Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding support from The Furniture Makers’ Company.

In order for us to consider your application, please complete and return the attached application form as fully as possible. Previous applicants must wait 12 months before reapplying.

 **Eligibility**

To be eligible for financial assistance, you must normally have a minimum of two years’ employment service in any capacity within the UK furnishing industry.

Applications from partners and dependents of deceased employees can also be considered, where ‘dependent’ is defined as an individual who is financially or emotionally dependent upon the industry employee either through age (under 18) or due to mental or physical disability.

We require that you provide documentary evidence of your employment within the UK furnishing industry, such as:

* A letter/email from your employer confirming employment dates
* Employment contract
* Redundancy letter
* Payslip/pension advice slip or P45
* You can give us written permission to contact your employer directly, in order to speed up the processing time of the application.

* If you are self-employed, please send us any relevant documentation, for example two years’ tax returns.

If you have no evidence of your employment, please complete the HM Revenue and Customs form, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-proof-employment-history>

Alternatively, you can phone 0300 200 3500 and request an employment history giving your N.I. number. Unfortunately, it can take up to eight weeks or more for you to receive the information from HMRC, so applicants are encouraged to provide alternative employment confirmation where possible.

 **Grants can be awarded for:**

* Essential household items
* Essential household bills
* General financial hardship
* Funeral expenses (up to £1,500 maximum)
* Disabled adaptations (not covered by Local Authority grants)
* Property repairs considered essential due to age, security or access
* Disabled / medical equipment
* Respite / convalescent breaks
* Emergency financial hardship due to a crisis -i.e.. short term and ongoing e.g. sickness (must include supporting documents)
* Pre-tenancy costs and removal costs
* Bankruptcy fees and Debt Relief Orders.

**Grants are not normally agreed for:**

* Assistance towards the clearance of consumer credit debt. In such cases you will need to talk to appropriate professional debt advice organisations. Bankruptcy and Debt Relief Order fees can be considered – see above.
* Legal costs
* Private education fees
* Replacement of statutory funding
* Non-essential home improvements
* Loans of any kind
* Memorial stones
* Holidays

**Please enclose with your application a copy of a recent bank statement (this is essential) and any relevant supporting documentation such as:**

* Quotes or invoices from suppliers
* Copies of any outstanding household bills
* Relevant reports or letters from Occupational Therapists or doctors
* Relevant supporting letters from caseworkers

**Important note**

Suspected fraudulent applications will be investigated and if any documents provided or criteria stated are found to have been falsely created to mislead the charity, the application details will be passed to Action Fraud and sent to Police Intelligence Bureau. In cases of fraud this may lead to a criminal prosecution.

Applications cannot be processed unless you have signed the declaration at the end of the application form.

Please return completed applications to: welfareofficer@furnituremakers.org.uk

If you have any queries, please contact us for help: Jo Goga, Welfare Officer: 07366 568458 or 020 7562 8528.