

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – a new benefit for disabled people aged 16 and above

A new benefit called Personal Independence Payment is replacing Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for young people and adults aged 16–64. At first, it only applied to those making a new claim, but adults on DLA are now also being reassessed under the PIP system. DLA will continue as a separate benefit for children aged under 16 years.

How is Personal Independence Payment (PIP) being introduced?

PIP has already replaced DLA for new claims by disabled adults aged 16 years or over.

This has been the case in England, Scotland and Wales since 2013, and in Northern Ireland since 20 June 2016.

However, existing DLA claimants are also being reassessed under the PIP system. Your son or daughter will be asked to claim PIP if they fall into one of the following groups:

- they are turning 16
- they are aged 16 or over and their existing DLA award is coming to an end
- they are aged 16 or over and report a change in circumstances relevant to their award, for example a change in their care or mobility needs, or
- they are aged 16 or over and volunteer to claim PIP.

What about adults with long term or indefinite DLA awards?

If your adult son or daughter's DLA award is not due to run out for some time, or if they have an indefinite DLA award, they will be asked to claim PIP at some point between October 2015 and September 2017 (between December 2016 and December 2018 in Northern Ireland). The Government initially started this process by inviting claimants living in certain postcode areas to claim PIP, but it may start randomly selecting people with long-term or indefinite DLA awards to be re-assessed under PIP. Once your son or daughter is selected, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will notify them of what they need to do to claim PIP.

Call our freephone helpline for updates on the timetable for PIP's introduction for adults with long term or indefinite awards.

My child turns 16 later this year, how will they be invited to claim PIP?

Before your child turns 16, the DWP should contact you to keep you informed of the process for claiming PIP, and to find out if your son or daughter needs an appointee (see below).

Shortly after your child turns 16 they will then send a letter to your child (or to you if you have been made their appointee), inviting them to make a claim for PIP. You need to do this within 28 days of the date of the letter by calling the PIP claim line on:

📞 0800 917 2222

📞 0800 012 1573 in Northern Ireland.

So long as your child claims PIP when invited to do so, their existing DLA payments will continue temporarily until a decision is made on their PIP claim. This remains the case even if their DLA award was supposed to run out when they turned 16. If your child does not claim PIP when invited to do so then their DLA payments will stop.

When your child telephones the PIP claim line they (or you if you are their appointee) will be asked to complete a simple claim form. This is normally done over the telephone but in exceptional circumstances, for example if they have difficulties in using the telephone, they may be sent a paper form instead. Alternatively, it is possible to ask for a home visit from the DWP to help complete the form.

Need advice?

Call our freephone helpline
0808 808 3555
helpline@contact.org.uk
Open Monday to Friday, 9.30am–5pm



The initial claim form asks basic questions such as your child's name, contact details, nationality, bank account

details and information about the main health professional supporting them. It does not ask for detailed information about your child's care or mobility needs. This detailed information is instead gathered in a separate paper questionnaire that will be posted to them after they have made their initial claim.

What if my child can't manage their benefits when they turn 16?

If your child isn't able to manage their affairs, you can become their 'appointee', to manage and collect their benefits. You can't become an appointee simply because it is more convenient for you or your child. The DWP can only agree to an appointee if they believe that your child lacks the capacity to manage their affairs. Usually this will be because of mental incapacity but in exceptional circumstances it can be because of a physical disability. The DWP will normally arrange a home visit as part of this process.

How similar is PIP to DLA?

The new PIP appears similar to DLA in many ways. It is not means-tested, nor based on national insurance contributions and can be paid to those both in and out of work. In addition:

- it has two separate components – a 'mobility component' based on your ability to get around, and a 'daily living component' based on your ability to carry out key activities necessary to participate in daily life
- there are special rules for the terminally ill
- those getting the enhanced rate of the mobility component of PIP can use the Motability scheme
- an award of the daily living component opens the way for a carer to claim Carer's Allowance.

While it looks similar in some respects, PIP uses an entirely new set of criteria to decide whether someone qualifies for it. The way that PIP is assessed is also very different to DLA.

Initially a simple claim form is completed over the phone and this is then followed by a paper questionnaire that must be completed and returned. Most people will also be asked to attend a face to face assessment with a health care professional. This won't be your own GP, but a health professional working on behalf of the DWP.

How do you qualify for PIP?

PIP uses a points-based system to decide whether someone qualifies for the benefit, and if so, at what rate. You receive points depending on the level of difficulty you experience in the following areas:

- preparing food
- eating and drinking
- managing treatment
- washing and bathing
- managing toileting needs
- dressing and undressing
- communicating verbally
- reading
- mixing with other people
- making decisions about money
- planning and following journeys
- moving around.

The number of points you score in the last two categories are added together to decide if you get the mobility component, and at what rate. Your scores in the other categories are added together to decide whether you get the daily living component.

Get help with the questionnaire

The PIP questionnaire will probably be new to you, so ask a local advice agency to help you complete it. It is very important to put as much information as you can about your child's needs, and complete all the relevant sections. Any information provided by a professional involved with your child's care may also help. Our UK-wide freephone helpline can put you in touch with local help to complete the form. Call ☎ 0808 888 3555 to find out more.

Further information

If you live in Northern Ireland and your child is refused PIP or gets it at a lower rate than their previous DLA payments, they and their main carer may get supplementary payments for up to one year to compensate. For more details see the NIDirect.gov.uk website. For more detailed information on PIP see our guide to *Personal independence payment and other benefits at 16*.

For advice about any aspect of PIP, or claiming DLA when your child turns 16, contact our freephone UK helpline:

☎ **0808 808 3555**

✉ **helpline@contact.org.uk**

Got a question about the changes?

Call the Contact freephone

helpline: 0808 808 3555

helpline@contact.org.uk

www.contact.org.uk

