

# Seniors Alert

COMMUNITIES SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE

Information Booklet for Community and Voluntary Groups



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail,  
Comhionannais agus Gaeltachta**  
Department of Community,  
Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs

## overview

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### **What has changed?**

A number of changes have been introduced as a result of the Review of the Scheme of Community Support for Older People ("CSOP") conducted by the Department in 2009. The key change is the replacement of the CSOP with a new Scheme, which updates the way in which grant support can be accessed. Other changes include:

- » Better registration process for organisations wishing to access grant support;
- » Simplified application process;
- » More clearly defined criteria for assessing older people's eligibility for the grant;
- » Better information to assist community groups and beneficiaries;
- » Reduced administrative burdens on groups;
- » Introduction of streamlined accounting and tax clearance procedures;
- » Streamlined grant packages to meet demand and ensure grant levels are more reflective of the value in the market place;
- » Broadened range of equipment eligible for support under the Scheme; and
- » Improved accountability arrangements, including the introduction of an enhanced verification process in respect of grant payments, including spots checks with beneficiaries.

### **Why change?**

A number of areas in which the Scheme could be improved were identified. As a result, the new Scheme is designed to:

- » Respond more effectively to the needs identified for older people;
- » Be easier to access;
- » Simplify and modernise the administrative processes;
- » Addresses the need for better information to support volunteers;
- » Improve targeting of limited resources; and
- » Make the grant aid available throughout the country.

### **What is the objective of the new Scheme?**

This Scheme will provide grant support to supply equipment to enable older people without sufficient means to continue to live securely in their home with confidence, independence and peace of mind.

### **Is the Scheme of Community Support for Older People closed?**

Yes. The CSOP is being discontinued and no further applications will be accepted once the new Scheme becomes operational.

### **How can the grant be used?**

Grant support will be available for:

- » Personal monitored alert systems (which may include monitored smoke and monitored carbon monoxide detectors as part of a monitored home package)
- and
- » Other items to improve the security and safety of the home.

### **How is the new Scheme delivered?**

Grant support will be made available through community and voluntary groups registered with the Department.

## the applicant organisation

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### **What groups may participate in the Scheme?**

Any group wishing to participate and draw down grant support must be a community based, voluntary and not-for-profit organisation. Groups will be required to show evidence through a registration process that they satisfy these and other requirements and that they do not overlap with any work of other groups delivering the Scheme.

### **What if my group already operates the CSOP?**

All groups that received and accounted for a CSOP grant between 2007 and 2010 will be invited to register with the new Scheme.

### **Registration process for other groups**

Community groups wishing to participate will be required to register with the Department before operating the Scheme. Groups wishing to register should contact the Department or download the registration application form from the website.

### **What are the registration criteria?**

Applicants will be expected to satisfy all of these criteria.

- » Community, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations. Individuals, private bodies and commercial entities (for profit) will not be registered.
- » Have a recognised structure (parish/community committee, a company limited by guarantee, not-for-profit co-operative or friendly society, registered charity).
- » Demonstrate a track record of working with or providing services to older people within their communities.
- » Demonstrate a capability of managing the grant.
- » Accept the terms and conditions of the Scheme.

### **Will all groups be registered?**

Not all groups will be registered to operate the Scheme. This will occur where the above criteria are not met or where other groups are

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operating the Scheme in the same area. In the event of a refusal to be registered by the Department a group may request a review.

### **Administrative support**

Community groups operating the Scheme will be eligible for a contribution towards the costs incurred by volunteers administering the Scheme. Groups receiving public funds for administrative support or service delivery will not usually be paid this fee.

## **the beneficiary**

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### **Can everyone get grant support?**

No. Grant support is available to those who meet the eligibility criteria. A grant will not be given simply because a person has reached 65 years of age.

### **Who is eligible for grant support?**

A person will be eligible for grant aid if he or she is:

- » Aged 65 years or older;  
and
- » Of limited means or resources;  
and
- » Living alone or with another person who meets the eligibility criteria;  
and
- » Resides within geographical area of the relevant community group;  
and
- » Able to benefit from the equipment supplied;  
and
- » Prepared to maintain contact with the community group.

### How is eligibility determined?

A person's eligibility must be confirmed before an application is made. This must be done by the community group. The following approach may assist in determining eligibility.

Criteria	How
Aged 65 years or older	Date of birth must be given on assessment form – age can be confirmed by birth certificate, passport, or medical care (if there is doubt about the applicant's age)
Living alone or with another eligible person	This will depend on local knowledge and confirmation during the home visit
Reside within the geographical area of local group	Based on the address supplied by the applicant and confirmed by the home visit
Of limited means and resources	The community group is satisfied from information provided during the home visit
Be able to benefit from the equipment supplied	It is important that community groups identify those persons who will benefit from long term use of the equipment. The aim is to provide equipment before a person becomes ill or infirmed or has become a victim of crime
Maintaining contact with the community group	Undertaking provided by the applicant to engage with the community group on a regular basis

The older person will also be required to confirm that they understand the purpose and use of the equipment and that they will be responsible for future monitoring charges and payments.

## the application

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### **Application/Assessment forms**

The application/assessment form will be issued by the Department in response to a request from the community group. Each application/assessment form will be uniquely numbered and coded to the community group before being issued.

### **The application process**

When a group has identified older persons in need of support under the Scheme, that group may request application forms from the Department. Once eligibility has been assessed the form will be sent to the Department to be processed.

### **How long will it take to get paid the grant?**

Applications will be processed by the Department within two to three weeks of receipt. When the application has been processed payment will issue to the group, who will then arrange for the supply and installation of the funded equipment.

### **Is there a closing date for receipt of applications?**

There is no closing date for the receipt of applications. The Scheme is open to applications all year round and it is possible for community groups to submit more than one application in a calendar year. Funding is limited in each year.

### **What level of grant support is available?**

Because the cost of equipment changes, the level of grant support will change to reflect the best value that can be obtained. Grant levels will be notified to registered groups at regular intervals and will be available on the Department website.

### **What equipment will be grant aided**

The range of equipment that is eligible for grant support will be determined by the Department from time to time. Details of the equipment that can be obtained with grant support will be notified to registered groups on a regular basis.

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### **Ownership and tracking of equipment funded by the Scheme**

Community groups own the equipment funded under the Scheme and will be required to maintain a register of monitored alert equipment and to provide this information to the Department.

## **other provisions/requirements**

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### **Inspections & Verifications**

The Department will undertake inspections of grants paid to ensure that funds have been properly used. These inspections will require the co-operation of community groups and may consist of site visits, examination of documentation and interviews with the grant beneficiaries.

### **Tax Clearance Requirements**

In general, groups will not require a Tax Clearance Certificate. However, a group will normally be required to provide an original Tax Clearance Certificate to the Department if grants exceed or are likely to exceed €10,000 in a twelve month period. A Tax Clearance Certificate will not be required from a group that has a Charity (CHY) Number – the group must provide a letter of confirmation from the Revenue Commissioners in this regard.

### **Publication of information and Freedom of Information**

The provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts apply to this Scheme. Participation in the Scheme requires that the contact details and the level of grant paid is published and updated on a regular basis by the Department.

Once registered, community groups may process applications from older people living in the group's defined area of operation (see Application Process). On receipt of funding from the Department, the community groups will be responsible for arranging and paying for the supply and installation of funded equipment.

### **If you require further information you should contact:**

Community and Voluntary Supports Division, Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, Teeling Street, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo.  
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