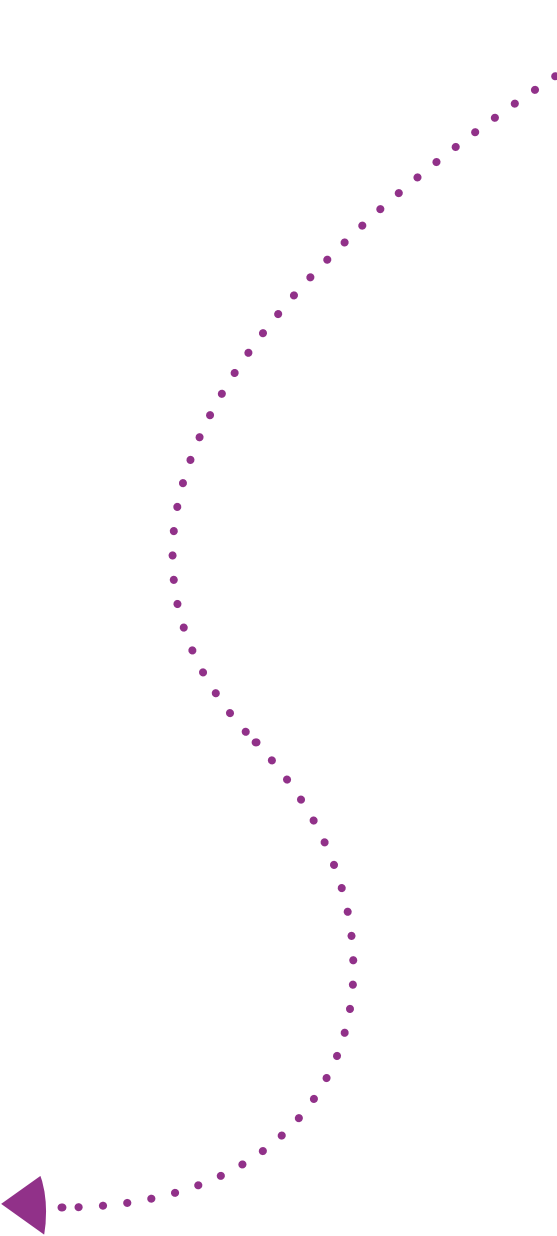
While, most ILF recipients who are living away from home in forms of supported accommodation should be in receipt of **£197.60 per week ESA** (which includes both the Enhanced Disability Premium of £17.10 and the severe disability premium of £66.95).



There may be exceptions to this (in some circumstances), but it is worthwhile checking if you think you may not be receiving the full amount, to which you are entitled.

You can get further information and advice about a range of services, including Welfare Rights by accessing this website

<https://advice.local.uk/> and you can access information about Advice and Advocacy Services and Law Centres in Scotland via this online document <https://dls.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Advice-in-Scotland-October-2018.pdf>



Scotland



Jim Elder-Woodward

I am the Chair of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) Scotland Recipient's Advisory Group – quite a mouthful! But simply, this is a group of people who receive payments from ILF Scotland to help them live a meaningful, productive life in the community. We meet with some of the senior staff of ILF Scotland, and some of their Assessors.



We discuss with them their policies and future plans. These meetings are informal and productive, with staff open to suggestions, and keen to have our involvement. I think it would be true to say; around the table, we are all in agreement – our combined aim is that disabled people should be empowered to lead the life of their choice.



Communication Equipment and Support

The Scottish Government introduced legislation in 2018 to ensure that Health Board and Local Authorities, working in partnership, provide communication equipment (and support to use it) to people of all ages in Scotland. You can find more information on the Scottish Government website .

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/right-speak-supporting-individuals-use-alternative-augmentative-communication/>

Transition Fund

Transition Fund Extended to 25 Year Olds!

In November 2019, ILF Scotland held its first ever Transition Fund event for recipients and their families to celebrate the achievements of the Fund. At the event, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Jeane Freeman, announced the extension of the Transition Fund age range from 16-21 to 16-25. She said: “The fund has helped young people develop their independence, confidence, community participation and social interactions. It’s clear that their lives have been improved for the better. The extension of the fund will enable those young disabled people, who have perhaps missed opportunities so far, to take up a new activity, develop a social enterprise or pursue other dreams. I look forward to hearing about the achievements of more young disabled people through this fund.”

We want to reassure everyone that in light of the latest Coronavirus (Covid-19) developments, the Transition Fund continues to remain open and is accepting applications from young disabled people aged 16-25. At ILF Scotland, we will operate as flexibly as we can within our policy framework during this challenging time. For any specific questions about the fund or any individual applications, please email enquiries@ILF.scot or phone **0300 200 2022**.





Young Ambassadors Group

We have established a young ambassadors group specifically for Transition Fund recipients where young people can help us with ideas about how to make the fund even better for potential new applicants. If you would like more details on how to get involved and be a part of our young ambassadors group then please contact us through our Facebook, Twitter or Instagram channels or by emailing communications@ILF.scot.





Transition Fund Developments

Young people can now apply online for a Person Centred Planning grant or a full Transition Fund grant. Go to <https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/how-can-i-apply/> click "Apply Now" and enter your email address. We will activate your account within 48 hours.





We would like as many young people to get the chance to apply to the fund to help them become more active and engaged in their communities and get funding to **#trysomethingnew**. If you know of any young people or groups that would benefit from hearing about the fund, please let us know and we will be happy to talk to them.

▼ Transition Fund in numbers



Total applications approved

1,686



Total grants approved

£3.7 million

Northern Ireland



David McDonald

My name is David McDonald. I'm a powerchair user of 25 years and an ILF recipient for almost as long, currently I am the Chair of the Fund's Stakeholder Group in Northern Ireland.

We began with three meetings in Belfast in 2016 and in 2017 members had met our Department of Health's Sponsor Team and the Available Income Policy, minus the pension's contribution, had been approved in Northern Ireland. We continue to work on reducing the requirement for it at all.



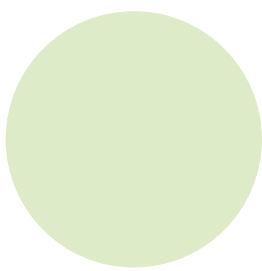


In 2018, we met with our Director of Mental Health, Disability and Older People, to make him aware of the positively life changing impact ILF has on the health, well-being and freedom of some of the most severely disabled people and their carers in Northern Ireland, who are in receipt of it currently, and the desperate need to open it again to new applicants. Together with our partners in the Fund's Stakeholder Group in Scotland and allies across our country, we gathered at the Northern Ireland Assembly, on 2 April 2019, to promote the Fund and launch the Campaign to make it available to many more than just us. None of what we are doing would be possible without the many ILF recipients and their carers attending and contributing to our meetings.

Conclusively, we have here a model of best practice. The more ILF recipients and their carers become involved, the better, and I would ask any who have not joined us yet, to do so: your involvement, opinion and contribution matter and you would be most welcome.



Independent Living Fund Events



Here at ILF Scotland we were excited to be running four events in Derry, Enniskillen, Belfast and Newry to look at the possibility of re-opening the 2015 Fund in Northern Ireland.

Unfortunately, due to the current situation with Coronavirus (Covid 19), we have had to postpone these events to a date later in the year. We understand that this is disappointing for those who were looking forward to these events, however, the health and safety of our attendees and staff is paramount and will always be at the forefront of our decision making.

However, it is important that we still hear your views about the possibility of re-opening the 2015 Fund in Northern Ireland. Therefore, we have created an online survey so that ILF recipients, disabled people, their parents/carers



and those from disabled people's organisations (DPOs) can still give us their views. The feedback we receive will be vital in shaping the future of the fund in Northern Ireland. The online survey is available on our website www.ilf.scot/northernireland. If you have any questions or require more information then please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing communications@ILF.scot or phoning **0300 200 2022**.

Researchers provided draft findings from the ILF Scotland Northern Ireland Research Project to the Stakeholder group on the 11th February in the NICVA premises in Belfast. We will publish these findings later in the year and will feature them on our website www.ilf.scot.



Contact Us

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact us using the details below:

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Ground Floor, Denholm House,
Almondvale Way Livingston EH54 6GA.

Telephone: **0300 200 2022**

Email: **enquiries@ILF.scot**

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