



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Get help from Maternity Allowance

**Easy  
Read**



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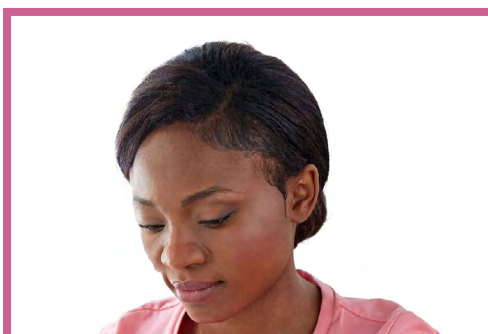
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# 1

## Introduction



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

Maternity Allowance is a benefit from the Department for Work and Pensions.



It is paid to:

- Pregnant people
- People who have recently given birth and cannot get Statutory Maternity Pay from work, or are self-employed.



The amount of Maternity Allowance you get depends on your circumstances.



This information tells you:

- What Maternity Allowance is
- Who can claim
- How to claim.



# 2

## Statutory Maternity Pay



If you work for an employer, you may get Statutory Maternity Pay instead of Maternity Allowance.

Statutory  
Maternity  
Pay

Maternity  
Allowance



You cannot get both of these at the same time.

**To get Statutory Maternity Pay you must:**



**26 Weeks**



- Have worked for your employer for at least 26 weeks



- Have earned on average at least £120 a week (during certain weeks)



- Still be employed by the same employer 15 weeks before the week your baby is due.



If you are unsure if you can get Statutory Maternity Pay, talk to your employer as soon as possible.

## Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

### If you are an employer

You must fill in this form when your employee is not entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), or when you cannot continue paying SMP. Fill in all the parts of the form.

The information you give in this form will help Jobcentre Plus to decide on your employee's claim for Maternity Allowance.

When you have completed this form, you must give the form to the employee together with the original Maternity Certificate MAT B1 that your employee gave you. She can then make a claim for Maternity Allowance.

For more information about SMP go to [www.gov.uk/employers-maternity-pay-leave](http://www.gov.uk/employers-maternity-pay-leave)

Or you can contact HM Revenue & Customs Employer helpline on 0300 200 3200.

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If your employer cannot pay you Statutory Maternity Pay, they must give you a form called **SMP1**.



The SMP1 explains why you cannot get Maternity Pay from your employer.



You must keep your SMP1 safe.

The Department for Work and Pensions need to see it.

For more information about Statutory Maternity Pay, go to [www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave](http://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave)



# 3

## Maternity Allowance



Maternity Allowance is usually paid if someone is pregnant and:

- Are self-employed
- Have recently stopped working
- Are employed but their employer cannot pay them Statutory Maternity Pay.



Your Maternity Allowance claim is decided on the work you have done during your **Test Period**.



### Explaining what is a Test Period

Your **Test Period** is the 66 weeks **before the week** your baby is due.



You can use our online calculator to find out your Test Period dates.

For more information about calculating your Test Period, go to [secure.dwp.gov.uk/check-your-maternity-allowance-dates/date-baby-due/](https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/check-your-maternity-allowance-dates/date-baby-due/)



**66 Weeks**



You will need to include your Test Period dates in your claim form.



**26 Weeks**



You need to have worked for at least 26 weeks of your **Test Period**.



This can be either employed or self-employed work or a mixture of both.



**Any  
26 Weeks**

You can pick any 26 weeks in your **Test Period**.

They do not have to be one after the other.



You need to have earned £30 or more in at least 13 of those 26 weeks.

For more information about your **Test Period**, go to [www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-allowance-claim-form](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-allowance-claim-form)

# 4

## Self Employed



If you are self-employed, you must have paid enough Class 2 National Insurance contributions to get the standard rate of Maternity Allowance.

**Lower  
Rate  
Maternity  
Allowance**



If you have not paid enough Class 2 National Insurance contributions, you may still receive Maternity Allowance but at a lower rate.



To get the standard amount of Maternity Allowance, you may need to make an early payment of National Insurance contributions to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).



HM Revenue  
& Customs

HMRC will send you a letter after you claim Maternity Allowance if this applies to you.



The letter will tell you how to make an early payment of National Insurance contributions.



# 5

## How to Apply



To apply for Maternity Allowance, you need to complete a form called **MA1**.

To get this online, go to:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-allowance-claim-form](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-allowance-claim-form)



You can either fill the MA1 form on your computer, mobile phone or tablet then print it off.



Or you can print a blank form and fill it in with a pen.



Send your completed form to:  
Wrexham Maternity Allowance  
Mail Handling Site A  
Wolverhampton  
WV98 1SU



If you cannot print the form, you can order one online.

To order a form online, go to:  
[secure.dwp.gov.uk/ask-for-a-maternity-allowance-claim-form/](https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/ask-for-a-maternity-allowance-claim-form/)



**Northern Ireland**

If you live in **Northern Ireland**, there is a different process to order an MA1 form.

Please go to:  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/maternity-allowance#toc-3](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/maternity-allowance#toc-3)

For more information if you live in Northern Ireland, go to:  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/maternity-allowance](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/maternity-allowance)



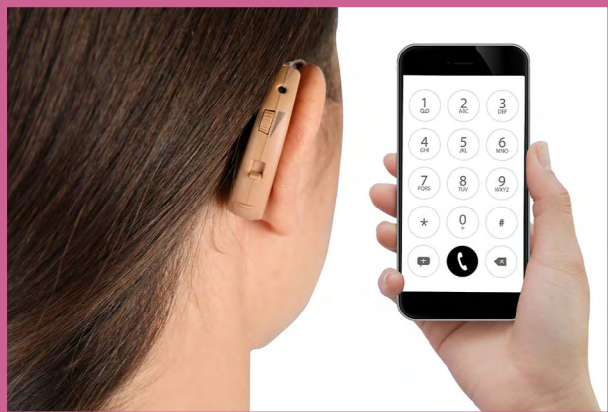
British Sign Language users can use the Video Relay Service.

Find out if you can use this service on the same webpage.

## Large print



If you need the MA1 in an alternative format such as Braille or large print, please contact Jobcentre Plus.



Telephone: **0800 055 6688**

Textphone: **0800 023 4888**



If you cannot speak or hear on the phone, you can use Relay UK:

**18001** then **0800 055 6688**

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## What to send in



To make a decision on your application, the Department for Work and Pensions need you to send some documents.

**MAT B1**

TO THE DOCTOR OR MIDWIFE - Please fill in this form in ink.

Name of patient  Certificate number

**Part A** **Part B**

Fill in this part if you are giving the certificate *before* the confinement.  
Do not fill this in more than 20 weeks before the week when the baby is expected.  
I certify that I examined you on the date given below. In my opinion you can expect to have your baby in the week that includes \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.  
Week means a period of 7 days starting on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday.

Date of examination \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Date of signing \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in this part if you are giving the certificate *after* the confinement.  
I certify that I attended you in connection with the birth which took place on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ when you were delivered of a child ( ) children.  
In my opinion your baby was expected in the week that includes \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

**Registered midwives**  
Please give your NMC Personal Identification Number and the expiry date of your registration with the NMC:

**Doctors**  
Please stamp your name and address here if the form has not been stamped by the Health Authority in whose medical list you are included.

Along with your completed **MA1** claim form, this can include:

- Proof of the date your baby is due to be born (such as a **MATB1** form from your healthcare provider)

### Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

#### If you are an employer

You must fill in this form when your employee is not entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), or when you cannot continue paying SMP. Fill in all the parts of the form.

The information you give in this form will help Jobcentre Plus to decide on your employee's claim for Maternity Allowance.

When you have completed this form, you must give the form to the employee together with the original Maternity Certificate MAT B1 that your employee gave you. She can then make a claim for Maternity Allowance.

For more information about SMP go to [www.gov.uk/employers-maternity-pay-leave](http://www.gov.uk/employers-maternity-pay-leave)

Or you can contact HM Revenue & Customs Employer helpline on 0300 200 3200.

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- An **SMP1** from your employer (if you cannot get Statutory Maternity Pay from them)





- Proof of your income such as payslips.

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## Our decision



**20  
Working  
Days**



Once you send all your documents, you should get a decision on your application within 20 working days.



If your application is successful, we will send you a letter confirming the details of your claim.



The letter will include:

- Your amount of Maternity Allowance
- How long you will get this for
- The last day of your employment (if this applies).

# 8

## If you do not agree with our decision



If you do not agree with our decision, you can ask us to look at it again.



When we look at the decision again, we call this a **Mandatory Reconsideration**.



A '**Mandatory Reconsideration**' means we will look at:

- The information you originally gave us
- Any new information you provide
- If there have been any changes in your circumstances.

We use this information to see whether we can change our decision.

# 1 month

You usually need to ask us to look at your claim again within **1 month** of the date on your decision letter.



If you would like to talk to us about your decision, please call the Maternity Allowance enquiry line:

Telephone: **0800 169 0283**

Textphone: **0800 169 0286**



If you cannot hear or speak on the phone, use Relay UK:

**18001** then **0800 169 0283**

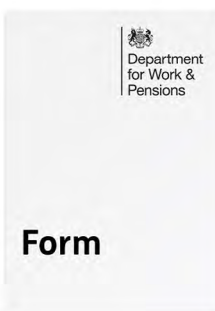


You can write a letter telling us why you do not agree with our decision.

Please send your letter to the address on your decision letter.



If you do not have your decision letter, contact the office where you applied for the benefit.



You can also fill in a **Mandatory Reconsideration** request form.

To get the form and learn more about a **Mandatory Reconsideration**, go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Search for **Challenge a decision made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)**.