

## Sure Start Maternity Grant

The Sure Start Maternity Grant is a one-off payment of £500, paid to families on a low income, to help with the costs of a new baby. In Northern Ireland, the grant comes from the Financial Support Service within the Department for Communities (previously from within the Social Fund) and you don't have to repay it. The Sure Start Maternity Grant won't affect your eligibility for other benefits, Tax Credits or Universal Credit.

### Who is eligible?

You usually qualify for the grant if both of the following apply:

- you're expecting your first child, or you're expecting a multiple birth (such as twins) and have children already
- you or your partner already get certain benefits:
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Pension Credit
  - Child Tax Credit
  - Working Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability element
  - Universal Credit.

You must usually claim the grant within 11 weeks of the baby's due date or within 3 months after the baby's birth.

There must usually be no other children under the age of 16 in the household with the following exceptions:

- other babies from the same pregnancy as the child being claimed for
- where the only other child under 16 is the parent of the baby being claimed for
- where the only other child aged under 16 is a dependent child of the person claiming and the child being claimed for is the child of another dependant aged under 20
- if you, or a dependant aged under 20, are expecting a multiple birth you can get a Sure Start Maternity Grant if you already have a child or children under the age of 16

in your family (the amount you can get depends on whether the number of babies expected or born is more than the number of children already in the family).

You may also be able to get a grant if you're adopting or becoming a surrogate parent. The baby must be less than 1 year old on the date you claim. You must be receiving one of the benefits above and one of the following must also apply:

- you've become responsible for the baby and you're not the mother
- the baby has been placed with you for adoption
- you've got permission to adopt a baby from abroad
- you've got a parental order for a surrogate birth
- you've been appointed as guardian
- you've an adoption or a residence order.

### How much will you get?

You will normally receive £500 for an eligible child. If you already have children under 16, you can only get a grant if you're expecting a multiple birth.

<b>Number of children under 16</b>	<b>Grant if you have twins</b>	<b>Grant if you have triplets</b>
You have 1 or more (none of whom are from multiple births)	£500	£1,000
You've already had twins	£0	£500
You've already had triplets	£0	£0

Payment will usually be made directly into a bank, building society or other account that you have nominated.

### How to apply

Apply for a Sure Start Maternity Grant by completing claim form SF100 (Sure Start). In Northern Ireland, you can get a claim form from your local Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office, or you can download it from [www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/sure-start-maternity-grant-form-sf100](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/sure-start-maternity-grant-form-sf100).

If you live in Great Britain, you can get a claim form from your local Jobcentre Plus, or download it from [www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant/how-to-claim).

You can claim from 11 weeks before the week your baby is due until three months after your baby is born. If you're becoming responsible for a child through adoption, you must claim within three months of the child being placed with you.

A health professional (doctor, midwife or health visitor) must also sign the health professional's statement at the back of your claim form.

Return your completed claim form to the Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office (NI) or Jobcentre Plus (GB). You'll get a letter telling you if your claim was successful.

In Northern Ireland you can get more information from your [local Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office \(NI\)](#).

**If you require any further information on the financial supports available for parents, please contact one of our Family Benefits Advisors for free, confidential and impartial advice on 0800 028 3008.**