



# East Renfrewshire Citizens

## Advice Bureau Weekly Update

29/04/2021

### SWF Community Care Grant

ERCAB have been helping a great number of clients who have been struggling financially to apply for the Scottish Welfare Fund - Community Care Grant. As a result of the current Covid-19 pandemic, ERCAB have seen an increase in clients seeking financial help. Community Care Grants enable independent living or continued independent living, preventing the need for institutional care.

A Community Care Grant can be given, if you qualify, to help with costs if:

- you're leaving care or imprisonment and need help to start a settled home
- you've been homeless, or living an unsettled life, and need help to start a settled home
- you need support to stay out of care
- you're caring for someone who's been released from prison or a young offender's institution
- you're experiencing great pressure and need help to keep a settled home
- you're escaping domestic abuse
- a child's health is at risk

You must also be 16 or over and on a low income to apply for a Community Care Grant. The grant can cover a number of expenses for those who are struggling. These include; furniture, household equipment, travel costs and removal costs, etc.

For more information on this and for help on how to apply, please, contact the bureau on; **0141 881 2032** or email; [Sarah.McBride@EastRenfrewshireCAB.casonline.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.McBride@EastRenfrewshireCAB.casonline.org.uk).

### Discretionary Funds for Students

Did you know that as a student, your university or college may have a discretionary fund to help you if you are in hardship? Discretionary funds are a source of financial help to students in further or higher education. In further education institutions, the funds are only available to students aged 16 or over.

They may also be able to direct you to budgeting help, careers services and other grants and bursaries. Check with their funding department today! Payments may affect your entitlement to means-tested social security benefits, for example Universal Credit. If you're worried about the impact on your benefits, you should consult an experienced adviser.

For more information on discretionary funds and how they can help, please, contact the bureau on; **0141 881 2032**.

### Good News Story – Universal Credit

A client approached ERCAB this week as her housing payments (paid as part of her Universal Credit award), had been stopped by the DWP. Our Client was reliant on this payment to cover her rent costs. She is a disabled, young, single parent. ERCAB HTC adviser looked into the case and found that the DWP decision maker had stopped the clients housing payments as he believed the client's landlord was not a registered Landlord as he is required to be. After searching the landlord register, ERCAB adviser found the company was operational, but had a name very similar to a partnership that closed in 2016. ERCAB were able to provide the DWP with this evidence, they accepted this information and duly reviewed their decision. The client has been informed this week her rent payments will start again and be backdated. This resulted in a client financial gain of **£7,200** a year. The client was relieved and delighted with this outcome.

For help with Universal Credit, please contact our Help to Claim Advisers on:

Ainsley – **07388628543**

Helen – **07395965393**

Clodagh - **07871616249**

### Good News Story – Benefits

Our client is currently unemployed and unable to work due to some long term health complications. His only source of income is Job Seeker's Allowance (£74.70 per week) and Housing Benefit. His fridge, cooker and washing machine are all broken and he has no funds to replace them. He is currently sleeping on a broken bed which is exacerbating his osteoarthritis. He approached ERCAB for help.

We assisted our client to apply for a Community Care Grant from The Scottish Welfare Fund. The online application was submitted and requested funding for replacement white goods, bed and orthopaedic mattress. We successfully referred our client for fuel vouchers to release some of his benefit income meantime. He received funds within 2 working days. We referred our client to a local Food bank who arranged delivery of a tailored package of food items- suited to his current limited food preparation facilities. This was delivered to him within 2 days.

We completed a benefits review and identified that our client may be eligible for Personal Independence Payment. This would potentially increase his income as this would not affect his current benefits. We advised him of the application process, Helpline number to initiate the claim and available support from ERCAB in doing so. Our client has contacted PIP Helpline and will return to ERCAB for on-going support.

If you are struggling and need help, please, contact the bureau on; **0141 881 2032**.