



# Attendance Allowance for people of State Pension age or over

## Notes

**This booklet provides help and information to fill in the Attendance Allowance claim form.**

If you want help filling in the claim form:

- phone us on **0800 731 0122**. We can also arrange interpreters if you phone or visit us
- textphone **0800 731 0317** if you have speech or hearing difficulties. Our textphone service does not receive messages from mobile phones

Or you can contact an organisation like Citizens Advice.

This booklet is available in large print or braille.

Please phone **0800 731 0122**.

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# Things you will need before you fill in the claim form

Before you fill in the claim form, it will be useful to have ready some of the things listed below. Do not worry if you do not have all of them.

- Your National Insurance number. You can find this on your National Insurance number card, letters from the Department for Work and Pensions, or payslips
- The name of your GP and the address of your GP's surgery
- Details of your medication or an up-to-date printed prescription list if you have one
- Details of anyone you have seen about your illnesses or disabilities in the last 12 months, apart from your GP
- Your hospital record number (if you know it). You can find this on your appointment card or letter
- If you have been in a hospital, a care home or similar place – the dates you went in and came out, and the name and address of the place you stayed

You may also find it helpful to keep a record – write down a list of things you have needed help with or found difficult over one or two days. If you have good days and bad days, or your disability varies over time, you may want to keep a record of your needs over a good day and over a bad day. Start from the time you get up in the morning, through 24 hours, to the time you get up the following morning. You can send in the record with your form if you want to.

You do not have to fill in the form in one go. Take your time so that you can describe all the help you need.

## How to fill in the claim form

Please use black ink to fill in the form. Do not worry if you are not sure how to spell something or you make a mistake. If you want to correct a mistake, please cross it out with a pen – do not use correction fluid.

# What is Attendance Allowance and can I get it?

Attendance Allowance is to help with extra costs if you have a disability severe enough that you need someone to help look after you.

You may get Attendance Allowance if:

- you are State Pension age or over when you make your claim
- you cannot get Disability Living Allowance
- you cannot get Personal Independence Payment
- your disability means that you need help with your personal care (see page 5) or you need someone to supervise you for your own or someone else's safety (see page 5), and
- you have needed that help for at least 6 months

You may not think of yourself as disabled, but if you have a health condition or illness that means you need the type of help we tell you about in these notes, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance.

- Your disability may be physical, or you may have mental-health problems, learning difficulties, sight, hearing or speech difficulties.
- Attendance Allowance is not usually affected by your income or savings (but, if you get Constant Attendance Allowance with another benefit, this will be paid instead, or reduce the amount of your Attendance Allowance)
- Attendance Allowance is not taken off other benefits and tax credits you may get
- You do not usually need to have paid any National Insurance contributions to claim Attendance Allowance
- You do not have to pay tax on the Attendance Allowance you get
- If you get Attendance Allowance, you may get extra money with other benefits (see page 11)

Even if you are not actually getting the help you need, you can still get Attendance Allowance.

If you are under State Pension age, you may be able to get Personal Independence Payment instead. Contact the Personal Independence Payment enquiry line on **0800 121 4433** if you want to ask us about a Personal Independence Payment.

You can find out more about Attendance Allowance online at **[www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance)** or by phoning **0800 731 0122** – see **page 1**.

# What do ‘help with personal care’ and ‘supervise’ mean?

‘Help with personal care’ means day-to-day help with things like:

- washing (or getting into or out of a bath or shower)
- dressing
- eating
- going to or using the toilet, or
- telling people what you need or making yourself understood (if you have a problem, such as learning difficulties, that makes this hard)

‘Supervise’ means that you need someone to watch over you to help you avoid substantial danger to yourself or other people.

This could mean:

- when you take medicines or have treatment
- keeping you away from danger that you may not know is there
- avoiding danger you could face because you cannot control the way you behave, and
- stopping you from hurting yourself or other people

You may need help with personal care or supervision because you:

- find it hard to move your arms or legs or have no control over them
- get breathless easily or are in pain, or
- have behaviour difficulties, mental-health problems, or you get confused

## When can I claim Attendance Allowance?

You can normally only get Attendance Allowance when you have needed help for 6 months (unless you claim under the special rules – see **page 8**). If you claim straight away, we will deal with your claim as soon as possible.

# How is Attendance Allowance worked out?

There are 2 rates of Attendance Allowance:

- lower rate, and
- higher rate

The rate you get is based on how much help you need.

## **Lower rate of Attendance Allowance**

You may get the lower rate of Attendance Allowance if you need:

- help with personal care frequently throughout the day
- help with personal care during the night
- someone to supervise you continually throughout the day to help you avoid substantial danger
- someone to watch over you at night to help you avoid substantial danger, or
- someone with you when you are on dialysis

## **Higher rate of Attendance Allowance**

You may get the higher rate if you need:

- help with personal care or someone to supervise you throughout the day and also during the night

You may also be able to get this rate if you claim under the special rules (see page 8).

There are fixed amounts of money for Attendance Allowance. You can find the current rates online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

# How your disabilities affect you

You may not think of yourself as disabled, but if you have a health condition or illness that means you need the sort of help we tell you about in these notes, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance.

We know that disabilities can affect people more on one day than another – they have good days and bad days. We know that your disability may vary over a period of time. Please try to tell us as much as you can about how your disability varies.

We also know that help needed during the day and help needed during the night can be different. There are separate questions for you to tell us about the different sort of help you might need.

# Medical examinations

If we cannot get a clear picture of how your illnesses or disabilities affect you, we may ask a health care professional to examine you. Medical Services, who arrange medical examinations for us will contact you if an examination is required.

These notes give you more help and advice with some of the questions in the claim form

**Question 07 If you are not British please send us your passport, travel documents and any other letters you have from the home office.**

If you are Swiss or a national of any of the EEA countries listed below and you were living in the United Kingdom (UK) **before 1 January 2021** you **do not** need to send us anything.

- Austria,
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark (but not the Faroe Islands and not Greenland)
- Estonia
- Finland (but not the Aland Islands)
- France (including Corsica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion and French Guiana but not Monaco)
- Germany
- Gibraltar
- Greece (Including Crete and the Greek Islands)
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Republic of Ireland
- Italy (including Sicily, Sardinia and Elba, but not Vatican City and San Marino)
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain (including the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla)
- Sweden

**Question 08 Do you normally live in Great Britain?**

To be able to get Attendance Allowance you normally have to have lived in the UK for 2 years out of the last 3 and not be subject to immigration control. You may be able to meet this condition if you are, or have been, living in a European Economic Area (EEA) state or Switzerland and are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement.

These rules do not apply if you are terminally ill and qualify under the special rules.

Also, if you have come to Great Britain from a country that is part of the EEA, or Switzerland and are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, then depending on your circumstances you may not have to wait for this period of time before you can get Attendance Allowance.

If you or a member of your family live in a country that is part of the EEA, or in Switzerland, then you may be able to get Attendance Allowance if the UK is responsible for paying you sickness benefits.

You can find more information about claiming Attendance Allowance when you live in a country that is part of the EEA, or in Switzerland, on our website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## Question **12** Special rules

We have special rules for people who are terminally ill. This means people who have a progressive disease and are not expected to live longer than another 6 months.

So that we can deal with your claim as quickly as possible, it is important that you send a DS1500 report with your claim. The notes below tell you how to get a DS1500 report.

If you do not have the DS1500 report by the time you have filled in the claim form, send us the claim form straight away. Please send the DS1500 when you can.

Getting Attendance Allowance under the special rules means:

- getting the higher rate of Attendance Allowance
- getting paid straight away (this means you do not have to wait until you have needed help for 6 months – but changes like those on page 10 of these notes may still affect how much money you get), and
- we deal with your claim 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 Attendance Allowance, but we will not tell them anything about the special rules.

If you are filling in this form as part of your job, you do not need to tell us your National Insurance number or date of birth at question 13.

### **How to claim under the special rules**

Please fill in the claim form. Tick the box at question 12 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.

### **How to get a DS1500 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 very quickly. Ask for the report in a sealed envelope if you do not want anyone to see it.



## **Question 18 About your illnesses or disabilities and the treatment or help you receive**

### **Consent**

We may need to contact your GP, or the people or organisations involved with you, for information about your condition(s) or treatment. This may include medical information.

This is so that we understand your current needs. You do not have to agree to us contacting these people or organisations but if you do not agree, we may not be able to check you can get the payments you are claiming.

## **Question 25 The aids and adaptations you use**

We want to know if you use any aids or adaptations to help you do things. For example:

- hoist, monkey pole or bed-raiser may help you get out of bed
- a commode, raised toilet seat or rails may help you with your toilet needs
- bath rails, a shower seat or a hoist may help you bath or shower
- a long-handled shoehorn, button hook, zip pull or sock aid may help you dress
- a stairlift, raised chair, wheelchair or rails may help you move about indoors
- a walking stick, walking frame, crutches or artificial limbs may help you get around
- special cutlery or a feeding cup may help you eat and drink, or
- a hearing aid, textphone, magnifier or braille terminal may help you communicate

Please tell us if you need help to use the aids or adaptations and, if you do, what help you get from another person.

## **Question 45 Being in hospital, a care home or a similar place**

By care home, we mean a home such as a residential care home, nursing home, hospice or similar place.

We need to know if:

- you are in a hospital, a care home or similar place when you make your claim, and
- the local authority or NHS pay anything towards the cost of your stay

If you are awarded Attendance Allowance when you are in hospital, a care home or a similar place, we cannot pay you until you come out. But if you are a private patient or resident, paying for your stay without help from public funds, we will be able to pay you.

We may still be able to pay you if you are claiming under the special rules and you are in a hospice.

## **Question 48 How we pay you**

### **If we pay you too much money**

We have the right to take back any money we pay that you should not have got. This may be because of the way the system works for payments into an account.

For example, you may give us some information, which means you should get less money. Sometimes we may not be able to change the amount we have already paid you. This means we will have paid you money that you should not have got. We will contact you before we take back any money.

## How DWP collects and uses information

When we collect information about you we may use it for any of our purposes. These include:

- social security benefits and allowances
- child maintenance
- employment and training
- investigating and prosecuting tax credits offences
- private pensions policy, and
- retirement planning

We may get information about you from other parties for any of our purposes as the law allows to check the information you provide and improve our services. We may give information about you to other organisations as the law allows, for example to protect against crime.

To find out more about our purposes, how we use personal information for those purposes and your information rights, including how to request a copy of your information, please see

**[www.gov.uk/dwp/personal-information-charter](http://www.gov.uk/dwp/personal-information-charter)**

# Help and advice about other benefits

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

- go online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
- contact Jobcentre Plus. The number is in the phone book look under Jobcentre Plus
- contact an advice service like Citizens Advice

## To find out about Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit

- Go online at [www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit](http://www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit) or [www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit](http://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit)
- Contact the Tax Credit Helpline
- Phone: **0345 300 3900**
- Textphone: **0345 300 3909**
- If you need a form or help in Welsh, phone **0300 200 1900**

## To find out about State Pension

- Go online at [www.gov.uk/new-state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/new-state-pension)

## To find out about Pension Credit

- Go online at [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit)
- Contact The Pension Service
  - Phone: **0800 99 1234**
  - Textphone: **0800 169 0133**

## Could you get Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is money that can help people over State Pension age top up their weekly income to a minimum amount. If you qualify for Pension Credit, you could also qualify for benefits like Housing Benefit, Council Tax support, Cold Weather Payments and help with the cost of NHS services. If you are aged 75 or over and get Pension Credit, you will also be able to get a free TV licence.

Go to [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit) to:

- see if you can claim Pension Credit
- use our online calculator to see how much Pension Credit you could get, and
- apply for Pension Credit online

## Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit

If you are claiming Attendance Allowance and someone cares for you, read the information sheet about Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit we have sent with this claim pack.

# What happens next

Write in the boxes below the dates we have stamped on page 1 of the form.

We received the request for this claim form on:

Please send the form back by:

Fill in the form and post it back to us.

Write the date you post your form to us in this box:

Do not send this Notes booklet back with your claim form.

We can send you this leaflet in other formats, such as large print.

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We have done our best to make sure that the information is correct as of April 2018. It is possible that some of the information may change over time.