

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)



If you are looking after someone who has a disability or illness and is aged from 16 to below their state pension age, they may be entitled to Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

This information covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, see our factsheet to consider applying for Adult Disability Payment instead.

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What is PIP?

PIP is a benefit paid to people who have daily living and/or mobility needs, to help with the extra costs of long-term illness or disability.

PIP has mostly replaced DLA (Disability Living Allowance) for people who are 16 or over – but under State Pension age. If you are eligible, PIP can be paid regardless of your income, savings or National Insurance contribution record and is a tax-free benefit. You can get PIP even if you are working or studying. If you are a carer who also has care needs, you can claim PIP for yourself and this will not affect your Carer's Allowance.

Getting PIP does not decrease other benefits; it may even increase them. If you have a carer, claiming PIP may help them to qualify for certain benefits (such as Carer's Allowance). PIP may also entitle you and/or your carer to further help with Council Tax and Housing Benefit. So having a benefits review if you are awarded PIP may be useful.

There are no restrictions on how you can spend your PIP money; you do not have to spend it on paying for the care that you need. However, your council or trust can take PIP into account when calculating how much you might need to pay for any care services you receive.

Note for Scotland: Adult Disability Payment (ADP) is replacing PIP in Scotland. See our factsheet and mygov.scot/personal-independence-payment-is-moving for more details. If you are currently receiving PIP or DLA, you do not have to apply – you will be contacted directly by Social Security Scotland and you will continue to be paid. Meanwhile, the Department of Work and Pensions will continue to be your point of contact for any change of circumstances and requests. To find out more, see: mygov.scot/adult-disability-payment

Who can claim PIP?

To qualify for PIP you must meet all the following criteria:

- You are aged from 16 to below your State Pension age (or if you are being reassessed, you were under 65 on 8 April 2013 in England and Wales or were under 65 on 20 June 2016 in Northern Ireland).
- You satisfy the daily living and/or mobility activities test (pages 5-12).
- You have satisfied the test for at least three months and are likely to continue to satisfy the tests for at least nine months after the three-month qualifying period. You can make your claim before the three months have passed, but you will not receive any payment until they have.
- You have no immigration conditions attached to your stay in the UK subject to some exceptions. If you have immigration restrictions on your stay in the UK, claiming benefits may affect your future right to remain in the UK. Seek specialist immigration advice before claiming – you can search for immigration specialists at find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk or lawsoc-ni.org/solicitors in Northern Ireland.
- You meet the residence and presence conditions (see pages 23-24).

▶▶ **Note:** You will be able to stay on PIP if you claimed it before you reached your State Pension age subject to any review. There are rules about the mobility component however.

▶▶ **Note:** If you are terminally ill, there are simpler rules that make it easier to apply – see page 16 for further details.

When can you claim PIP?

If you are aged from 16 to below your State Pension age and are not already getting DLA, you can claim PIP now.

If you are aged 16+ and were under 65 on 8 April 2013 (in England and

Wales) or were under 65 on 20 June 2016 (in Northern Ireland) and are already getting DLA, then at some point you will be reassessed for PIP by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (Department for Communities in Northern Ireland). You will be asked to claim PIP instead. This will happen when one of the following conditions applies:

- you reach 16 years of age (unless you are a child and have been awarded DLA under the special rules for terminal illness)
- there is a reported change to your care or mobility needs
- you have a DLA fixed award due to expire, unless you were aged 65 or over on 8/4/13 (or 20/6/16 in Northern Ireland)
- you choose to claim PIP instead of your DLA.

▶▶ **Note:** DLA claimants do not need to take any action regarding their PIP re-assessment until they are told to do so by the DWP (or Department for Communities in Northern Ireland).

How much is PIP worth?

There are two components of PIP:

- a daily living component
- a mobility component.

Each component can be paid at either:

- **standard rate** – where your ability to carry out daily-living/mobility activities is limited by your physical or mental condition
- **enhanced rate** – where your ability to carry out daily-living/mobility activities is severely limited by your physical or mental condition.

	Standard	Enhanced
Daily living component	£72.65	£108.55
Mobility component	£28.70	£75.75

How is PIP assessed?

In order to qualify for PIP, you will have to score a certain number of points in relation to 12 activities. 10 of these activities assess daily living and two of these activities assess mobility.

Within each activity there is a set of ‘descriptors’ or tests. There is a range of points that can be scored based on whether you fit a descriptor within these activities. You can score points for more than one activity, but if more than one descriptor applies in any one activity, you will be awarded whichever descriptor gives you the most points.

You will be awarded points if the descriptor applies to you all of the time, or if you can show that a descriptor applies to you for more than half of the days within a 12-month period.

In order for a descriptor to apply to you, you must be able to carry out the activity it describes “reliably”, which means:

- safely – in a fashion that is unlikely to cause harm to yourself or to another person
- to an acceptable standard
- repeatedly – as often as the activity being assessed is reasonably required to be completed
- in a reasonable time period – no more than twice as long as the maximum period that a non-disabled person would normally take to complete that activity.

If you are unable to carry out the activity in the above manner, this descriptor will not apply to you, and you should move on to the next descriptor to see if that better suits your situation.

To be awarded the standard rate of the daily living component, you have to score at least 8 points from the 10 activities that assess daily living (activities 1-10). To be awarded the enhanced rate of the daily living component you have to score at least 12 points from the 10 activities that assess daily living (activities 1-10).

To be awarded the standard rate of the mobility component, you have to score at least 8 points from the two activities that assess mobility (activities 11-12). To be awarded the enhanced rate of the mobility component, you

have to score at least 12 points from the two activities that assess mobility (activities 11-12). You can learn more about the criteria and filling in the forms on the Citizens Advice website.

Assessment criteria

Below are the 12 activities, and the range of descriptors within each activity.

Daily Living Activities

Activity 1 – Preparing food

This activity is not a reflection of your cooking skills, but instead looks at the impact of your health condition on your ability to carry out the tasks required to cook a simple meal and whether you need any support. It assesses your ability to open packaging, peel and chop food, serve food, and use a microwave oven or cooker hob to cook or heat food. A simple meal is a cooked one-course meal for one person from fresh ingredients.

A	Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
C	Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave. (For example, this may apply if you cannot safely use a cooker hob and hot pans.)	2
D	Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
E	Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	4
F	Cannot prepare and cook food.	8

Activity 2 – Taking nutrition

This activity considers your motivation and ability to be nourished. This covers cutting food into pieces, transferring it to the mouth, chewing and swallowing or the use of therapeutic sources. (A therapeutic source means parenteral or enteral tube feeding using a rate-limiting device such as a delivery system or feed pump.)

A	Can take nutrition unaided.	0
B	Needs: - To use an aid or appliance to be able to take nutrition; or	2

	- Supervision to be able to take nutrition; or - Assistance to be able to cut up food.	
C	Needs a therapeutic source to be able to take nutrition.	2
D	Needs prompting to be able to take nutrition.	4
E	Needs assistance to be able to manage a therapeutic source to take nutrition.	6
F	Cannot convey food and drink to their mouth and needs another person to do so.	10

Activity 3 – Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition

This activity considers a person's ability to: 1) take medications appropriately that are prescribed by a registered nurse, doctor or pharmacist, 2) monitor and detect changes in a health condition, and 3) manage therapeutic activities that are carried out in a domestic setting that are prescribed or recommended by a registered doctor, nurse, pharmacist or healthcare professional regulated by the Health Professions Council. Examples of therapy include using an oxygen mask or dialysis machine or physiotherapy as prescribed by a doctor. Aids or appliances could include using dosette boxes or pill boxes or reminder alarms to manage medication.

A	Either: - Does not receive medication or therapy or need to monitor a health condition or; - Can manage medication or therapy or manage a health condition unaided.	0
B	Needs any one or more of the following: - to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage medication; - supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage medication - supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to monitor a health condition.	1
C	Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes no more than 3.5 hours a week.	2
D	Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 3.5 but no more than 7 hours a week.	4
E	Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 7 but no more than 14 hours a week.	6
F	Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 14 hours a week.	8

Activity 4 – Washing and bathing

‘Washing’ means cleaning one’s whole body, including removing dirt and sweat. ‘Bathing’ means getting into and out of either a standard bath or shower.

A	Can wash and bathe unaided.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe.	2
C	Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe.	2
D	Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair or their body below the waist.	2
E	Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower.	3
F	Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist.	4
G	Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body.	8

Activity 5 – Managing toilet needs or incontinence

Toilet needs means the ability to get on and off the toilet, evacuation of the bladder and bowel, and cleaning yourself afterwards. Managing incontinence means the ability to manage evacuation of the bladder and/or bowel including using collecting devices and cleaning yourself afterwards. If you use a catheter and/or collecting device, this is considered as incontinence for the purposes of this activity.

A	Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence.	2
C	Needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs.	2
D	Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs.	4
E	Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel.	6
F	Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel.	8

Activity 6 – Dressing and undressing

This activity considers your ability to put on and take off culturally appropriate, un-adapted clothing that is suitable for the situation.

A	Can dress and undress unaided.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be dress or undress (For example, suitable aids could include modified buttons, zips, front-fastening bras, Velcro fastenings and shoe aids).	2
C	Needs either: – prompting to be able to dress, undress, or determine appropriate circumstances for remaining clothed or – prompting or assistance to be able to select appropriate clothing.	2
D	Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their lower body.	2
E	Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their upper body.	4
F	Cannot dress or undress at all.	8

Activity 7 – Communicating verbally

Basic verbal information is information conveyed in a simple sentence. Complex verbal information is information conveyed in either more than one sentence or one complicated sentence.

A	Can express and understand verbal information unaided.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear.	2
C	Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information.	4
D	Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information.	8
E	Cannot express or understand verbal information at all, even with communication support.	12

Activity 8 – Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words

Basic information is signs, symbols or dates. Complex information is more than one sentence of written or printed standard size text – for example, text found in utility bills and bank statements. For the purposes of this activity, accessing information in Braille is not considered as reading.

A	Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses.	0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance, other than spectacles or contact lenses, to be able to read or understand either basic or complex written information.	2
C	Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information.	2
D	Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information.	4
E	Cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all.	8

Activity 9 – Engaging with other people face to face

When considering whether you can engage with others, considerations should be given to whether you can engage with people generally, not just people you know well.

A	Can engage with other people unaided.	0
B	Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people.	2
C	Needs social support to be able to engage with other people.	4
D	Cannot engage with other people due to such engagement causing either: - overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant; or - the claimant to exhibit behaviour which would result in a substantial risk of harm to the claimant or another person.	8

Activity 10 – Making budgeting decisions

Simple budgeting decisions are those that are involved in activities such as calculating the cost of goods and change required following purchases. Complex budgeting decisions are those that are involved in calculating household and personal budgets, managing and paying bills and planning future purchases.

A	Can make complex budgeting decisions unaided.	0
B	Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make complex budgeting decisions.	2
C	Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make simple budgeting decisions.	4
D	Cannot make any budgeting decisions at all.	6

Mobility activities

Activity 11 – Planning and following journeys

This activity considers the barriers you may face that are related to a mental, cognitive or sensory ability. Environmental factors (such as being unable to cope with crowds or loud noises) may be considered.

A	Can plan and follow the route of a journey unaided.	0
B	Needs prompting to be able to undertake any journey to avoid overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.	4
C	Cannot plan the route of a journey.	8
D	Cannot follow the route of an unfamiliar journey without another person, assistance dog, or orientation aid.	10
E	Cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.	10
F	Cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, assistance dog, or an orientation aid.	12

Activity 12 – Moving around

This activity considers your physical ability to move around without severe discomfort such as breathlessness, pain or fatigue.

A	Can stand and then move more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided.	0
B	Can stand and then move more than 50 metres, but no more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided.	4
C	Can stand and then move unaided more than 20 metres, but no more than 50 metres.	8
D	Can stand and then move using using an aid or appliance more than 20 metres, but no more than 50 metres.	10
E	Can stand and then move more than 1 metre, but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided.	12
F	Cannot either aided or unaided: – stand; or – move more than 1 metre.	12

Aids and appliances

Aids and appliances can include those that are normally used and those

that can ‘reasonably be expected’ to be worn or used. ‘Reasonably be expected’ will take into account issues of availability, cost and cultural considerations.

Aids and appliances are devices that improve, provide or replace your impaired physical or mental function and include prosthesis. They can include non-specialised aids such as an electric can opener, or electric toothbrushes, provided they are needed because of the disability as opposed to being used by preference. Not all devices are included though. For example, sat navs are not included unless they are specifically designed to help with a disability.

Assistance, prompting and supervision

Assistance is support that requires the presence and physical intervention of another person, including doing some but not all of the activity in question.

Prompting is support provided by explaining, reminding or encouraging you to undertake or complete a task but not physically helping you.

Supervision is a need for the continuous presence of another person to ensure your safety. There must be evidence that the risk would be likely to occur in the absence of such supervision, but the risk could be infrequent such as an occasional seizure.

Variable and fluctuating conditions

Conditions will be looked at over the ‘required period’ (which means looking backwards to the three months before your date of claim, and looking forwards to the nine months after your date of claim). Points will be awarded if the descriptor applies on more than 50% of the days over that 12 month period. Furthermore, where you satisfy different descriptors, the descriptor that is applicable to you will be:

- where one descriptor is satisfied over 50% of the days in the required period, that descriptor
- where two or more descriptors are satisfied over 50% of the days in the required period, the descriptor that scores the highest number of points
- where no descriptor satisfies 50% of the days in the required period, but two or more descriptors (other than ones that score zero points) added together do, then the descriptor satisfied for the greatest proportion of days.

How to claim PIP

Making an initial claim

If possible, it is usually quicker to start your claim by phone. If you are awarded PIP from the day you called them. Paper claim forms are also available (form PIP1) which can be submitted by post but the process takes longer. You can start by sending a letter to: Personal Independence New Claims, Post Handling Site B, Wolverhampton, WV99 1AH.

England, Wales and Scotland

To start a new claim for PIP, you should telephone the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on **0800 917 2222** (textphone 0800 917 7777).

Scotland

If you have a new claim, you will need to claim Adult Disability Payment instead. Call Social Security Scotland on **0800 182 2222** or apply online: socialsecurity.gov.scot/benefits If you're a British Sign Language user, you can download an app to contact Social Security Scotland by video relay: <https://contactscotland-bsl.org>. You can also see our factsheet for more details at carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-if-you-are-disabled-ill-or-injured/adult-disability-payment.

Northern Ireland

To start a new claim for PIP, you should telephone the PIP Centre on **0800 012 1573** (textphone 0800 587 0937).

Claiming by phone

The phone call can be made by someone else but they will need to be with you. The phone call sets the date of the claim. You may also be able to add someone to a conference call (this cannot be done if you use textphone).

The information you will need for this phone call is:

- your full name and date of birth
- your address and telephone number
- your National Insurance number
- your bank or building society account details
- your GP or other health professional's details

- details of any recent stays in hospitals, care homes or hospices
- details of any time you've spent out of the country
- nationality or immigration status
- if you are terminally ill, you will need to discuss your condition during this initial claim.

The DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) will then check if you meet the basic eligibility conditions. If you meet these, they will check if you would prefer to be sent the '*How your disability affects you*' form (PIP2) by email or by post. If you are being assisted by a local advice agency, check which method they would prefer. If you don't meet the criteria, you will be sent a disallowance letter, but you can challenge this if you think it's wrong. We will cover this in more detail further on.

▶▶ **Note:** If you are terminally ill, you will not have to complete the '*How your disability affects you*' form and will not need a face-to-face consultation – see page 16 for further information.

How your disability affects you (PIP2)

This form will be sent to you if you're eligible via a link in an email unless you need it to be posted. It will ask for information about how your condition affects you. Additional evidence can be submitted with this form including any letters or reports from healthcare professionals involved in your care. On the form, there is a section for 'additional information'. In this section, carers, friends or family can also provide information. It does not have to be filled in if you feel like you have included everything in the rest of the form.

You have one month to return the completed '*How your disability affects you*' form. If you post it, it's a good idea to ask the Post Office for free proof of postage. Failure to return the form without good cause can result in the claim being terminated so don't delay. Any evidence you're waiting for can be forwarded on later. If you are unable to complete the form within the given timescales, you should contact the DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) by phone to ask for an extension. If the form has not been received and the DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) have identified that you need additional support, you may be invited to a consultation.

Tips for completing the claim form

- The form is quite lengthy and detailed so take your time to complete it and note that you don't have to complete it all in one go.
- Look at the 12 activities and work out which tests you satisfy before you fill in the form. It may be a good idea to ask your carer to do the same to make sure that you don't miss anything out.
- What matters is whether you need the help, not whether you are already getting it.
- If you are not sure about how much help you need, or how long things take, keep a diary for a week or so. This would be particularly useful with fluctuating conditions.
- If you are applying for the 'moving around' activity (activity 12), try measuring how far you can walk, how long it takes you to walk that far and how it feels before you fill in the form.
- Evidence is important. It is a good idea to collect evidence and submit it either with the claim pack or as soon as you can afterwards. This might include a report from an occupational therapist or consultant, information from your doctor or support worker, or a statement from a carer, friend or family member. Check this with an adviser if possible.
- Keep a copy of your form and any evidence you send.
- Your local advice centre may be able to offer support with filling in the form or condition specific charities can often offer helpful tips.
- Carers UK has a page with further support: carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/filling-in-forms/

▶▶ **Note:** You should ask for help to complete the claim form from a local advice agency – see the Further Help page for contact details.

Assessment

The form and any additional information are then sent to a health professional. If there is enough information, the assessment can be completed at this stage but most people will be asked to attend a consultation.* It is important to make it to the appointment (or provide a good reason if you are unable to in advance if possible); otherwise your claim may not be proceeded with. After the consultation, the health

professional will then send a report to the decision maker.

▶▶Note: *If you are terminally ill, you will not need to attend a consultation – see below for further information.

If you have a terminal illness

Special rules allow people who are terminally ill to get help quickly. You are considered to be terminally ill if you have a progressive illness that is likely to limit your life expectancy to six months or less. It is impossible to say exactly how long someone will live and some people who receive PIP under these rules live much longer than six months.

Under these special rules, you do not have to satisfy the qualifying period. (The qualifying period means that you have had the disability or ill health for at least three months, and are likely to have the disability or be in ill health for a further nine months.) You also do not have to have been present in Great Britain for 104 out of the last 156 weeks before claiming – you only need to be present at the time of claiming.

If you are claiming PIP under these rules, the claim should include an SR1 medical report form, which is available from your GP or consultant. You (or the person making the claim on your behalf) can contact the PIP office and ask for an email address that your doctor or consultant can use to submit the completed form or they can send it by post to the PIP benefits office. Don't delay your claim by waiting for the SR1 report – it can be sent on later.

You will not have to complete the *How your disability affects you* form and you will not need a separate consultation. Instead, you or the person claiming on your behalf will be asked some extra questions, whilst you are on the phone, about your condition and how it affects your ability to get around.

You will automatically qualify for the enhanced rate of the daily living component. However, the payment of the mobility component will depend on whether you need help to get around, and if you do, how much help you need.

The way to make a claim if you have a terminal illness is by phone on **0800 917 2222** (England and Wales) or **0800 012 1573** (Northern Ireland). In Scotland, see our Adult Disability Payment factsheet.

The phone call can be made by someone supporting you without you needing to be present. However, you should be told about the claim because the DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) may need to contact you to verify your details and they will send notifications and any payment to you.

What happens if you already get Disability Living Allowance (DLA)?

What happens if an adult is claiming DLA?

For existing DLA claimants that are transferred to PIP, the claim process is similar to the process described above except it will start by you being sent a letter informing you that your DLA is due to end and inviting you to claim PIP. There is no option to remain on DLA. (In Scotland, you would be moved to ADP.)

If you are transferring from an existing DLA claim to PIP you do not have to meet the PIP three month qualifying period. You will have 28 days from the date of the letter to claim PIP – generally this will be done by phone (although paper claim forms are also available). This is the initial claim only. If you do not claim within the 28 days, your DLA will be suspended. A letter will be sent saying that the suspension will be lifted if you claim within the next 28 days. If no claim is made the DLA claim is terminated. In these circumstances DLA will continue to be paid for a further 13 days following your next payday.

If the claim is made, the *How does your disability affect you* form will be sent to you. Failure to return the form will result in the claim being terminated. If the form has not been received and the DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) have identified that you need additional support, you may be invited to a consultation.

When the form is received, an independent assessor determines whether further evidence is needed and whether a consultation is required. The majority of people will have a consultation on the first claim. If this is missed without good cause, the PIP claim will be rejected.

A decision maker will then decide the claim. Once a decision has been made, DLA will continue to be paid for 28 days after your next payday until the PIP decision comes into force.

What happens if a young person under 16 is claiming DLA?

When a young person reaches their 16th birthday, they will need to transfer to PIP and make a new claim. (The exception is if DLA is being claimed under the special rules for terminal illness – in which case they will be invited to claim PIP at the end of their existing DLA award). The DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) will contact the parent or guardian before the young person's 16th birthday to make them aware of the change and establish if the young person needs an appointee. The young person's DLA payments will continue until a decision is made on their PIP claim. (In Scotland, you would be transferred to Child Disability Payment which is paid until the age of 18.)

The decision

The decision maker will review the report from the health professional, along with any other evidence, and make a decision. The DWP (PIP Centre in Northern Ireland) will send you a letter with a decision on the PIP claim and an explanation of how the decision was reached.

If you have been awarded PIP, the letter will explain the amount of the award, the length of the award and the reasons for making that decision. The letter should also include specific details about the PIP payments such as the date payments will start and their frequency.

Shorter-term awards of up to two years could be given, or longer-term awards of five or ten years could be given. Ongoing awards will be given in the minority of cases where needs are stable and changes are unlikely. However, all claimants will have their award periodically reviewed, regardless of the length of the award, to ensure that everyone continues to receive the most appropriate level of support.

If you have not been awarded PIP, the letter should include a full statement of reasons for the decision.

Challenging a decision

If you are refused PIP or it is awarded at a lower rate than you expected (including where the decision on PIP follows your transfer from DLA), you can ask the DWP (England and Wales) or the Department for Communities (DfC) (Northern Ireland) to look at the decision again. You must do this before you can go on to appeal. This is called a mandatory reconsideration.

If you still disagree once they have reviewed their decision, you can go on to lodge an appeal with the Tribunal Service (England and Wales) or the Appeals Service (TAS) (Northern Ireland). You will need to attach a copy of the mandatory reconsideration notice with the appeal.

It is important to challenge a decision, or get advice as quickly as possible, because there are time limits that generally mean you must take action within one month of the date of the decision you are challenging. If you fall outside of this time limit, it may still be possible to challenge the decision. For more information about appealing a benefit decision visit carersuk.org/appealsguide

How to make a complaint

If you are unhappy with a medical assessment, you can complain to the company that assessed you. You could look up their contact details and ask what their complaints policy is. If you are unhappy with the way your claim has been dealt with, eg long delays or lost forms, you should first contact the PIP enquiry line on **0800 121 4433** (England, Wales and Scotland) or **0800 587 0932** (Northern Ireland).

If you are unhappy with their response, you'll be asked if you want your complaint sent to a Complaint Resolution Manager. They aim to deal with complaints within 15 working days.

If you are still unhappy, you can then ask the Independent Case Examiner to investigate – they'll be impartial and this is free.

What to do if your circumstances change

Any change in your daily living or mobility needs may affect your entitlement to PIP or the amount you receive. You should let the DWP

(DfC in Northern Ireland) know about the change as soon as you can so that they can review your PIP award and make sure you are receiving the right support.

If you ask for a PIP award to be looked at again, there is always the risk that the award could be decreased rather than increased. Therefore it is always best to get help from a local advice agency before you contact the DWP (DfC in Northern Ireland). To find out about advice agencies in your area, please see 'Further help' section.

Going into hospital, a care home or a hospice

You, or someone acting on your behalf, should also tell the DWP (Social Security Agency in Northern Ireland) if you have been admitted to a hospital, a care home or a hospice, or have been imprisoned, as this may also affect your benefit. You can report a change in circumstance by contacting the PIP enquiry line on **0800 121 4433** (England, Wales and Scotland) or **0800 587 0932** (DfC in Northern Ireland).

Going into hospital

If you are aged 18+ when you go into hospital, both the daily living and mobility components of PIP are not payable after 28 days in hospital (including payments of the mobility component under an existing Motability contract). If you are under 18 when you enter hospital, your PIP can continue to be paid for the whole time you are there.

Going into a care home

The daily living component of PIP is not payable after the first 28 days in a care home unless you are completely self-funding. The mobility component of PIP can continue to be paid.

The linking rule

Any stays in hospital separated by 28 days or less are added together when working out when PIP should stop. For the daily living component of PIP, this also includes stays in a care home within the past 28 days.

Going into a hospice

PIP will generally still be payable if you are terminally ill and in a hospice. However, the Department of Work or Pensions or the Department of Communities (in Northern Ireland) need to be updated and informed that you are terminally ill in writing for this to happen.

Other help you may qualify for

Means-tested benefits and tax credits

If you are receiving means-tested benefits (such as Income Support, income related Employment and Support Allowance, income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction or Working Tax Credits) getting PIP may mean that you become entitled to an increase in your existing benefits or tax credits.

However, if you are receiving Universal Credit, getting PIP will not entitle you to any increase in benefit.

If you are responsible for a child or qualifying young person and they are awarded PIP, this might mean that you become entitled to an increase in your means-tested benefits or tax credits (such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction or Child Tax Credit).

If you or your partner gets means-tested benefits or tax credits, you should tell the offices which pay them that you or your child have been awarded PIP.

An award of PIP for you or for a child or qualifying young person can also mean that you become eligible for means-tested benefits or tax credits for the first time, so it would be a good idea to get a benefits check.

Any deductions that are being made from means-tested benefits because other adults share your household may be removed if you get PIP.

If you receive Universal Credit and the person you care for is awarded PIP and they live with you, any deduction that is made because they share your household may be removed.

Getting a benefits check

You can find out what benefits you are entitled to and how much you should be paid by getting a benefits check (see note below) or see 'Further help' section for details of advice agencies.

►► **Note:** You can get a personalised benefits check online, for example at: carersuk.org/benefits-calculator It will take about 20 minutes to complete. These online tools are not suitable for everyone. Special rules apply to some groups of people, for example students, people under 18, people in permanent residential care, UK nationals who live abroad and people who are not British or Irish citizens.

Exemption from the benefit cap

Households will be exempt from the benefit cap where you, your partner or a child or qualifying young person is entitled to PIP.

Help with transport costs

Motability

If you are awarded the enhanced rate mobility component of PIP (with at least 12 months to run), you may be able to apply to the Motability scheme. Through this scheme you can use your mobility component to lease or buy a car, wheelchair or scooter. If you're unable to drive and need help with paying for lessons or require help in getting a deposit for a car through the scheme, you may qualify for a grant. To find out more, contact Motability – see page 26.

Blue Badge scheme without further assessment

The Blue Badge scheme allows people with difficulties getting around (caused by a mental or physical issue) to park in parking restricted areas. For example, if you have a badge, you can park free and for any length of time at on-street parking meters and on-street pay and display areas.

In England and Northern Ireland, if you have been awarded 8 points or more in the 'moving around' activity of PIP or 10 points in the 'planning and following journeys' activity, you can get a Blue Badge. In Scotland and Wales, you can get the badge if you have been awarded 8 points or more in the 'moving around' activity or 12 points in the 'planning and following journeys' activity. If you're caring for a child who is two years or older and has physical or mental difficulties moving around, you can also apply for a badge. In Wales, you may qualify for a 'discretionary qualification':

www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/blue-badges-eligibility.pdf

The scheme is run through your local council or health and social care trust and you should contact them for further information. They will want to see all the pages of the PIP award letter.

Alternatively in Northern Ireland, contact the Blue Badge Unit on **0300 200 7818**. They will also have details of the other circumstances when, subject to an assessment, you may qualify for a blue badge.

Vehicle tax

You may be exempt from paying vehicle tax if you get the enhanced mobility component of PIP. You may also get a 50% discount on your vehicle tax if you receive the standard mobility component of PIP.

Public transport concessions

You may also be able to take advantage of special cards or discounted rates to help with the costs of using public transport, as well as seeking help for any accessibility needs you or family members have. You could contact your local council or health and social care trust in Northern Ireland for more information about this, as different local authorities will offer different types of benefits and schemes.

The Citizens Advice website also has lots of guidance and tips. Look up 'Help with the cost of public transport' on their website to explore options relevant to the nation in the UK where you live: citizensadvice.org.uk

Residence and presence

To satisfy the residence and presence tests you must meet both the following conditions:

- You must have been present in Great Britain (which for this purpose also includes Northern Ireland) for 104 weeks out of the 156 weeks before claiming (two out of the last three years).
- You must be habitually resident.

'Present' means physically present in Great Britain, although some people may be treated as being in Great Britain while abroad.

The past presence test does not apply to people recognised as refugees and their families or to those claiming under the special rules for terminal illness. They only need to have been present on the day they claim.

There are other situations where you may not have to meet the past presence conditions, but the rules in this area can be complicated and will depend on your circumstances. You can get more guidance and help from your local Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us or Advice NI in Northern Ireland: www.adviceni.net/.

The AIRE Centre can also provide advice on individual rights in Europe and can be contacted on **020 7831 4276** or by email at info@airecentre.org

The habitual residence test is a test to see if you normally live in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Republic of Ireland or the Isle of Man. The test will be applied if you have been living abroad. There is no precise legal definition of ‘habitual residence’. Relevant factors are where you normally live, where you expect to live in future, your reasons for coming to this country, the length of time spent abroad before you came here, and any ties you still have with the country where you have come from.

Further help

Our website contains a wealth of useful information on the financial and practical matters related to caring. Visit carersuk.org and click on “Help and Advice” in the main menu.

You can find details of your local carers’ organisation on our website at carersuk.org/local-support

For information and advice contact the Carers UK Helpline on **0808 808 7777** (Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm) or email advice@carersuk.org

Other organisations

The Appeals Service Northern Ireland

The service that handles the appeals process for benefit decisions in Northern Ireland.

w: nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/contacts-az/appeals-service-benefits-appeals

Citizens Advice or Advice NI (for Northern Ireland)

Provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice.

w: citizensadvice.org.uk or adviceni.net/ (Northern Ireland only)

HM Courts and Tribunals Service

To search for a court or tribunal in England or Wales, or a tribunal in Scotland.

w: gov.uk/find-court-tribunal

Independent Case Examiner

A free complaints review service for people who have made complaints about their claim for benefits. (UK wide)

w: gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-case-examiner

t: 0800 414 8529 (textphone: 18001 0800 414 8529)

Motability

Motability help people get mobile by exchanging their mobility allowance to lease a car, scooter or powered wheelchair. (UK wide)

w: motability.co.uk **t:** 0300 456 4566

NI Ombudsman

The government official responsible for dealing with complaints about state services. (Northern Ireland)

w: nipso.org.uk **t:** 0800 34 34 24 (textphone: 028 9089 7789)

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The government official responsible for dealing with complaints about state services. (England and Wales)

w: ombudsman.org.uk **t:** 0345 015 4033

Benefit helplines

Northern Ireland has three helplines for different purposes:

Benefit Enquiry Line - for general questions

t: 0800 220 674 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

Welfare Changes Helpline - for independent advice on benefits changes

t: 0808 915 4604

Make the Call - to check you're not missing out on benefits

t: 0800 232 1271 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

In Northern Ireland, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Carer's Credit are all administered by the Northern Ireland Disability and Carers Service:

The Disability and Carers Service

t: 0800 587 0912 (textphone: 0800 012 1574)

Attendance Allowance

(England, Wales and Scotland)

t: 0800 731 0122 (textphone: 0800 731 0317)

Carer's Allowance Unit

(England, Wales and Scotland)

t: 0800 731 0297 (textphone: 0800 731 0317)

In Scotland, for Carer's Allowance Supplement/Young Carer Grant/ Child Disability Payment/ Adult Disability Payment, contact:

Social Security Scotland

t: 0800 182 2222 (textphone: 0800 731 0317)

Disability Living Allowance

(England and Wales)

- If you were born on or before 8 April 1948:

t: 0800 731 0122 (textphone: 0800 731 0317)

- If you were born after 8 April 1948:

t: 0800 121 4600 (textphone: 0800 121 4523)

For Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance:

Jobcentre Plus

(England, Wales and Scotland)

New claims **t:** 0800 055 6688 (textphone: 0800 023 4888)

Existing claims **t:** 0800 169 0310 (textphone: 0800 169 0314)

Social Security or Jobs and Benefits Office

(Northern Ireland)

Details of local offices: **w:** nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-benefits-offices

New ESA claims **t:** 0800 085 6318 (textphone: 0800 328 3419)

Existing claims **t:** 0800 587 1377 (textphone: 0800 328 3419)

Pension Credit and Pension Service

(England, Wales and Scotland)

Pension Credit claim line: **t:** 0800 99 1234 (textphone: 0800 169 0133)

State Pension claim line: **t:** 0800 731 7898 (textphone: 0800 731 7339)

(Northern Ireland)

Pension Credit: **t:** 0808 100 6165 (textphone 0808 100 2198)

State Pension claim line: **t:** 0808 100 2658 (textphone: 0800 100 2198)

Personal Independence Payment

(England and Wales)

New claims **t:** 0800 917 2222 (textphone: 0800 917 7777)

Enquiry line **t:** 0800 121 4433 (textphone: 0800 121 4493)

Northern Ireland

New claims **t:** 0800 012 1573 (textphone: 0800 587 0937)

Enquiry line **t:** 0800 587 0932 (textphone: 0800 587 0937)

Tax Credits

(England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

t: 0345 300 3900 (textphone: 18001 0345 300 3909)

Universal Credit / New Style Employment and Support Allowance Helpline

(England, Wales and Scotland)

t: 0800 328 5644 (textphone: 0800 328 1344)

(Northern Ireland)

t: 0800 012 1331 (textphone: 0800 012 1441)

This factsheet is designed to provide helpful information and advice. It is not an authoritative statement of the law. We work to ensure that our factsheets are accurate and up to date, but information about benefits and community care is subject to change over time. We would recommend contacting the Carers UK Helpline or visiting our website for the latest information.

Please email us your feedback on this factsheet by sending your comments to info@carersuk.org
This factsheet was updated in April 2024. Next review due April 2025.

Carers UK Helpline

For expert information and advice about caring.

 0808 808 7777
(Monday to Friday 9am-6pm)

 advice@carersuk.org

Carers UK

20 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4LX
020 7378 4999
info@carersuk.org

Carers Wales

029 2081 1370
info@carerswales.org

Carers Scotland

0141 378 1065
info@carerscotland.org

Carers Northern Ireland

028 90 43 98 43
info@carersni.org

However caring affects you, we're here

Caring will affect us all at some point in our lives.

With your help, we can be there for the 6,000 people who start looking after someone each day.

We're the UK's only national membership charity for carers: join us for free at carersuk.org/join

We're both a support network and a movement for change.

Visit us at our website to join us, help us or access more resources: carersuk.org

**This information can be requested
in large print or as a text file.**