

# Attendance Allowance

Benefit and support you may get if you are ill or disabled and aged 65 or over



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

This leaflet is no longer current.  
You can find up to date information on [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK)

# Introduction

This leaflet:

- explains what Attendance Allowance is
- asks some questions to help you decide if you may be able to get it, and
- tells you how to claim it.

This leaflet is for adults aged 65 or over.

If you are age 16 to 64 you may be able to get Personal Independence Payment instead.

## What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is a tax-free benefit to help you with the extra costs you may have because you are ill or disabled. The amount you get is based on the help you need as a result of your disability or condition.

It is not 'means tested', so having savings or other income won't affect whether you can claim. It will not usually affect any other benefits you may be getting.

## How is Attendance Allowance worked out?

There are 2 rates of Attendance Allowance:

- Lower rate, and
- Higher rate.

### Lower rate

You may get the lower rate if you need:

- help to care for yourself frequently throughout the day, or
- help to care for yourself at night, or
- someone to supervise you throughout the day so that you don't put yourself or other people in danger, or
- someone to watch over you at night so that you don't put yourself or other people in danger, or
- someone with you when you're on dialysis.

### Higher rate

You may get the higher rate if you need:

- help to care for yourself, or supervision, throughout the day and at night.

You may also be able to get this rate if you are terminally ill.

## When can I claim?

You can claim Attendance Allowance if you've needed help for at least 6 months.

However, we have special rules for people who are terminally ill. If you are terminally ill and are not expected to live for more than another 6 months, you can get the higher rate straight away.

To claim under these special rules, you'll need to fill in the benefit claim form and get a separate form DS1500 from your doctor, specialist or consultant to send with it.

Someone else can claim Attendance Allowance for a person who is terminally ill. The person who is ill doesn't have to know or give their permission.

## Questions to help you decide if you should claim Attendance Allowance

### Do you have difficulty, need prompting or need help with your personal care?

By this we mean day-to-day help with things like:

- getting in and out of, or settling in, bed
- getting washed or dressed
- using the toilet
- moving around indoors – this includes using stairs, getting in or out of any type of chair or wheelchair
- eating or drinking
- taking medication or having therapy – this includes oxygen therapy, injections, inhalers and coping with side effects
- communicating (such as hearing, speech, reading and writing)
- supervision to keep you safe – this includes being a danger to yourself or others, being at risk of neglecting or harming yourself, wandering or falling, being confused or having fits or blackouts, or
- dealing socially with other people.

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### **Are you in a care home?**

If you're in a care home when you claim, we won't usually pay Attendance Allowance until you leave. However, we may pay it if you're paying for all of your care home costs yourself and are not getting any help towards these costs from your local council or from public money.

### **Are you in hospital?**

If you're in hospital when you claim, we won't usually pay Attendance Allowance until you leave. However, we may pay it if you're a private patient and you're paying without help from the NHS.

### **Are you in a hospice?**

We may pay Attendance Allowance if you're claiming because you are terminally ill and you're in a hospice.

### **Do you live in Great Britain?**

To get Attendance Allowance you must normally live in Great Britain. In most cases you'll need to have spent a minimum of at least 2 out of the last 3 years in Great Britain before you can claim Attendance Allowance.

### **Do you live in an EEA country or Switzerland?**

In some circumstances, if you live in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland you may be able to claim Attendance Allowance.

Please contact the Exportability Co-ordinator and tell them where you are living and that you want to make a claim.

Their address is:

The Exportability Co-ordinator  
Room B201  
Blackpool Benefit Centre  
Warbreck Hill Road  
Blackpool  
FY2 0YE



Email: [exportability.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:exportability.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)



Phone: +44 1253 331044

**Note:** The European Economic Area is made up of the 28 member states of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK), plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

### **Have you been told by the Home Office or UK Border Agency that you cannot claim benefits because of your immigration status?**

You can find out by checking your passport, or documents you may have received from the Home Office.

You will not usually be able to claim Attendance Allowance if you're subject to immigration controls, although there are a small number of exceptions. For more information contact the Attendance Allowance Service Centre.



Phone: 0345 605 6055

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## How do I claim?

If you live in the UK, you will need to fill in a form to claim Attendance Allowance.

If you live abroad you will need to contact the Exportability Team, using the contact details mentioned earlier in this leaflet.

You can get the form in 2 ways.

### Online



You can visit us at:  
[www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities](http://www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities)

Through this website, you can:

- fill in a claim form on your computer to print out and post to us, or
- print out a blank claim form to fill in by hand and post to us.

We'll treat the date we receive your claim form as the date of your claim.

### By phone

You can call to get a claim form, and to arrange help to fill it in.



Phone: **0345 605 6055**  
Textphone: **0345 604 5312**

Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.

Tell us if you need the form in another format, such as large print or Braille.

If English is not your first language, you can use your own interpreter or we can provide one.

If you ask for a claim form, we'll treat the date of your phone call as the date you claimed, as long as you send the form back within 6 weeks.

## Call charges

You can use the **0845** code to call any of our **0345** numbers. Check with your phone company which code is cheaper for you.

You can ask us to call you back if you're concerned about the cost of the call.

## Textphones

Our textphone numbers are for people who cannot speak or hear clearly. If you don't have a textphone, you could check if your local library or citizens advice bureau has one. Our textphones don't receive text messages from mobile phones.

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## Important information about this leaflet

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance.

We have done our best to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct as of April 2014. It is possible that some of the information is oversimplified, or may become inaccurate over time for example because of changes to the law.

You can find more information about benefits and pensions online.



For benefits information go to:  
[www.gov.uk/browse/benefits](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits)



For pensions information go to:  
[www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension)

We aim to provide a high quality of service to all our customers. You can find out more in our customer charter at [www.dwp.gov.uk/about-dwp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/about-dwp)