

Help and advice about other benefits

If you want general advice about any other benefits you may be able to claim:

- Ring the **Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL)** for people with disabilities on **0800 88 22 00**.
- People with speech or hearing problems using a textphone can dial **0800 24 33 55**. If you do not have your own textphone system, they are available in some libraries and some Citizens Advice Bureaux.
- Get in touch with your Jobcentre Plus or social security office. You can find the phone number and address in the Business Numbers section of the phone book. Look under **Jobcentre Plus** or **Social Security**.
- Get in touch with an advice centre like a Citizens Advice Bureau.

If you want more information about Carer's Allowance:

If you are claiming the personal care component of Disability Living Allowance and someone looks after you for 35 hours or more per week, they may be able to get Carer's Allowance. The enclosed information sheet has important information about Carer's Allowance and tells you and your carer:

- How your benefit could be affected if your carer is paid Carer's Allowance.
- How to obtain help and advice about Carer's Allowance.
- How to make a claim.
- When to make a claim to avoid losing benefit.
- Where to get a claim form or how to claim on-line.

If you want more information about Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit:

- Ring their Helpline on **0845 300 3900**.
- People with speech or hearing problems using a textphone can dial **0845 300 3909**.
- People who need a form or help in Welsh can dial **0845 302 1489**.
- You can visit the website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits

For more information about Pension Credit:

- You can get leaflet **PC1L Pick it up. It's yours**.
- Ring the Pension Credit application line on **0800 99 1234**.
- People with speech or hearing problems using a textphone can dial **0800 169 0133**.
- You can visit the website at www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

About Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance is a tax-free social security benefit for people with an illness or disability who need help with:

- getting around,
- personal care, or
- both of these.

You can claim Disability Living Allowance even if you:

- do not actually get the help you need, or
- live alone, or
- are working.

Disability Living Allowance is:

- not affected by savings,
- not usually affected by any other money you have coming in,
- usually ignored as income for working out Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance.

If you get Disability Living Allowance, it may increase other benefits you get. For example, Income Support, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

When to claim

Claim straight away. You are normally only entitled to Disability Living Allowance when you have needed help for 3 months. But if you claim now, we can make sure that you get Disability Living Allowance as soon as you are entitled to it.

Filling in the claim form

Before you fill in the claim form you will need some of the things listed below. Do not worry if you do not have all of them.

- A black pen.
- Your National Insurance Number.

You can find this on your National Insurance numbercard, letters from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or payslips. If you do not have a National Insurance number, or you do not know it, get in touch with your Jobcentre Plus or social security office, they will help you apply for, or trace your number.

- Details of your medication, or an up to date, printed prescription list from your doctor, if you have one.

Filling in the claim form continued

- Details of anyone you have seen about your illnesses or disabilities in the last 12 months, apart from your G.P.
- The name of your G.P. and the address of your G.P.'s surgery.
- You may find it helpful to keep a diary of your needs. If your condition varies, you may want to keep a diary of your needs over a good day and one over a bad day. In each case, start from the time you get up in the morning, through 24 hours, to the time you get up the following morning. Try to list all the times when you need help from someone else or when you have difficulties doing something because there is nobody around to give help. When complete, these diaries could be attached to your claim form.
- If you have been in hospital, residential or nursing care, the dates you went in and out and the name, address and contact details of the hospital, residential care or nursing home.
- Your bank, building society or Post Office® card account details, if you have an account. You can find these on your chequebook, statement, or passbook. But do not worry if you do not already have an account, we will tell you more about that later.

The decision maker who will make the decision on your claim does not know you. The decision maker needs to get a clear picture of how your illness or disability affects you during the day and during the night and the type of help that you need.

Even if you do not get the help, you should describe the help you need, or may need to help you to do things. You don't have to fill in the form in one go. Take your time so that you can describe the help you need accurately.

If you want help filling in the claim form or any part of it

- Ring the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) for people with disabilities. The number is 0800 88 22 00. The textphone number is 0800 24 33 55.

The person you speak to may need to arrange for someone to phone you back. The person who calls you back is specially trained to help you fill in these forms. They will have a copy of the claim form and they will go through it with you over the phone. Or they can fill in a claim form for you.

If they fill in the claim form for you, they will send it to you. You can then check, sign and send it back. They can send you a completed claim form in braille or large print. They will send you an envelope. It will not need a stamp.

We can provide an interpreter, if required, or you may wish to arrange for a friend or family member to interpret for you.

- If you cannot use the phone, we may be able to send someone to visit you. Write to us at the address on the envelope that came with this claim form. If you have a visit, it may take us longer to deal with your claim.
- You may be able to get help from an organisation that specialises in helping people with your illness or disability. Phone them and ask if they can help you.

Being examined by a doctor

If we cannot get a clear picture of how your illnesses or disabilities affect you, we may ask a doctor to examine you.

If a medical examination is required we will ask Medical Services to arrange this on behalf of the Disability and Carers Service.

When Medical Services receive a case for examination, they send a letter which outlines their service. This includes details of the examination and that interpreters and same-sex doctors will be arranged wherever possible. They will contact you to arrange an appointment for the examination.

Medical Services arrange your appointment, ask a doctor to conduct a medical examination and provide a report of their opinion to the Disability and Carers Service. The decision maker will make a decision on your claim using the doctor's report and any other evidence or information available.

You can ask for a copy of the report from the office dealing with your claim.

10 Additional notes for question 10 What is your nationality?

Your nationality is usually determined by

- which country you were born in, or
- reference to a parent's nationality, or
- settled residence in a country.

11 Additional notes for question 11 Do you normally live in Great Britain?

Periods of residence in European Union (EU) countries can count towards periods of residence in Great Britain and whether you can be treated as being present in Great Britain.

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Important notes about question 18 Special Rules

Sadly, some people suffer from a terminal illness and are not likely to live for long. We have arrangements called **Special Rules**. These are to make sure people who are not likely to live for more than 6 months get their benefit as quickly as possible.

So that we can deal with your claim as quickly as possible, it is important that you send a doctor's **DS1500 report** with your claim. These notes tell you how to get a DS1500 Report.

If you cannot get your DS1500 Report in time, complete the claim form and **send it to us straight away**. Send the DS1500 Report as soon as you can.

Getting Disability Living Allowance under the **Special Rules** means:

- getting the highest rate each week for help with personal care,
- getting paid straight away, you do not have to wait until you have needed help for 3 months, and
- claims are dealt with more quickly.

Claiming under the Special Rules for someone else

You can claim under the **Special Rules** for someone else. You do not have to tell them you are claiming for them. Tell us about them on the claim form. We will normally write to them about whether they can get Disability Living Allowance, but we will not tell them anything about the **Special Rules**.

How to claim under the Special Rules

Please fill in the claim form or someone else can claim for you. Tick the box at page 8 of the claim form to show you are claiming under the **Special Rules**. If you do not tick this box, we cannot normally pay you under the **Special Rules**.

About your doctor's report

Ask your doctor or specialist for a **DS1500 Report**.

This is a report about your medical condition. You will not have to pay for it. You can ask the doctor's receptionist, a nurse or a social worker to arrange this for you. You do not have to see the doctor. Most doctors' practices provide DS1500 Reports without undue delay. Ask for the report in a sealed envelope if you do not want anyone to see it.

What we want you to do

Please send us the claim form and the DS1500 Report.

22 **Additional information for question 22** **How far can you normally walk (including any short stops) before you feel severe discomfort?**

We understand how difficult it can be to accurately estimate walking distances. There are several things that can help you.

- Ask someone to walk with you and pace the distance you walk. The average adult pace/step is just under one metre, for example, if the person walking with you took one hundred paces/steps you would have walked approximately 90 metres.
- The average four-door car is just over 4 metres long.
- The average double decker bus is 10 to 12 metres long.
- A full-size football pitch is 91 to 119 metres long.

If you still find it difficult to estimate the distance you can walk in metres, please tell us the number of steps you can take and tell us at question 25 the way that you walk, for example shuffling, small steps.

57 Additional notes for question 57 Making payments to you

We normally pay Disability Living Allowance directly into an account. This is the safest way to pay you and lets you choose how and when you get your money. You can use a bank or building society. You may be able to use a cash machine, which will usually mean you can get your money at any time of the day or night. Most of these machines can be used for free, but some of them will charge you to take your money out. If so, you will be warned by a message on the screen. This will give you the opportunity to cancel your transaction without being charged. There are arrangements with banks and building societies so that you can collect cash from some of their accounts at your Post Office® branch. The Post Office® also provides a bank account that we can pay benefits and entitlements into. With this account you can only collect your money in cash from Post Office® branches during opening hours.

Payment directly into an account

● How you will be paid

Your Disability Living Allowance will be paid into the account at the end of every 4-week period.

● Finding out how much is paid into the account

We will tell you when the first payment will be made and how much it is for. Each payment, after the first one, should be for the same amount unless there is a change in your circumstances. We will tell you whenever we know there is going to be a change in the amount we pay into your account.

You can check Disability Living Allowance payments on your account statements. Your statements will show your National Insurance (NI) number next to payments that are from us. A Post Office® card account statement shows your payment details but not your National Insurance (NI) number. If you think your payment is wrong, get in touch with the office that pays you.

● Getting someone to collect your Disability Living Allowance

You may be able to get someone else to collect your Disability Living Allowance for you regularly if you wish. For help with this please contact your bank, building society or the Post Office® if you have a Post Office® card account.

● If not enough money is paid into the account

If we do not pay enough money into the account, we will make another payment or add the money we owe you onto your next payment. We will contact you to tell you what we are going to do.

● Sometimes we may pay too much money into the account and you may be overpaid.

If this is because of the way the system works for payments directly into an account, we have the right to recover any money you are not entitled to. For example, you may give us information which means you are entitled to less money but we may not be able to change the amount already sent out. We will contact you first if we propose to recover money.

● If you do not want to use your existing account

If you have an account but you do not wish to use it, for example a joint account, any bank or building society will help you open an account that suits you better. Remember to ask whether their accounts allow you to get your money from the Post Office® if this is important to you.

57 Making payments to you continued

If you do not have a suitable account

● Basic bank accounts

If you have had problems opening a current account, or if you are worried about being overdrawn, you could ask any bank or building society about opening a basic bank account. These are sometimes called introductory or starter accounts and are available from all major banks. These accounts offer free banking but overdrafts are not available. You can use these accounts to pay money in, pay bills automatically and get cash out. Many basic bank accounts also allow you to get cash from Post Offices®.

● Post Office® card account

This is a simple bank account that can only have benefit, pension, entitlement, allowance or tax credit payments paid into it. You can only collect payment from it in cash at a Post Office® branch during opening hours. You will not have a cheque book and cannot withdraw money at a cash machine. You will not be able to run up an overdraft, pay bills by Direct Debit or Standing Order, or have your salary or any other money paid in. The account can only be in your name.

You may be able to arrange with the Post Office® for someone else to collect your benefit regularly from this account.

Fill in the Disability Living Allowance claim form and send it to us. Do not wait until you have opened an account. Any bank or building society will help you.

How we collect and use information

The Department for Work and Pensions collects information for the purposes of dealing with social security, child support, vaccine-damage issues, employment and training. The information we collect about you depends on the reason for your business with us, but we may use the information for any of these purposes.

We may check information about you with other information we have. We may get information about you from other people and certain other organisations. We may give information to certain other organisations, as the law allows, to:

- check the accuracy of information,
- prevent or detect crime,
- protect public funds in other ways, and
- use in research or statistics.

These other organisations include other government departments, local authorities, and private-sector bodies such as banks and organisations that may lend you money. We will not give information about you to anyone outside our department unless the law allows us to. The Department for Work and Pensions is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.

If you want to know more about what information we have about you, or the way we use your information, please contact us. You can contact any of our offices and ask for leaflet **GL33 Data Protection Act 1998 – It affects you**. Or you can find a copy of the leaflet on our website at www.dwp.gov.uk