

## Private Sector Grants FAQs

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## Information for Applicants

### What's the Housing Executive's responsibility?

The Housing Executive administers grants on behalf of the Department for Communities.

It will agree the total grant-aid payable and make payment(s) at the appropriate time to the payees you tell us to.

The Housing Executive is **not responsible** for contractors; contractors are employed by you.

### Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing

You contractor is obliged to ensure that the site is maintained at a high standard of health and safety throughout the job observing Health & Safety regulations.

This includes implementing social distancing measures.

For more information on COVID-19 and social distancing go to the Public Health Agency website:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus)

### Suspending work due to COVID-19

It is your choice whether to have work suspended at your property. Please discuss the matter with your contractor and agree the way forward.

### My contractor is leaving the site what should I look out for?

If you and your contractor agree to suspend work because of COVID-19 it is vital your contractor ensures the site is closed properly and left in a safe manner.

Check with your contractor what s/he will do to ensure the property is safe if s/he has to stop work before the job is completed.

The Housing Executive is not responsible for your contractor as s/he is employed by you. It is therefore important that you are satisfied your contractor ensures the site at your property is safe in the event of work having to be stopped before it is completed.

### Can work be paid for?

Under normal circumstances the Housing Executive will only make payments based on an inspection by a Technical Officer. However, we have suspended these visits.

The Housing Executive has made arrangements to make payments without inspections but these will be based on evidence provided.

## What if the work is fully completed can grant-aid be paid?

If the work is completed as an applicant you can make a request for final payment or agree with your contractor s/he should do this.

If you decided to complete the return the Housing Executive will need:

- the 'Notification of Completion of Work' signed to confirm the work has been completed to your satisfaction;
- a completed Payment of Grant Monies form;
- your Contractor's Invoice;
- confirmation from [Building Control](#) that the works have been carried out satisfactorily;
- clear [photographic evidence](#) supplied by your contractor of the completed work; and
- details of any changes your contractor made to the plans during work.

## What photographic evidence should my contractor provide?

You should refer to the *List of Works* which you were sent when the *Approval of Application* pack was sent.

From this your contractor must provide clear photographic evidence of the grant-aid work for which you are making a claim. A couple of examples are detailed below:

### **Bath Out; Shower In**

Photos of the bathroom showing from where the bath was removed and the new shower fitted. Additional evidence (not essential) to support the claim might include a dated copy of the purchase receipt for some / all the shower's fittings.

### **Ramp access**

Photo of the ramp which should include, where practical, a tape laid out alongside to show how long the ramp is.

## How much will be paid for fully completed work?

Without an inspection the Housing Executive will be able to pay a maximum of 90% of the cost of the eligible works. Fees will be paid in full with exception of the Warranty Bond Fee.

It is up to you to ensure you pay for any additional non-grant aided work agreed with your contractor.

## When will any outstanding grant-aid monies be paid?

Once the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will organise one at your property.

At this time our Technical Officer will assess the work and arrange the balance to be released when s/he is satisfied the work has been completed in accordance with the specification for the relevant works and the final necessary documents (eg Building Control Certificate/s) have been received.

ANYONE KNOWINGLY MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT TO FRAUDENTLY OBTAIN MONIES IS LIABLE TO PROSECUTION

Any payments made for work which has not been carried out to the satisfaction of the Housing Executive in accordance with Article 68 (4)(a) [*Housing (NI) Order 2003*] may be subject to recoupment action by the Housing Executive in accordance with Article 71 of the Housing (NI) Order 2003 if necessary.

### **What happens where Building Control has not issued a certificate?**

If Building Control is not able to inspect and therefore cannot provide a certificate of completion, evidence should be provided to confirm that Building Control Approval has been applied for.

Where applicable, Building Control should have been applied for before work commenced. The person who made this application should have received an acknowledgement receipt of payment from Building Control.

The Housing Executive may provide payment if no Building Control Certificate can be issued due to COVID-19, but the Building Control receipt and notification to the Council that the works are completed must be sent in as evidence.

Once the COVID-19 period has passed, a copy the final Building Control Certificate must be returned.

### **What if only part of the work has been completed?**

If work has started the Housing Executive will consider making an interim payment of up to a maximum 75% of the cost of the eligible works. Fees will be paid in full with exception of the Warranty Bond Fee.

The amount will depend on the volume of work completed.

If you are submitting the request for a part-payment we will need you to:

- complete the [interim payment form](#);
- provide an invoice from your contractor for work to date;
- return a completed Payment of Grant Monies form;
- provide clear [photographic evidence](#) from your contractor of the work which has been completed to date; and, where applicable, details of any changes made to the plans during work to date.

### **Where do I submit the request for payment (either full or partial)?**

The Housing Executive's preference is that all evidence is submitted by email. In the subject line you must provide the Grant Reference (see *Approval of Application* pack) number and property address.

### Restrictions on email size

**PLEASE NOTE** there is a restriction on the size of email which we can receive. Therefore you must ensure that one email's total size does not exceed 30MB. This means you may need to send more than one email.

If you need to send more than one email it is vital that each email you send contains the same subject title detailing:

- the grants reference number (*see Approval of Application*); and
- each email is marked as 1 of 4; 2 of 4, etc.

### Grant Office emails:

Belfast / South East [belfast.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:belfast.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

Derry/Londonderry [derry-londonderrygrants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:derry-londonderrygrants@nihe.gov.uk)

North East [northeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:northeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

South [south.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:south.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

West / Omagh [west.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:west.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

### Will there be an inspection for partially finish work?

Once the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will organise one for your property.

At this time our Technical Officer will assess the works previously carried out and for which an interim payment was made to ensure that those works have been completed in accordance with the specification for the relevant works. As part of that assessment our Technical Officer will re-measure and where necessary if any change arises due to the re-measurement any payment previously made will be adjusted accordingly to reflect that change.

This will be accounted for when the final balance of the grant payable is due to be released.

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LIABLE TO PROSECUTION

Any payments made for work which has not been carried out to the satisfaction of the Housing Executive in accordance with Article 68 (4)(a) [*Housing (NI) Order 2003*] may be subject to recoupment action by the Housing Executive in accordance with Article 71 of the Housing (NI) Order 2003 if necessary.

## Use of the extra support service

If you used the extra support service (Radius / Gable) during the grant application process then be assured we will have told them about these new arrangements.

Contact details for these organisations:

- Radius Housing's Staying Put Team: 033 0123 0888
- Gable: 028 7188 2147 or E: [gable@shelterni.org](mailto:gable@shelterni.org)

## Information for Contractors

### Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing

As a contractor you are obliged to ensure that you maintain a high standard of health and safety throughout the job observing Health & Safety regulations. This includes social distancing measures.

For more information go to:

Public Health Agency: [www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus)

HSE-NI: <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-update>

FMB: <https://www.fmb.org.uk/about-the-fmb/policy-and-public-affairs/responding-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

### Suspending work due to COVID-19

The Housing Executive encourages contractors to discuss any suspension of work at the property with their customer.

It is important to ensure you fulfil your obligations to customers around the health and safety of a site.

### I am leaving the site what should I do?

If you and your customer agree to suspend work because of COVID-19 it is vital you ensure the site is closed properly and left in a safe manner.

Please discuss with your customer what you will do to ensure your property is safe if you have to stop work before the job is completed.

We have reiterated with your customer that the Housing Executive is not responsible for their contractor; you as a contractor are employed by them.

### Can work be paid for?

Under normal circumstances the Housing Executive will only make payments based on an inspection by a Technical Officer. However, we have suspended these visits.

The Housing Executive has made arrangements to make payments without inspections but these will be based on evidence provided.

## What if the work is fully completed and needs to be paid for?

In order to support the local economy the Housing Executive intends to make a payment of up to 90% for completed work.

Where work is completed and your customer is satisfied with the work a request for final payment from the Housing Executive can be made.

If your customer prefers that you submit the request for payment you will need you to:

- arrange for your customer to sign and return the 'Notification of Completion of Work' to confirm the work has been completed to their satisfaction;
- return a completed Payment of Grant Monies form detailing to whom the grant-aid money will be paid;
- your Invoice;
- provide clear [photographic evidence](#) of the completed work;
- confirmation from [Building Control](#) that the works have been carried out satisfactorily; and
- return details of any changes you and your customer made to the plans during work.

## What evidence should I provide?

Contractor should refer to the *List of Works* issued by the Housing Executive for the particulars of the job. Clear photographic evidence of the grant-aid work for which a claim is being made should be provided. A couple of examples are detailed below:

### **Bath Out; Shower In**

Photos of the bathroom showing from where the bath was removed and the new shower fitted. Additional evidence (not essential) to support the claim might include a dated copy of the purchase receipt for some / all the shower's fittings.

### **Ramp access**

Photos of the ramp which should include, where practical, a tape laid out alongside to show how long the ramp is.

## How much will be paid for fully completed work?

Without an inspection the Housing Executive will be able to pay a maximum of 90% of the cost of the eligible works. Fees will be paid in full with exception of the Warranty Bond Fee.

It is up to you to ensure you arrange for payment of any additional non-grant aided work agreed with your customer.

## What happens where Building Control has not issued a certificate?

If Building Control is not able to inspect and therefore cannot provide a certificate of completion, evidence should be provided to confirm that Building Control Approval has been applied for.

Where applicable, Building Control should have been applied for before work commenced. The person who made this application should have received an acknowledgement receipt of payment from Building Control.

The Housing Executive may provide payment if no Building Control Certificate can be issued due to COVID-19, but the Building Control receipt and notification to the Council that the works are completed must be sent in as evidence.

Once the COVID-19 period has passed, a copy the final Building Control Certificate must be returned.

### **When will any outstanding grant-aid monies be paid?**

Once the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will organise one at the property for which a partial claim was paid.

The Technical Officer will assess the work completed, re-measure and where necessary payment will be adjusted.

The balance to be released when s/he is satisfied the work has been completed in accordance with the specification for the relevant works and the final necessary documents (eg Building Control Certificate/s) have been received.

### **What if only part of the work has been completed?**

If work has started the Housing Executive will consider making an interim payment of up to a maximum 75% of the cost of the eligible works. Fees will be paid in full with exception of the Warranty Bond Fee

The amount will depend on the volume of work completed.

If your customer has asked that you submit the request for a part-payment you will need you to:

- complete the [interim payment form](#);
- provide an invoice for work to date;
- return a completed Payment of Grant Monies form;
- provide clear [photographic evidence](#) of the work which has been completed to date; and, where applicable, details of any changes made to the plans during work to date.

### **Will there be an inspection for partially finish work?**

Once the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will organise one at the property for which a partial claim was paid.

At this time our Technical Officer will assess the works previously carried out and for which an interim payment was made to ensure that those works have been completed in accordance with the specification for the relevant works. As part of that assessment our Technical Officer will re-measure and where necessary if any change arises due to the re-

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This will be accounted for when the final balance of the grant payable is due to be released.

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Derry/Londonderry [derry-londonderrygrants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:derry-londonderrygrants@nihe.gov.uk)

North East [northeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:northeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

South [south.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:south.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

West / Omagh [west.grants@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:west.grants@nihe.gov.uk)

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