



Department of Treasury and Finance
Office of State Revenue

THERMOREGULATORY DYSFUNCTION ENERGY SUBSIDY SCHEME INFORMATION SHEET

What is thermoregulatory dysfunction?

For the purposes of this subsidy, thermoregulatory dysfunction is defined as a significant loss of a person's capacity to control body temperature when exposed to extremes of environmental temperatures. It is associated with medical conditions which result in the affected person being at risk of serious detriment to their general health and bodily function when exposed to extremes of temperatures.

What is the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy?

The Western Australian Government has introduced the **Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy** to help offset the energy costs associated with temperature control at their home for financially disadvantaged persons or their dependents with thermoregulatory dysfunction.

The subsidy is aimed at persons who hold means tested concession cards, (or the dependants of people who hold means tested concession cards), who require heating and/or cooling to control the temperature in their homes under specialist medical advice.

The subsidy is administratively based with a commencement date 1 January 2007.

In order to qualify for the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction subsidy, the patient must:

- Be certified by a treating doctor who has been treating the patient for at least three months; and
- Be assessed as meeting one of the four primary qualifying conditions; and
- Be assessed as meeting one of the three secondary qualifying conditions.

| Primary Qualifying Conditions |
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| Autonomic system dysfunction. (Medical conditions in which the autonomic system has been damaged Eg. Severe spinal cord injury, stroke, brain injury and neurodegenerative disorders) |
| Loss of skin integrity or loss of sweating capacity. (Eg. significant burns greater than 20%, severe inflammatory skin conditions and some rare forms of disordered sweating) |
| Objective reduction of physiological functioning at extremes of environmental temperatures. (Eg. Advanced multiple sclerosis) |
| Hypersensitivity to extremes of environmental temperature leading to increased pain or other discomfort or an increased risk of complications. (Eg. complex regional pain syndrome and advanced peripheral vascular disease) |

| Secondary Qualifying Criteria |
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| a) Severe immobility (Eg. Such as occurs with Quadriplegia or the loss of three limbs) |
| b) Demonstrated significant loss of autonomic regulation of sweating, heart rate or blood pressure |
| c) Demonstrated loss of physiological function or significant aggravation of clinical condition at extremes of environmental temperature |

The Applicant

An applicant for the subsidy may be either:

The patient, who requires heating and/or cooling for their own use; **OR**

The guardian or primary caregiver of a person who utilises the energy for heating and/or cooling in their home.

However, the applicant must hold one of the following:

- **Pensioner Concession Card** (issued by either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs); or
- **Health Care Card**; or
- **Health Care Interim Voucher**.

Note: Inability to Sign

When the applicant is a child or an adult who holds one of the above-mentioned concession cards but is unable to sign the application form (due to age or disability), then the guardian or carer should sign the form on their behalf, providing they explain the reason/s for doing so. For more information, please contact a Grants and Subsidies Officer on the contact details at the end of this document.

Applying for a Concession Card

Information regarding Pensioner Concession Cards (PCC) and Health Care Cards (HCC) is available from the Department of Veterans' Affairs or your local Centrelink Office.

Medical Authorisation

The medical authorisation (at section 6 of the application form) **must be completed and signed** by your treating physician or specialist and returned to the Office of State Revenue.

How much is the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy?

The subsidy is \$335 per annum.

How do I apply for the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy?

If the stated criteria are met, please complete a Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy application form and return it to the Office of State Revenue.

To enable the speedy processing of your application please ensure all sections are completed in full and signed.

How will I receive my subsidy payment?

Payment will be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly to the bank account nominated by the applicant.

To ensure payment is made in a timely manner, please provide the relevant bank account details as they appear on bank statements, this includes the name of the bank, the branch location, the BSB number, account number and the name of the account holder. If you are unsure about these details, please contact your bank for assistance.

Note: The bank account must be a savings or cheque account.

How often is the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy paid?

The subsidy is paid in advance on an annual basis.

Do I have to complete a new application form every year?

No. A renewal form will be forwarded to you just prior to your anniversary date. (Your anniversary date will be every 12 months from the date we receive your original application). It is important to notify the Office of State Revenue if you change your address to ensure that the renewal form reaches you.

However, you will be required to make a new application every two years. You will be contacted three months prior to this date and advised how to reapply.

General information regarding the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy Scheme

The Office of State Revenue will confirm the status of concession cardholders with Centrelink and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Office of State Revenue has the right to decline any application (or demand repayment of any subsidy already paid) in situations where, in the Office's reasonable opinion, false information has been provided or the eligibility criteria have not been met. Recipients may seek a review of such a decision, at which time they may put forward their case for payment.

There may be instances where the patient lives in a form of supported accommodation (e.g. hostel), caravan park or similar. In these cases, a copy of an invoice or some similar document showing that the applicant is individually billed and pays for measured energy usage must be included with the application form.

Reviewing

The Office of Energy will need your authorisation and the authorisation of your treating physician to view your medical records for the purpose of reviewing an applicant's entitlement to the subsidy.

Energy Supply Outages - Special Needs Customers

It is suggested that customers contact their energy provider/s (Eg. Synergy, Horizon or Alinta), to enable the provider to take into account, wherever possible, the applicants' special circumstances, in the event that there is a planned service outage.

For more information regarding the Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Energy Subsidy Scheme

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| By Mail: | Office of State Revenue GPO Box T1600 Perth WA 6845 | Website: | www.osr.wa.gov.au |
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| Hours: | 8.00am to 5.00pm (Mon to Fri) | Telephone: | (08) 9262 1373 |
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