

# Freedom of Information request 06/2013

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## Information request

1. Is it true that married couples are not entitled to receive the Pension Credit Severe Disability Premium, but that single people, cohabitees and civil partners are eligible to receive it?
2. If the answer to [1] is yes, how long has this difference of treatment been applicable to this particular benefit?
3. If the answer to [1] is yes, what is the reason for this difference of treatment?
4. Are there any other benefits which are available to cohabitees or civil partners, while not being available to married couples?

## DWP response

In Pension Credit, couples who are married or civil partners, and couples who live together as husband and wife or as civil partners are treated in the same way. There are two standard rates available through the Pension Credit guarantee credit element - one for single people and another for couples. Additional amounts are also available for those with a severe disability, provided they meet the qualifying conditions.

The extra amount for severe disability is intended as a contribution towards the cost associated with obtaining care in the home where there is no one else in the house who could reasonably provide that care.

If a customer is single, they may receive the extra amount if:

- they live alone, and
- they get Attendance Allowance or the middle or highest rate of Disability Living Allowance, and
- no-one is paid Carer's Allowance for looking after them.

If a customer has a partner, they may get the extra amount at a higher rate if:

- they both get Attendance Allowance or the middle or highest rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance, and
- no-one else lives with them (except in certain specific circumstances); and
- no-one is paid Carer's Allowance for looking after them.

If a customer has a partner, they may get the extra amount at a lower rate if:

- no-one else lives with them (except in certain specific circumstances), and either
- they both get Attendance Allowance or the middle or highest rate of Disability Living Allowance and someone gets Carer's Allowance for looking after one of them (but not both of them), or
- one of them gets Attendance Allowance or the middle or highest rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance and the other is blind and no-one is paid Carer's Allowance for looking after either of them.

Other social security benefits are available for couples, irrespective of whether they are married, in civil partnerships, or living together. Some are contribution-based, which are dependant on the National Insurance contribution record of an individual (regardless of their marital status). Some are income-related, which means that, if someone is a member of a couple (whether married, in a civil partnership or living together) we assess them as a couple and we will add their income and capital and their partner's income and capital together when working out their benefit entitlement.