



Information for parents
ENGLAND | WALES
NORTHERN IRELAND

contact *For families
with disabled children*

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. You might be able to claim if your child receives the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the middle or highest rate, or the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). For more information about DLA and PIP see our guides to Claiming Disability Living Allowance for children and Personal Independence Payment. In Scotland, Carer's Allowance has been replaced with a similar benefit called Carer Support Payment.

Carer's Allowance is not means tested. It does not matter what savings you have and most forms of income are also ignored. However, if you work you can only get Carer's Allowance if your earnings after deductions are no more than £196 per week.

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR CARER'S ALLOWANCE?

You can claim if you are aged 16 years or over and:

- ***You look after someone who gets the middle or highest rate of the care component of DLA. You can also apply if you look after someone on the daily living component of PIP, or a benefit for older disabled people called Attendance Allowance.***
- ***You look after that person for at least 35 hours a week.***
- ***You are not earning more than £196 a week. See below for more details about how your earnings are calculated.***
- ***You are not in full-time education. Generally you're treated as in full time education if your course is described as full time by the educational establishment, although there can be exceptions (for example you've been granted an exemption from parts of your course, or the course is not a traditional university-type course requiring private study). Even if the course isn't described as full time, you'll still be treated as being in full-time education if it involves 21 hours or more supervised study per week.***
- ***You meet certain tests linked to your immigration status and the length of your presence in the UK.***

You can only get one award of Carer's Allowance, even if you are looking after more than one disabled person.

If you share the care of your child with another person and you each provide at least 35 hours a week care, only one of you can get Carer's Allowance for that child.

HOW ARE MY EARNINGS ASSESSED FOR CARER'S ALLOWANCE?

Only your own earnings are counted. If you have a partner who works their earnings are ignored. In calculating your earnings, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can make certain deductions from your gross wages. This includes not only any tax and national insurance you pay but also deductions for:

- ***Any alternative care costs that you have. This includes any childcare costs that you have while you are working whether this is for a disabled child or any other children under 16. If the person you care for is aged 16 or over and you have to pay someone to look after them while you work then those care costs can also be deducted. There is a cap on the maximum amount that can be deducted in this way – this is half of your net earnings. There is no requirement that you pay a registered childcare provider. These costs can still be deducted so long as you pay someone other than a close relative.***
- ***50 per cent of any pension contributions that you make into a work or personal pension scheme, and***
- ***An amount for any expenses you have that are 'wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred' in carrying out your work and for which you are not re-imbursed by your employer. For example, if you have to buy equipment or specialist clothing, or have to pay for travel between work places (travel between work and home does not count).***

If your earnings vary they should be averaged out, although the period over which they are averaged is at the discretion of the DWP. If you are self-employed your average earnings will normally be based on your most recent year's accounts, unless there has been a change in the pattern of your business.

HOW MUCH IS CARER'S ALLOWANCE?

Carer's Allowance is paid at a basic rate of £83.30 per week from April 2025. Some people who claimed before 6 April 2010 receive additional amounts for a dependent adult or for children.

CARER'S ALLOWANCE & OTHER NON MEANS-TESTED BENEFITS

You can't usually be paid Carer's Allowance at the same time as certain non means-tested benefits. These are Incapacity Benefit, contributory Employment and Support Allowance, Maternity Allowance, bereavement benefits, contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance and State Retirement Pension.

However, making a claim for Carer's Allowance could still help you even if you can't be paid it because you get one of the above benefits. This is because it can help you to qualify for an extra payment, known as the carer premium, as part of certain means-tested benefits like income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction.

CARER'S ALLOWANCE & MEANS-TESTED LEGACY BENEFITS

If you have not yet moved onto Universal Credit and still get a means-tested legacy benefit like income-related ESA or Housing Benefit, or if you get Pension Credit, then any Carer's Allowance is taken into account as income when calculating those other benefits. However, to ensure that you are better off overall, an extra amount known as the carer premium (carer element for pension credit) is added to your means-tested benefit payments.

A carer premium is also included in a means-tested benefit calculation when you claim Carer's Allowance and the only reason it's not paid is because you're getting another non means-tested benefit instead. Qualifying for the carer premium could mean you're better off by up to £46.40 per week.

CARERS ALLOWANCE & COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION

How a claim for Carer's Allowance will impact on a means-tested council tax reduction depends on where you live. In England, every local authority has its own rules so you should seek local advice.

CARER'S ALLOWANCE & UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The amount of any Universal Credit you receive is reduced by your Carer's Allowance payments. However, you will receive an extra carer element worth £201.68 per month in your Universal Credit calculation. You can also get a carer element in your Universal Credit award if you meet all the Carer's Allowance qualifying rules but have decided not to claim Carer's Allowance, or if the only reason you don't qualify for Carer's Allowance is because your earnings are too high.

CLAIMING CARER'S ALLOWANCE

Carer's Allowance should be backdated to the start of the DLA/PIP award, as long as you claim within three months of the decision awarding your child DLA or PIP. You must have met the qualifying conditions during the whole period. Otherwise Carer's Allowance payments can only be backdated for a maximum of three months.



Apply online (not Northern Ireland) at:

gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim

or ask the Carer's Allowance Unit for a claim pack

0800 731 0297 Textphone **0800 731 0317**

In Northern Ireland call **0800 587 0912**

or claim online at nidirect.gov.uk/services/apply-carers-allowance-online

WARNING!

In certain circumstances getting Carer's Allowance for looking after a disabled adult can affect the means-tested benefits paid to that disabled adult. Seek further advice if you care for a disabled adult who is still on a means-tested benefit like income-related ESA, Housing Benefit or Pension Credit.



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