

Notes about claiming

Disability Living Allowance

for a child under 16



S O C I A L
S E C U R I T Y
A G E N C Y

Important - Please read these notes first. They tell you what you need to know about the rest of this pack.

What is Disability Living Allowance?

Disability Living Allowance is a tax-free social security benefit for people with an illness or a disability who need help with getting around, or help with personal care, or help with both of these.

It is not affected by any money the child or the child's family might have as income, or by any savings they might have.

People can still claim Disability Living Allowance even if they do not actually get the help they need.

They must normally be living in Northern Ireland and have lived there for 26 weeks in the 52 weeks before you claim, or 13 weeks for children under 6 months old.

This is a claim form specially for children. If you use this form to claim for a person over 16, it may take longer to deal with the claim. You can get a claim pack for adults from the same place that you got this pack.

There are fixed amounts of money for Disability Living Allowance. The current rates are in the leaflet called **Social Security Benefit Rates**. You can get this leaflet from any Social Security office/Jobs & Benefits office/Pension Centre. The rates are also on the website at www.dsdni.gov.uk

When to claim

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

Carer's Allowance

If you are claiming the care component of Disability Living Allowance and there is someone looking after the child for 35 hours or more a week, they may be able to get Carer's Allowance. See form **DS700** for more information which you can get from your Social Security office/Jobs & Benefits office/Pension Centre. If the child is awarded Disability Living Allowance and someone thinks they may qualify for Carer's Allowance they should make a claim within 3 months of the date of the child's award decision to avoid losing benefit.

The questions in the claim pack

- Answer all the questions that apply to the child you are claiming for and complete in black ink wherever possible. And use the spaces to tell us in your own words as much as you can about the help they need. The more you can tell us the easier it is for us to get a clear picture of the child's needs. Do not worry if you are not sure how to spell anything or have to cross something out. But please do not use any correction fluid.

Benefit you can get because of this claim, can be paid more quickly if you answer all the questions that apply to you and the child. If you find it difficult to fill in this form, do not worry. One of our staff can help you. You will find help and advice on filing in the claim form on page 3 of these notes.

- We know that a disability or illness can affect people more on one day and less on another – they have good days and bad days. When you tell us how the child's illnesses or disabilities affect them, tell us about the help they need **most** of the time. If you are not sure if we need to know about something, tell us anyway.
- We know that some of the questions we ask are very personal. And sometimes thinking about the things a child cannot do is upsetting. But we need to know these things to make sure that the child gets all the Disability Living Allowance they are entitled to.
- If there is not enough space on the form for everything you want to tell us, use a separate piece of paper and send it with the form. Make sure you put the child's name and reference number on any extra pieces of paper. If you do not know the reference number, use their date of birth.

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

- Ring the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) for people with disabilities and carers. The number is **0800 220 674**.

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 this form. 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 will send you an envelope. It will not need a stamp.

- If you cannot use the phone, we may be able to send someone to visit your child. Write to us at the address on the envelope that came with this claim pack. 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 the child's illness or disability. Phone them and ask if they can help you.

Help and advice

If you want general advice about Disability Living Allowance or any other benefits you may be able to claim

- Ring the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) for people with disabilities and carers. The number is **0800 220 674**.

The person you speak to will be able to give you general advice about Disability Living Allowance. And they can tell you about other organisations that may be able to help you.

People with speech or hearing problems using a textphone can dial **0800 243 787**. If you do not have your own textphone system, they are available in some libraries and Citizens Advice Bureau.

- Get in touch with your Social Security office/Jobs & Benefits office/Pension Centre. You can find the phone number and address on the advert in the business numbers section of The Phone Book. Look under **Social Security Agency**.
- Get in touch with an advice centre.

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

- ring their **Helpline**. The number is **0845 603 2000**
- people with speech or hearing problems using a **textphone** can dial **0845 607 6078**
- or you can visit the website at **www.hmrc.gov.uk**

For more information about Pension Credit

- get leaflet **PC1L Pension Credit**
- ring the **Pension Service application line**. The number is **0808 100 6165**
- people with speech or hearing problems using a **textphone** can dial **0808 100 1165**
- or you can visit the website at **www.thepensionservice.gov.uk**

Problems with getting around

Children can only get Disability Living Allowance for help with getting around if they are **3 years old or over**. The rate of Disability Living Allowance that children get depends on the type of help or supervision they need and their age. If they need reminding or prompting or encouraging to walk, it depends on how much reminding, prompting or encouragement they need. There are 2 rates.

Lower rate

If the child is 5 years old or over and **any** of the following apply

- if the child can walk, but needs someone with them to make sure they are safe
- if the child can walk, but needs someone with them to help them find their way around in places they do not know well.

Remember that all children need some help and supervision when they are out of doors. The child you are claiming for must need **more** help or supervision than other children of the same age who do not have their particular problems.

Higher rate

If the child is 3 years old or over and **any** of the following apply

- if the child cannot walk at all.
- if the child can only walk a short distance before they feel severe discomfort
- if the effort of walking could threaten their life
- if the child has had both legs amputated above the ankle or through the ankle, or was born without legs or feet
- if the child is deaf and blind and they need someone with them when they are outdoors, they must have a large amount of hearing loss and sight loss. But they do not have to be totally deaf and blind
- if the child is severely mentally impaired with severe behavioural problems and needs help with personal care both day and night.

Help with personal care

Children can only get Disability Living Allowance for help with personal care if they are **3 months old or over**. And remember that all children need some help or supervision. The child you are claiming for must need **more** help or supervision than other children of the same age who do not have their particular problems. The rate of Disability Living Allowance that children get depends on the amount of help or supervision they need, and on the sort of help or supervision they need. For example, they may need someone to keep an eye on them, or look after them while they are on dialysis. Or they may need help with things like washing, dressing, using the toilet, communicating with other people, or something like this. If they need reminding or prompting or encouraging to do things, it depends on how much reminding, prompting or encouragement they need.

There are 3 rates.

Lowest rate

- if the child has care needs for some time during the day.

Middle rate

- if the child has care needs for some time during the day, or they are liable to get into danger or
- if the child has care needs for some time during the night.

Highest rate

- if the child has care needs for sometime during the day and night.

Special Rules

Some people can get Disability Living Allowance under the ***Special Rules***. These rules are explained on the blue sheet called **Notes about claiming under the *Special Rules*** in this claim pack.

About your child's National Insurance (NI) number

To link your child with the right NI account and keep that account secure, we need proof of your child's identity. It is your responsibility to give us the right information to link your child with the right account.

If you do not provide us with your child's NI number, there may be some delay in processing your application. If they do not have a NI number, or they have a temporary one beginning with the letters ZZ or TN, get in touch with your Social Security Office/Jobs & Benefits office/Pension Centre, they will help you to apply for or trace a NI number. See **Help and advice** on page 3 of these notes

About this claim form

- **The form** asks about the child and for some general information.
- Before you fill in **the form**, look under **Help and advice** on page 3 of these notes.
- Please send **the form** back to us as soon as you can.
- If you do not want to complete care and mobility needs on pages 6 to 27 we can send a doctor to visit your child.

If a doctor visits your child, you may prefer that the examination be undertaken by a doctor of the same sex and wherever possible we will try to accommodate your request. Where you feel that your child's examination can only proceed with a doctor of the same sex, for example on cultural or religious grounds, you must make this clear and appropriate arrangements will be made. Please note the examination is likely to be different from what you would expect from the child's own doctor. The doctor's examination is not to diagnose or discuss treatment of your child's medical condition, it is to assess how the condition affects your child and the doctor may not need to carry out a physical examination.

About medical examinations

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

When Medical Support Services receive a case for examination they will arrange for a doctor to visit and examine your child in your own home. They will send you a letter which includes the date that the doctor's visit will take place, details of the examination and complaints procedures.

The doctor who examines your child will provide a report of their opinion to Disability and Carers Service. The decision Maker will make a decision on your child's claim using the doctor's report and any other evidence or information available.

You can ask us for a copy of the report.

We may need to ask your doctor for further information about your child's condition. Doctors are asked to give details of the medical facts, and are not required to give an opinion on problems your child may have with daily living activities or eligibility for benefit.