

GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

9.3

THE FA'S BENEVOLENT FUND – HELPING YOU THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

- Advice and information
- Access to counselling - where The FA's offer has not yet been taken up
- Short term financial assistance

FOR ALL

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THE FA'S BENEVOLENT FUND – HELPING YOU THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

WHAT IS THE BENEVOLENT FUND?

The Benevolent Fund is an FA registered charity which can provide advice, information and financial support to survivors of abuse experienced through English football, who are going through difficult times.

One of the main aims of the Benevolent Fund is to help you build a sustainable plan for your future, so that you feel more in control of your finances and more secure in your accommodation. We will provide you with recommendations that are designed to help you achieve this in the long-term and help you to access support through welfare benefits, housing, debt advice and budgeting skills.

If you need short term financial support to help you get back on your feet, we can provide this as well.

As well as help to tackle any practical issues you may have, we also support your overall wellbeing by providing access to therapy/ counselling through Sporting Chance where The FA offer has not already been taken up.

We recognise the difficulties and frustrations that many people experience in completing forms and applying for statutory services (e.g., housing, benefits). We know that sometimes it is a struggle to ask for help and this can feel overwhelming. We can provide specialist support for those most in need so that they can be guided and supported through these processes.

WHAT FINANCIAL HELP IS AVAILABLE?

We can provide short term financial support to assist you when you are experiencing financial difficulties and need help to get back on your feet. In most cases awards will be for one-off items of expenditure or help to manage a short-term financial crisis. Examples might include help to move house, purchase of furniture or white goods, funding of employment-related training or help when awaiting a first salary payment.

It is important to remember that financial awards are not intended to represent compensation or to put a value on the trauma you have suffered. Awards are entirely separate to any legal process and are considered only on your circumstances and the specific difficulties you are experiencing.

Every application is considered individually and the nature of your financial difficulties. We ask you to provide details of your income, outgoings, debt and the specific help that you are requesting. Try to provide as much detail as possible as this helps us to build a better picture of your circumstances and how best to help you.

WHAT HELP IS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT MY WELLBEING?

The Benevolent Fund works closely with Sporting Chance who are part funded by The FA to provide survivors with an offer of therapeutic and counselling support. If this offer has not already been taken up by you, then the Benevolent Fund can signpost you to this support.

Sporting Chance has established a network of appropriately qualified therapists to support sports people with childhood trauma, including child sexual abuse.

MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS

We know that it can be difficult to reach out and ask for help, so to avoid disappointment we try to be very clear about items of expenditure that the Benevolent Fund cannot help with – including:

- Funding for building projects
- Legal expenses
- Replacement funding for example for benefits that have not been claimed
- Retrospective funding (where you have already met an expense)

If you have received financial help through the Benevolent Fund, you can normally only apply again after two years. You will need to

complete a new form each time you seek help to ensure that we have details of your current circumstances.

If you do reapply for help, we ask you to update us on how you have progressed any recommendations we have previously made. Reapplications within two years are more likely to be successful if you provide evidence that you have progressed all the recommendations made to help you.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO WAIT FOR A DECISION?

Applications go through a 2-stage process. They are considered by independent advisors to the Board of Trustees first and then their recommendations are considered by the Board who make final decisions. This process usually takes about 2 weeks but sometimes decisions are delayed because we need further information from you. We aim to contact you as soon as possible to clarify any points on your application.

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FOOTBALL'S OTHER DISCRETIONARY FUNDING SOURCES

If you're a member of the PFA (Professional Footballers' Association), LMA (League Managers' Association) or Referees' Association, please contact the relevant organisation to enquire about the support that their members can apply for through their respective charitable funds.

The PFA can be contacted at Info@thePFA.co.uk or on **0161 236 0575** or **0207 329 9966**.

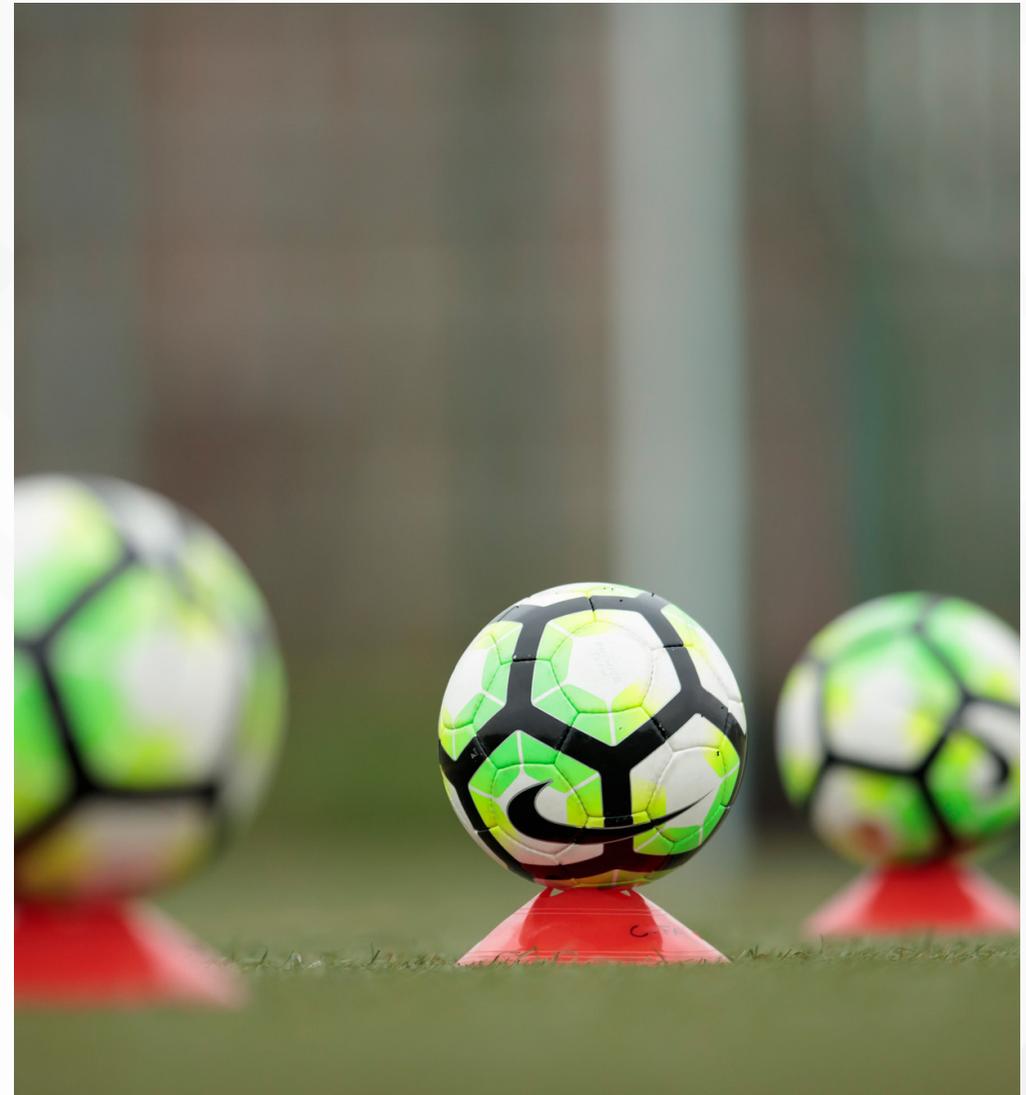
The LMA can be contacted at LMA@leaguemanagers.com or on **01283 576350**

The Referees' Association can be contacted at: welfare@the-ra.org

CONTACT

If you wish to make an application to The FA Benevolent Fund or find out further information, please e-mail BenevolentFund@thefa.com

If you wish to find out more about the support available to survivors through either The FA Benevolent Fund and/or the Professional Footballers' Association, Ian Ackley, the PFA Survivor Support Advocate is on hand to provide advice via **0800 368 8389** or supportadvocate@thePFA.com





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