

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

Carer's Allowance (Under Pensionable Age)

This factsheet contains information about benefit entitlement if you are caring for someone who receives:

- Attendance Allowance
- the middle/higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance
- the 'daily living' element of Personal Independence Payment
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- Constant Attendance Allowance as part of the Industrial Injuries or War Pensions schemes

Amount

From April 2020 Carer's Allowance itself is worth £67.25 per week. Some older claims may include extra payments for family members, but these have been abolished for new claims.

Basic Rules

The qualifying rules are:

- You must be over 16 years old. There is no upper age limit.
- You must be caring for someone who receives Attendance Allowance, the middle/higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance, the 'daily living' element of Personal Independence Payment, Armed Forces Independence Payment or Constant Attendance Allowance (as part of the Industrial Injuries or War Pensions schemes).
- You must spend at least 35 hours a week looking after the person. This might be made up of a variety of activities such as: personal care, shopping, talking to them, keeping an eye on them in case of accidents, helping them with tasks around the home. It does not have to be 35 hours of hands-on personal help.
- If you are working, you must be earning less than £128 (net) per week (i.e. after deducting income tax, national insurance, 50% of any personal/occupational pension contributions and certain care costs) – it is however possible to claim additional help as a carer under Universal Credit even if you earn more than this sum.
- You must not be in full-time education – i.e. 21 hours or more hours a week of supervised study – this normally includes any time spent in directed study or set work as a necessary part of the course.
- You must be present and ordinarily resident in the UK.

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Even if you care for more than one person, you can only get one payment of Carer's Allowance.

You can claim Carer's Allowance during breaks from caring – i.e. up to 4 weeks in any 6 months, and longer if either you or the person you care for is in hospital.

Sometimes receiving Carer's Allowance or the carer element of Universal Credit can affect the benefits of the person you are caring for. Please phone our helpline for advice before claiming.

Overlap with other benefits – underlying entitlement

A number of other benefits overlap with Carer's Allowance. If you are receiving one of these, and you then claim Carer's Allowance, you will not receive more than the amount of the higher benefit. However, owing to a rather complicated rule which can give you 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance when you don't actually receive it, you may get an increase in other, means-tested benefits, even though you don't get Carer's Allowance as such.

Benefits that overlap with Carer's Allowance are: State Retirement Pension; Contributory Jobseeker's Allowance; Incapacity Benefit; Contributory Employment and Support Allowance; Maternity Allowance; Widow's or Bereavement Pension; Widowed Mother's or Widowed Parents Allowance; Severe Disablement Allowance.

Increases to other benefits

By claiming Carer's Allowance you may be able to claim, or increase, the amounts of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance (income-based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (income-related)
- £10 Christmas Bonus with some benefits

Claiming a top-up to Carer's Allowance: changes

Previously, it was possible to claim Income Support as a top-up benefit to Carer's Allowance if you were of working age, and Pension Credit if you were of pension age. This has changed, as follows:

Income Support

You can now only make a new claim or Income Support if you are a disabled person of working age who receives a 'severe disability premium' (SDP) in an existing benefit such as Housing

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Benefit (or income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance or Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance) or you received one in the previous month and you still satisfy the SDP rules.

Please seek advice from our helpline, as the rules are complicated and are due to change again on 27/1/2021.

All other working-age claimants must claim Universal Credit (UC) to top up Carer's Allowance, if making a new claim.

If you currently receive Income Support as a carer, you will continue to receive it – however, if your circumstances change (for instance you cease to be a carer and you need to make a new claim for means-tested benefits) you may need to make a claim for Universal Credit. Seek advice.

If your circumstances do not change, you will remain on Income Support until between November 2020 and September 2024, during which period existing claims will be moved to Universal Credit.

If you are entitled to Carer's Allowance you get an extra amount added to your Income Support entitlement. This is called a carer's premium and is worth £37.50 a week or £75.00 a week where both members of a couple claim Carer's Allowance.

There is a similar provision in Universal Credit. The 'carer element' of UC is £162.92 per month. See our range of leaflets on UC for details.

Other Means-tested Benefits

Claiming Carer's Allowance gives you a 'carer premium' with a number of other benefits – (£37.50, or £75.00 a week if both members of a couple claim Carer's Allowance)

Those benefits are:

- Council Tax Reduction from your borough or district council (see below for other possible help with Council Tax)
- Jobseeker's Allowance (income-based) *
- Employment and Support Allowance (income-related)*
- Housing Benefit *

**NB – if you are of working age, you may need to claim the new Universal Credit instead of these benefits if you make a new claim - seek advice. UC does not replace Council Tax Reduction.*

If you receive Jobseeker's Allowance and you become a carer, contact our helpline for advice. You may be able to reduce your job-search on JSA or change your claim to another benefit.

If you receive Universal Credit and you become a carer you should be able to reduce the work-related 'conditionality' in your UC claim and you may also receive the additional UC 'carer element'.

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National Insurance Contributions

If you are entitled to Carer's Allowance you will be credited with National Insurance contributions towards your State Retirement Pension and other benefits.

Making a claim

You claim on a form DS700. You can obtain a claim form from; the Benefits Helpline on 01629 531535 or:

- Carer's Allowance Unit on 0800 731 0297 (textphone 0800 731 0317)
(Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm)
<https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance-unit>

You can claim online at <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim>

Backdating

You should make your claim as soon as possible and you can have it backdated for up to 3 months during any period that you qualified for it. It can be backdated for longer if the person you care for has only recently received the decision awarding Attendance Allowance of the relevant of Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance etc. and the award starts more than 3 months ago – in this case it can go back to the date their claim begins as long as you claim within 3 months of the date of their benefit decision.

To keep up-to-date with benefit changes in Derbyshire go to
www.derbyshire.gov.uk/benefitnews

Additional information can be found on our website, visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/welfarebenefits

Benefits Helpline – 01629 531535 or email
welfarebenefits@derbyshire.gov.uk

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
11.00am – 4.00pm

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