

Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and ECO Flex eligibility

Introduction

The information provided in this document is intended as guidance only, and eligibility criteria are expected to change without any advanced notice. This guidance only provides household eligibility. Eligibility for grant funding is dependent upon the property being suitable for the energy measure and meeting the eligibility criteria of the specific scheme. This is usually determined by the scheme provider.

Grant funding through ECO/ECO Flex is for home owners, leaseholders, shared owners, and for tenants of private sector landlords. Private sector tenants will need consent from their landlord for large energy improvements, and applications can usually be made by either the tenant or the landlord. Eligibility criteria are always based on the income and circumstances of the household living in the property. Household savings are not considered as part of an assessment of eligibility criteria, nor is the income of the landlord for private rental properties.

Tenants of Croydon Council or Housing Associations are not eligible for the grant funding described in this document

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an obligation on energy suppliers aimed at helping households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving measures. Obligated energy suppliers must fund measures which improve the ability of low income, fuel poor and vulnerable households to heat their homes. This obligation is aimed at home owners and residents in private sector rental properties. It is also known as the Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO). Energy companies may meet the obligation themselves or provide funding for installers to meet the obligation on their behalf.

Resident eligibility for support through ECO requires a resident to either meet standard ECO eligibility (receipt of means tested or disability benefits) or the household must meet alternative criteria set by local authorities under what is known as the Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Mechanism (shortened to LA Flex) and more commonly known as ECO Flex. ECO Flex assessments are only required where a resident does not meet the standard eligibility criteria.

The ECO and ECO Flex eligibility criteria are also commonly used by non-ECO grant schemes, such as the Mayor of London's Warmer Homes scheme, and other first time central heating and winter emergency boiler schemes.

The actual energy measures which can be funded will depend upon whether the household is an owner occupier or rents from a private sector landlord, and their property type (whether they live in a house/bungalow or a flat/maisonette). The grant may fully fund or partially fund the energy measure and any associated works. Wall and loft insulation, first time central heating systems, and some renewable technologies, such as an air source heat pump, can but funded under ECO schemes. However, the grant cannot fund replacement doors or windows.

Standard ECO eligibility

This is sometimes known as HHCRO eligibility criteria

To meet this criteria the homeowner or tenant (or a member of their household) must receive at least one of the following benefits:

- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Mobility Supplement
- Personal Independence Payment
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Tax Credits (Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits)
- Universal Credit

If none of the above benefits are received, if someone in the household receives child benefit and the total gross household income is below the relevant income threshold in the table below the household can also meet the standard ECO eligibility criteria. Household Income for the child tax credit thresholds is determined from all sources before tax and be based on the preceding annual tax year (which runs from 6th April to 5th April of the following year).

Type of Claim	Number of children or qualifying young persons living in the household			
	1	2	3	4 or more
Single claimant	≤ £18,500	≤ £23,000	≤ £27,500	≤ £32,000
Member of couple	£25,500	≤ £30,000	≤ £34,500	≤ £39,000

If the resident receives child benefit and another qualifying benefit (listed on the previous page) the income thresholds do not apply.

If a resident meets the standard ECO eligibility criteria they can apply for support from an ECO provider without Local Authority support. The Croydon Healthy Homes team can help with the application. Croydon Healthy Homes is Croydon Council's free energy advice service aimed at Croydon residents on low incomes, and those more vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

www.croydon.gov.uk/healthyhomes

Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex) - ECO Flex

Under the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) Order 2018, local authorities can declare additional low income households who do not meet ECO eligibility if they have published a Local Authority Flexible Eligibility statement of intent. Croydon Council can issue declarations that a household meets the eligibility criteria, however all declarations will be subject to the resident providing evidence they meet the relevant eligibility criteria and signed at the discretion of the designated officer.

This is outlined in Croydon Council's statement of intent:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Croydon%20Council%20ECO%203%20Statement%20of%20Intent%20Version%202.pdf>

ECO Flex assessments are carried out by the Croydon Healthy Homes team, as part of wider energy advice consultations. It is expected residents seeking a declaration under ECO Flex is looking to reduce their energy consumption in other ways and will act on energy advice given by the team. Information about the Croydon Healthy Homes service is available:

www.croydon.gov.uk/healthyhomes

Croydon Council follows guidance from the Greater London Authority on setting ECO Flex eligibility. This is based on a household meeting income thresholds set under the low income category and additionally either meeting the high costs or vulnerability to cold category. These are outlined below:

Evidence to back up eligibility for ECO Flex declarations will be required and may be stored securely by the Council for up to 3 years for auditing purposes. Croydon Council needs to report to the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on all ECO Flex declarations made

Income thresholds and other eligibility criteria may change with no notice given and the information in this documents is for guidance purposes only. Residents will need to meet the eligibility criteria at the time of the assessment.

Low Income Category:

In defining low income we use the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Minimum Income Standard.

Qualifying incomes for ECO Flex thresholds are the total household net income (i.e. income after tax, national insurance and pension contributions are deducted). Housing and Childcare costs can also be deducted in determining the income threshold.

- Housing costs, can be mortgage payments, rents or service charges
- Eligible childcare costs are just fixed child care costs - associated travel should not be deducted.

In order for Croydon Council to declare a resident eligible, evidence of all incomes, housing and child care costs will be required. This must be for at least the previous 3 months.

To determine the income threshold for a household please find the corresponding household composition in the table below. Households are listed as single claimants or couples. Additional household members are classed as follows:

1. Up to 4 years old
2. Primary school age children
3. Secondary school age children and other adults living as part of the household

Household compositions are grouped by the number of children in the household, listed firstly for single people, secondly by couples. Where there are more than 4 children/additional adults please use the income threshold for 4 children/additional adults – using the 4 oldest children/additional household members.

	Net Income threshold
Single Person - no children/additional people	£14,700
Single Parent - one child/additional person	
1 x Up to 4 years	£18,300
1 x Primary School age	£19,200
1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£22,100
Single Parent - two children additional people	
2 x Up to 4 years	£21,300
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£22,200
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£25,100
2 x Primary School age	£22,800
1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£25,700
2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£28,600
Single Parent - three children/additional people	
3 x Up to 4 years	£22,200
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£23,300
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£28,200
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age	£23,800

1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£28,800
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£31,700
3 x Primary School age	£24,400
2 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£29,300
1 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£32,300
3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£35,100
Single Parent - four children/additional people	
4 x Up to 4 years	£25,000
3 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£26,100
3 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£31,000
2 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age	£26,600
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£31,600
2 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£34,500
1 x Up to 4 years, 3 x Primary School age	£27,200
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£32,200
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£35,100
1 x Up to 4 years, 3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£38,000
4 x Primary School age	£27,700
3 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£32,700
2 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£35,600
1 x Primary School age, 3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£38,600
4 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£41,400
Couple - no children/additional people	£24,900
Couple - one child/additional person	
1 x Up to 4 years	£25,500
1 x Primary School age	£26,500
1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£29,300
Couple - two children/additional people	
2 x Up to 4 years	£28,300
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£29,300
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£32,200
2 x Primary School age	£29,800
1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£32,700
2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£35,700
Couple - three children/additional people	

3 x Up to 4 years	£29,800
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£30,900
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£33,800
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age	£31,400
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£34,300
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£37,200
3 x Primary School age	£32,000
2 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£34,900
1 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£37,800
3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£42,700
Couple - four children/additional people	
4 x Up to 4 years	£32,600
3 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age	£33,700
3 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£36,500
2 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age	£34,300
2 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£37,200
2 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£40,100
1 x Up to 4 years, 3 x Primary School age	£34,800
1 x Up to 4 years, 2 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£37,700
1 x Up to 4 years, 1 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£40,700
1 x Up to 4 years, 3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£43,500
4 x Primary School age	£35,300
3 x Primary School age, 1 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£38,300
2 x Primary School age, 2 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£41,200
1 x Primary School age, 3 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£44,100
4 x Secondary School age/other Adult	£46,900

If a household does not meet the relevant income threshold in the table they are not eligible for support under ECO Flex.

ECO Flex secondary eligibility criteria

If a resident meets the income threshold above, the primary eligibility criteria, they must also meet at least one of the 18 eligibility criteria below from either the high energy costs or vulnerable to the cold section.

High energy costs

1. Annual household energy bills (gas and electricity combined) is greater than 80% of the average London domestic energy bill.(based on the latest government data)
2. The property has an EPC rating of D, E, F or G
3. There is no gas central heating in the property unless the property is heated by efficient electric storage heaters
4. The gas boiler is less than 85% efficient or not working/condemned [to be determined by Croydon Healthy Homes advisors]

Vulnerable to the Cold

A member of the household is/has:

5. Aged 0 – 4
6. 70 or over
7. Pregnant
8. Respiratory condition: eg chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; asthma
9. Cardiovascular condition: eg ischaemic heart disease; cerebrovascular disease
10. Immunodeficiency: condition eg HIV
11. Neurological condition: eg Alzheimer's disease; vascular dementia; other forms of dementia; Parkinson's disease
12. Moderate to severe mental illness: eg schizophrenia; bipolar disorder; moderate to severe depression or anxiety disorder
13. Substance abuser
14. Autoimmune disease, cancer and neurobiological disease: lupus; multiple sclerosis; diabetes; rheumatoid arthritis; cancer; fibromyalgia; ME
15. Haemoglobinopathies: sickle cell disease; thalassaemia
16. Limited mobility; osteoarthritis; other musculoskeletal conditions
17. Severe learning disabilities
18. Severe sensory impairment

ECO Flex Declarations

The declaration will state the household meets the income threshold and whether the household meets the high cost or vulnerability to cold criteria, but will not provide any further details to how the criteria have been met.

Declarations made by Croydon Council will usually be only valid for specific/named grant schemes, and only schemes where Croydon Council has an established relationship with the delivery partner. Declarations are sent directly to the grant provider or their agent to reduce risk of fraud and not to residents directly.

In accordance with the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) Order 2018 and associated guidance the decision to issue a declaration is at the sole discretion of the relevant local authority (Croydon Council). There is no appeal process.

Applications

All applications for support from Croydon Council under ECO Flex must come through the Croydon Healthy Homes team www.croydon.gov.uk/healthyhomes
Residents who are not online can phone 08002922529, and leave a voice message and an advisor will phone back.

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