

# Carer Support Payment



Carer Support Payment has replaced Carer's Allowance in Scotland as the main benefit available for unpaid carers. If you are looking after someone for 35 hours a week or more, you may be eligible.

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## What is Carer Support Payment?

You may be able to apply for a benefit called Carer Support Payment if you are looking after someone and have lots of caring responsibilities. The current rate is **£86.45 a week or £374.62 a month** (2026/27). This amount is reviewed each year in April.

### Is this benefit similar to Carer's Allowance?

Yes, this is a very similar benefit to Carer's Allowance, but it is only available to residents in Scotland and it is paid by [Social Security Scotland](#).

### Can I receive Carer Support Payment alongside other benefits?

You can receive certain benefits at the same time as Carer Support Payment. It has replaced Carer's Allowance but for other means-tested benefits, Carer Support Payment will count as income so this may affect how much you receive. Overall, you would usually still be better off though because of extra amounts you can receive once you've qualified for Carer Support Payment. We will cover this later in the factsheet.

Carer Support payment can't be paid at the same time as some benefits such as the State Pension because they are seen as overlapping. However it may still be helpful to make a claim to receive what's called an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer Support Payment. We will explain this in more detail further on in the factsheet.

### Do my savings count?

Carer Support Payment is not a means-tested benefit. This means that when the decision is made about whether you are eligible, your savings and capital (or any partner's) are not considered. However, it's important to know that you can only be paid Carer Support Payment if any earnings you receive are under a certain capped amount – we'll explain this further on in the eligibility section.

### Would I have to pay tax on this extra money?

Carer Support Payment is taxable. However, as a carer, you would only have to pay tax if other combined sources of taxable income (such as an occupational or personal pension or part-time earnings) took you over the

threshold for paying income tax. Carer's Support Payment on its own is below this threshold.

### **What is Scottish Carer Supplement?**

This is an extra payment for carers who receive Carer Support Payment. It replaced Carer's Allowance Supplement in March 2026. The overall amount is the same but payments of Scottish Carer Supplement are spread over the year and are paid along with Carer Support Payment. For every week that you qualify for Carer Support Payment, you receive an additional £11.70 a week (2026/27).

This will not affect any other benefits you might be claiming so you don't have to notify other benefit offices. However, like Carer Support Payment, it is taxable. For more information, visit our website: [Carer's Allowance Supplement/ Scottish Carer Supplement in Scotland | Carers Scotland](#)

### **If you're a young carer**

If you are between 16 and 19 and don't qualify for a Scottish Carer Supplement or Carer Support Payment, you could see if you qualify for a Young Carer Grant. It's not possible to claim a [Young Carer Grant](#) and Carer Support Payment at the same time, but you can apply after you've been paid the Young Carer Grant. Find out more about [support that's available for young carers](#).

### **Carer Additional Person Payment (CAPP)**

This new payment was introduced in March 2026 for carers who care for more than one person.

To qualify for CAPP, you must be receiving Carer Support Payment and be providing at least 20 hours of care a week for the additional person you're looking after. You can't claim this payment for supporting the person you receive Carer Support Payment for, but a payment will be made for every additional person you care for.

The rate for 2026-27 is **£10.40 a week** for each additional person you care for for 20 hours or more. Read more on this page:

[Increased support for carers - gov.scot](#).

## Who can claim Carer Support Payment?

There are some specific conditions that you'll need to meet if you would like to claim this benefit. In summary, to qualify for Carer Support Payment, you need to meet **all** the following conditions:

- > You look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit.
- > You look after that person for at least 35 hours a week unpaid.
- > You are aged 16 or over.
- > You don't earn over **£204** a week (after deductions – explained below).
- > You need to meet certain requirements if you're a student.
- > You usually live in Scotland, meet the presence and residence conditions and are not subject to immigration control.

**Note:** If you've recently moved to Scotland from elsewhere in the UK, you will need to notify the Carer's Allowance Unit (England and Wales) or the Disability and Carers Service (Northern Ireland) and apply for Carer Support Payment with Social Security Scotland.

[Do you live in Scotland? - Eligibility checker for Carer Support Payment](#)

Next, we will explain each of the above conditions in more detail.

### You look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit

This means that the person you are looking after has to be receiving one of the following benefits (sometimes referred to as 'qualifying benefits'):

- > Adult Disability Payment (ADP) – the daily living component
- > Child Disability Payment (CDP) – middle or highest care rate

- > Attendance Allowance or Pension Age Disability Payment
- > Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance – middle or highest care rate
- > Personal Independence Payment – the daily living component
- > Constant Attendance Allowance – at or above normal maximum rate with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- > Constant Attendance Allowance – at or above the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension
- > Armed Forces Independence Payment.

▶▶ **Note:** If the person you're looking after doesn't receive any of these benefits, it's worth checking out if they might qualify. If they are awarded a qualifying benefit at the right rate, you may then be able to claim Carer Support Payment if you meet the other criteria. You could also ask for the Carer Support Payment award to be backdated if you make a claim within 13 weeks. Find out more on [mygov.scot/benefits](https://mygov.scot/benefits).

## You look after that person for at least 35 hours a week

The 35 hours can include:

- > time spent physically helping the person
- > time you spend 'keeping an eye' on the person and preventing them coming to harm
- > time spent doing practical tasks for the person, eg cooking
- > time taken doing practical tasks, even if you don't do them in the presence of the person, may also count (such as preparing or cleaning up for someone who visits you regularly for care).

You must provide at least 35 hours of unpaid care for every week you claim Carer Support Payment (the 35 hours can be at any time of the day or night). For more details about what might be included in the caring hours,

visit the [government website](#).

### **If you care for more than one person**

It's not possible to add together the time you spend caring for different people to make up the 35 hours. If you care for more than one person, you need to choose which person you claim for, as you can only receive one payment of Carer Support Payment. However if you also care for other people you may be able to claim Carer Additional Person Payment (see page 3).

### **If you share the responsibilities**

Similarly, if you share the caring role with another person, and you both provide at least 35 hours of care every week, only one of you can claim Carer Support Payment. You need to decide between you who should make the claim. The other person could seek advice about the benefits they can claim, and may be able to claim Carer's Credit for the time they are caring. See our online information page: [Carer's Credit | Carers UK](#).

### **What happens if they are caring for someone too?**

If the person you are looking after is also caring for someone else, you can both claim Carer Support Payment for looking after different people as long as you both meet the criteria. This also applies if you are caring for each other.

### **You are aged 16 or over**

You need to be 16 or older to claim Carer Support Payment. However if you're aged between 11 and 25, you can apply for a Young Scot Card for benefits and support. If you're between 11 and 18, you can sign up for a carer support package. See: [A Step by Step Guide on Signing Up for the Young Carers Package – Young Scot](#). In addition, if you're aged between 16 and 19, you might be entitled to extra money in the form of a [Young Carer Grant](#). For details of what other support is available for young carers, see [mygov.scot/help-if-youre-a-carer/extra-support-for-young-carers](https://mygov.scot/help-if-youre-a-carer/extra-support-for-young-carers).

## You don't earn over £204 a week (after deductions)

There's a limit on how much you can earn if you're doing paid work while also caring. You won't be eligible for Carer Support Payment if you earn more than £204 a week (after deductions).

If you are employed or self-employed and have fluctuating earnings due to the nature of your work, it is possible that your earnings may be higher than £204 on some weeks but below the earnings threshold overall. If this is the case, Social Security Scotland has the discretion to average out your earnings over a period which could be up to 26 weeks. You will need to be in contact with them to discuss your claim, provide payslips and keep them informed of any changes in your earnings.

### What are the deductions?

The following amounts are deducted from your gross weekly earnings (if you are in employment) or your profit (if you are in self-employment) before your earnings are taken into account for Carer Support Payment:

- > Income Tax
- > National Insurance
- > Pensions (**half** of any contribution you make towards a personal pension scheme)
- > Expenses incurred through work.

### What else might apply?

You might be paying someone to look after the person you care for so that you can work. This could include a child under 16 who you or your partner get Child Benefit for.

If this is your situation, you can also deduct payments from your earnings up to the value of half your earnings (after the above deductions if they apply). This only applies if the person is not a close relative or partner of the carer or the person being cared for. A close relative would be a parent, son, daughter, brother or sister.

**Do pensions count as earnings?**

Personal pensions and work pensions do not count as earnings and you can be paid Carer Support Payment in addition to these. Contact Social Security Scotland if you would like to know more details about this.

If you do receive taxable income, such as occupational or personal pensions or part-time earnings, you should inform the tax office about your Carer Support Payment, because it is a taxable benefit.

**Find out what else is considered in terms of earnings**

There are more details about what counts as earnings on the mygov.scot website: [If you work - mygov.scot](#).

**You need to meet certain requirements if you're a student**

To qualify you must be:

- > 16 or over and studying part-time (no more than 21 hours a week) or
- > 16-19 and studying in full-time advanced or higher education (Higher National Certificate level or above, but certain exceptions apply so seek advice from Social Security Scotland if you're unsure) or
- > 20 or over and studying full-time. At this age, the level of qualification doesn't matter.

**You live in Scotland**

**To receive Carer Support Payment, you need to be:**

- ordinarily resident in Scotland (you normally live in Scotland)
- habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (meaning you're living in the UK, Ireland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands). There are exceptions (eg, having refugee status or humanitarian protection), but generally, you need to have been habitually resident for at least one to three months and for the time being, intend to make the Common Travel Area your home. Seek advice if this might be an issue for you.

- present in the Common Travel Area for at least 26 weeks out of the last 52. This is called the past presence test. There are some exceptions to this, such as if you have refugee status or are caring for someone with a terminal illness. To find out more visit, ‘Who can apply for Carer Support Payment?’ – [mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot) and if you are unsure, seek further advice.
- not subject to immigration control. If your leave is subject to a ‘[no recourse to public fund condition](#)’, you should seek immigration advice **before** claiming Carer Support Payment.

For more information, visit [Citizens Advice Scotland](#) to see if you need to meet the rules about your residence and presence. If you are unsure or have been turned down because of these rules, seek further advice.

## If you live outside of Scotland

**You might still be able to apply for Carer Support Payment if you:**

- live in an EU country or Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein Gibraltar and the UK is the country responsible for paying benefits to you. To be entitled, you must have a genuine and sufficient link to Scotland and meet the other eligibility requirements for Carer Support Payment.
- have been posted abroad to serve in the UK Armed Forces, or as a UK Civil Servant or a family member has been. For more information visit the [government website](#).

This area can be complex so if you're not sure if you can receive Carer Support Payment because of where you live, it is a very good idea to seek further advice.

## Carer Support Payment and other benefits

### What are overlapping benefits?

You may have heard the term ‘overlapping benefits’. This term describes certain benefits that cannot be paid in full at the same time even though you are eligible for both benefits. Carer Support Payment overlaps with the

following benefits:

- State Pension
- Contributory Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Maternity Allowance
- Bereavement or widow's benefits
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

If any of the benefits listed above are paid at a lower rate than the Carer Support Payment rate, you could be paid a small amount of Carer Support Payment on top of the other benefit you receive to make up the difference to the amount of Carer Support Payment (£86.45).

This also means that if you are getting the same rate or more than the amount of Carer Support Payment from one of the above benefits, you cannot be paid Carer Support Payment. However, even though you will not be paid it, you will have what is called an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer Support Payment. We will now explain why this is helpful.

### **How do I receive an 'underlying entitlement' and what does it mean?**

To receive an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer Support Payment, you still have to make a claim for Carer Support Payment and meet all the eligibility criteria. This is the case even if you can't be paid the benefit because you have a benefit that overlaps with it.

Having an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer Support Payment can be helpful as it can increase any means-tested benefits you are already getting or might mean you become entitled to those benefits for the first time. This is because extra amounts, known as the carer premium, carer addition or carer element, can now be included in the calculation for your means-tested benefits. We cover these in more detail below.

## Effect on other benefits (means-tested)

As mentioned before, if you are paid Carer Support Payment, it's worth noting that it will count as income for any means-tested benefits you're currently receiving or applying for and so that award decreases. Despite this, you will be better off because when your means-tested award is calculated, it will include an extra amount called the carer premium, carer addition or carer element. (This will be on top of your Carer Support Payment.)

The **carer premium** is an extra amount of money included in the calculation of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.

The **carer addition** is an equivalent amount paid with Pension Credit. The **carer element** is an equivalent amount paid with Universal Credit.

For this financial year (2026-27), the carer premium and carer addition are both worth about £48.15 a week. The carer element is worth £209.34 a month (around £48.30 a week).

What this means in practice is that if you are paid Carer Support Payment and are already getting a means-tested benefit, your means-tested benefit will decrease slightly. However, overall, you will be better off because you will have the carer premium/ addition/ element included when the level of your award is calculated and you will also have a separate payment of Carer Support Payment coming in.

If you meet the criteria for Carer Support Payment (or would do so but for the fact that your earnings are too high), you can still get the carer element in Universal Credit even if you don't make a claim for Carer Support Payment. There are however other considerations such as your Class 1 National Insurance Credits and entitlement to the Scottish Carer Supplement and Carer Additional Person Payment, which are only available if you also receive Carer Support Payment.

We recommend that you contact a local advice agency or one of our Carers UK advisers for more guidance on which options could make you better off. There are a list of advice organisations from page 25. You can contact our advisers by emailing [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org).

When you're awarded Carer Support Payment or the underlying entitlement to it, let the relevant means-tested benefit department(s) know. Then the carer premium, carer addition or carer element can be included in your benefit calculation. The carer premium, carer addition or carer element can be backdated to the date your Carer Support Payment was backdated to. The contact details for the relevant benefit departments should be on any letters they have sent to you or you could look them up online.

If you're receiving the carer element of Universal Credit for a person you're looking after, it's not possible to receive Carer Support Payment for a different person but you may qualify for the Carer Additional Person Payment (page 3). On the other hand, if you are not already getting a means-tested benefit and are awarded Carer Support Payment or the underlying entitlement to Carer Support Payment, it would be worth arranging a free benefits check to see if you might be entitled to anything else. You can also contact our helpline if you're seeking clarity as the rules can sometimes seem confusing: [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org).

## **What about my State Pension – what are my options?**

While there is no upper age limit for claiming Carer Support Payment, payment of this benefit usually stops when you reach retirement age because a State Pension is likely to be paid instead (unless your State Pension is less than the amount of Carer Support Payment, in which case you could continue to be paid a small amount of Carer Support Payment). This is because of the 'overlapping benefits' rules explained earlier.

However, if you are on a low income you may still be able to get some extra money in recognition of your caring role, because you can still have an underlying entitlement to Carer Support Payment. This might mean that

you qualify for means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit for the first time or that the amount of any existing means-tested award you're receiving is increased. It is therefore worth getting a benefits check to see whether making a claim for Carer Support Payment and having the underlying entitlement would increase your income.

Even though you could ask to carry on being paid Carer Support Payment instead of getting your State Pension straight away (ie you could defer your pension), you will not build up any extra pension during that time. If you are considering deferring your pension, it's a good idea to seek financial advice. See the 'Further help' section.

▶▶ **Example:** Rachel, 67, looks after her husband, Saajid, 69, who gets Pension Age Disability Payment (£76.70 a week). They both get a State Pension (one of £130 a week and one of £120 a week) and as they have no other income or savings, they also get Guarantee Pension Credit of £113.25 a week.

Their total weekly income is £439.95 a week. So Rachel makes a claim for Carer Support Payment. She is told that she cannot be paid this as she is getting her State Pension which is more than Carer Support Payment, but that she does meet all the criteria so has an 'underlying entitlement'.

Rachel informs the Pension Credit Service department of this and asks for a carer addition (which is £48.15 a week) to be included in their Pension Credit award. Rachel and Saajid's income increases by £48.15 a week to £488.10. See breakdown:

- State Retirement Pension x 2 = £250
- Pension Age Disability Payment = £76.70
- Pension Credit (including carer addition) = £161.40

## Benefits of the person I'm caring for – will they be affected?

If you claim Carer Support Payment, the disability benefit of the person you are looking after will not be affected, and if they are getting a State Pension, this will not be affected either.

However, if the person you are looking after is getting certain means-tested benefits and you are paid Carer Support Payment, this could affect how much they get. For example, if they are getting the severe disability premium (or severe disability addition in Pension Credit) as part of their means-tested benefits, they will lose this if:

- you are paid Carer Support Payment or
- you receive the Carer's Element in your Universal Credit claim for supporting them.

The severe disability premium (or severe disability addition in Pension Credit) is currently worth £86.05 a week. It will be included if they meet all of the following:

- > They receive a qualifying disability benefit:
  - the middle or the higher rate of the care component of DLA or CDP
  - the daily living component of PIP or ADP (at either rate)
  - Attendance Allowance or Pension Age Disability Payment (at either rate) or Constant Attendance Allowance paid with the Industrial Injuries or War Pensions schemes or
  - Armed Forces Independence Payment.
- > They live alone (but there are exceptions, for example if they live with other people who all also receive a qualifying disability benefit).
- > No one is being paid Carer Support Payment or the carer element of Universal Credit for looking after them:
  - If you aren't getting Universal Credit and just receive the 'underlying entitlement' to Carer Support Payment, the person you are looking after **will not** lose their severe disability premium (or addition).
  - If you are getting Universal Credit and aren't being paid Carer Support Payment, but get the carer element in your Universal Credit

award, then the person you are looking after will lose their severe disability premium (or addition).

Before you apply for Carer Support Payment, it's important to consider how a claim for this benefit would affect the benefits of the person you are looking after. If possible, discuss your application with them. Once you've submitted your application, Social Security Scotland will contact the person you care for by letter. For more guidance, you may find it helpful to contact a Carers UK adviser by emailing [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org).

## How benefits can help protect your National Insurance (NI) record

Your NI record is a summary of your NI contributions paid through work, or credits awarded when you are unable to work. It is used to work out your entitlement to some state benefits such as your State Pension.

For each week that you receive Carer Support Payment, you receive a Class 1 NI credit to help protect your record. If you are unable to claim Carer Support Payment, you may be able to claim Carer's Credit to protect your record instead.

### What's Carer's Credit?

Carer's Credit is a way of protecting your pension rights if you are caring for someone but not paying NI contributions through paid work and are unable to claim Carer Support Payment. You do not get paid any money if you claim Carer's Credit but you get a NI contribution credit to help protect your record. We have more information about Carer's Credit on our website:

[Carer's Credit | Carers UK](#).

To claim Carer's Credit, you need to be looking after one person or more for a total of 20 hours or more a week. The person(s) you are looking after must normally be getting one of the following:

- the middle or the higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance or Child Disability Payment

- the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment or Adult Disability Payment (at either rate)
- Attendance Allowance or Pension Age Disability Payment (at either rate) or Constant Attendance Allowance or
- Armed Forces Independence Payment.

If the person you're caring for doesn't get one of these benefits, you may still be able to get Carer's Credit if a health or social care professional has certified that the care you provide is needed. When you apply, fill in the Care Certificate part of the application form and ask a health or social care professional to sign it.

**Carer's Credit can also help with breaks in your caring role.** You can continue to receive it during a break in caring for up to 12 weeks. Let Social Security Scotland know if your break is longer. You can also claim Carer's Credit for any week within 12 weeks before the date you become entitled to Carer Support Payment or following the week you stop being entitled to Carer Support Payment. You can do this without meeting the 20 hour caring condition. This means you could have a break in caring for up to 12 weeks without losing your NI contribution credit.

**You won't receive Carer's Credit automatically.** To claim Carer's Credit, you need to apply to the Carer's Allowance Unit – see the 'Further help' section for contact details.

**▶▶ Example:** Sue cares for her brother, Alfred. Alfred receives Pension Age Disability Payment and Sue claims Carer Support Payment for looking after him. Alfred goes into hospital and his Pension Age Disability Payment stops after 28 days. This means that Sue's Carer Support Payment will also stop after 28 days. Sue can claim Carer's Credit for up to 12 weeks after her Carer Support Payment stops.

## How to claim Carer Support Payment

If you feel you meet the requirements for Carer Support Payment, you may now wish to apply. There are some different options to choose from:

> **Online**

Check if you can apply online or download a claim form by visiting: [mygov.scot/carer-support-payment/how-to-apply](https://mygov.scot/carer-support-payment/how-to-apply).

> **By phone**

Call Social Security Scotland free on **0800 182 2222** (Mon- Fri, 8am-6pm). If you want to apply in another language, ask for an interpreter in your preferred language.

> **By sign language**

Call using the Social Security Scotland app: [contactscotland-bsl.org/](https://contactscotland-bsl.org/).

> **In person**

You can meet a client support adviser at home, at a local venue, or through a video call. [Find out more about this option.](#)

> **By post**

Call Social Security Scotland using the number above and ask for a form to be posted to you or download a claim form and print it off. Once completed, as instructed, send this form to the address given on the front of the form.

▶▶ **Tip:** You may find it helpful to download a claim form, even if just to find out what kind of questions you will be asked in advance.

You could ask for help to complete the form from a local advice agency or see if a friend or family member could help. There is some useful information about getting support to complete the form, if needed, here: [Get help with applying for Carer Support Payment - mygov.scot](#).

## When to claim

If you were eligible to receive Carer Support Payment before making a claim, you can ask for your claim to go back to that date. Usually, a claim can be backdated for up to 13 weeks, as long as you have been eligible throughout this period. You need to ask for this to be done on the Carer Support Payment application form on page 8, where you are asked what date you want the claim to begin. This means that you could be paid the benefit up to 13 weeks before the date you applied for it.

Contact Social Security Scotland [online, by post or by phone](#) if you would like to see if your claim can be backdated further than this, which may be possible in certain circumstances.

For example, if you claim Carer Support Payment within 13 weeks of the person you care for getting a decision about their qualifying disability benefit, Carer Support Payment can be paid back from the date the qualifying disability benefit became payable (as long as you meet the Carer Support Payment conditions for this whole period). You need to ask for backdating on the claim form.

More information about how backdating a claim can affect other benefits is also available here: [Backdated Carer Support Payment - mygov.scot](#).

## What you'll need when applying

Some helpful information to gather in advance includes:

- > Your National Insurance number
- > Bank/ building society account details
- > Date of birth and address of the person you're caring for
- > Their National Insurance number (if 16+)

- > Or their Child Reference Number (if they're under 16).

## What happens after you apply?

After submitting your application, you may be contacted by Social Security Scotland who might ask for further information or documents to support your claim.

You will then receive a written decision that tells you whether you have been awarded Carer Support Payment and from what date. If you are awarded the 'underlying entitlement' only, you will still receive a decision giving you a nil award in a written decision letter. Keep your decision letter as it can be used as proof of your caring role if needed and shows your entitlement to the carers premium/element or addition if you claim certain means-tested benefits.

Social Security Scotland may be in touch if you receive any of the following income-related benefits: Universal Credit, Income Support, Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Pension Credit. That's because Carer Support Payment could reduce the amount you (or a partner) receive from these benefits (as it counts as income) but overall you will be better off by the amount of the carers element/ premium/ addition (as described on pages 10-11).

Because Social Security Scotland cannot make any necessary adjustments immediately, if you receive certain means-tested benefits, you will be asked if you would like to opt for an initial lower payment of Carer Support Payment on the application form. Alternatively, you may be contacted by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to pay back any overpayments. Either way, you'll still get the same amount of money overall.

## How is Carer Support Payment paid?

Carer Support Payment is usually paid monthly in arrears. However it can

be paid every week in advance if you or the person you care for has a terminal illness. The benefit can be paid into a UK bank account.

## Do you disagree with the decision?

If you disagree with the decision that Social Security Scotland has made, you can contact them to ask them to review it. There will be instructions in the letter you receive to guide you on the process to follow to do this.

This is called [requesting a redetermination or appeal](#) and there are different sources of support you can contact to help offer guidance on this with this from carer advocates, to friends and family, to carer support organisations or charities like Citizens Advice Scotland.

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 42 days of the date of the decision. If you fall outside of this time limit, it may still be possible to challenge the decision. Email our Carers UK Helpline at [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org) for further guidance. For more information about appealing a benefit decision, visit [Challenging a Social Security Scotland benefit decision - Citizens Advice](#).

## What to do if your circumstances change

Naturally, everyone's circumstances change from time to time. When this happens, it's important to report the changes as soon as possible to avoid any overpayment of benefit. This could be a change of job, a change of address, the loss of a family member or a change relating to a benefit the person you're caring for is receiving. For other examples, see this page: [If your circumstances change - mygov.scot](#). You can only report changes that have happened rather than saying what is about to happen.

You can report changes online at [Have you applied | Change of Circumstances \(socialsecurity.gov.scot\)](#) or call Social Security Scotland free on **0800 182 2222** (Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm) to report a change on the phone. Providing your National Insurance number, if you know it, will make

the process quicker. You can also ask for an interpreter.

If you would like to use British Sign Language, you can video call Social Security Scotland using the [Contact Scotland BSL app](#). Alternatively, you can notify Social Security Scotland by post by downloading and sending this form: [Carer Support Payment change of circumstances form - mygov.scot](#). For further details and support, see this page: [If your circumstances change - mygov.scot](#).

If you don't report a change in your circumstances, you could be overpaid Carer Support Payment over time. If this happens, you will be asked to pay the entire overpaid benefit back and this can mount up. If you have any concerns about this, you can seek advice from [Citizens Advice Scotland](#) or by emailing [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org). Also see our page on '[Support with Carer's Allowance/ Carer Support Payment overpayments](#)' for FAQs.

## **Am I allowed a temporary break in caring?**

You may be wondering if you can take a break from caring when claiming a benefit like this. You are able to take a short-term break from caring for up to four weeks in every 26 weeks and still be paid Carer Support Payment (and the Carer Additional Person Payment if relevant). Carer Support Payment can be extended to 12 weeks if you or the person you care for were in hospital for for at least eight of these weeks.

These are the conditions:

- You must have been providing 35 hours or more of care for 4 weeks in the last 26 weeks or for at least 14 of the past 26 weeks if you or the person being cared for were in hospital.
- The person you have been caring for must have been receiving a qualifying benefit for that period. If this stops, you will need to contact Social Security Scotland as it's not possible to claim Carer Support Payment if this happens.

Note that Carer Support Payment will stop if your total breaks add up to more than 12 weeks in the past 26 weeks. For guidance on protecting your

National Insurance record if this happens, see pages 15-16.

## Travelling abroad

You can continue to be paid Carer Support Payment while you are abroad for:

- the first four weeks as part of a carer break
- the first 13 weeks if you go abroad with the person you are looking after
- the first 26 weeks if you are abroad to care for someone who receives a qualifying benefit and the stay is in connection with arrangements for medical treatment for their long-term illness or disability.

The person you are looking after must continue to receive a qualifying disability benefit.

## If the person you are looking after goes into hospital

It's helpful to understand the rules about claiming this benefit if the person you care for has to go into hospital. You will no longer qualify for Carer Support Payment if the person you care for stops receiving Pension Age Disability Payment, Personal Independence Payment, Adult Disability Payment or Child Disability Payment. A stay in hospital can affect their entitlement to these disability benefits so you need to keep an eye on this and make sure the DWP/Social Security Scotland are kept updated about their hospital stay.

If they are in hospital and your care responsibilities for them **continue** for at least 35 hours a week, you can continue to receive Carer Support Payment until their disability benefit stops.

On the other hand, if they go into hospital and you are **no longer** providing care for at least 35 hours a week, you can continue to receive Carer Support Payment for up to 12 weeks as part of a carer's break or until their disability benefit stops. This is as long as you on the person you care for

has been in hospital for eight of those 12 weeks. The rules about carers' breaks also say that you must have provided 35 hours a week of care or more for at least 14 of the previous 26 weeks.

What happens with their disability benefit?

- > If you are **looking after a child** who was under 18 when they went into hospital, their disability benefit can continue to be paid for the whole time they are there.
- > If you are **looking after an adult aged 18+**, their disability benefit generally stops after 28 days (and may stop sooner if they have been in hospital or residential care in the 28 days before this current stay).

### Other reasons your Carer Support Payment may stop

It's worth noting that Carer Support Payment will stop if your total breaks in care add up to more than 12 weeks in the past 26 weeks.

If your Carer Support Payment stops due to the person you look after being in hospital, you can continue to get the carer premium or addition paid within certain means-tested benefits (such as Pension Credit, Income Support or Housing Benefit) for eight weeks after your Carer Support Payment stops. However, if you are claiming Universal Credit, the carer element within your Universal Credit will also stop.

### If you go into hospital

It is important to notify Scotland Security Scotland and the relevant benefit offices for any other benefits you receive if you have to go into hospital as an inpatient for more than one night. Carer's Support Payment can continue to be paid for up to 12 weeks in any 26-week period if you have to go into hospital if certain conditions apply. If you would like further clarity on the rules about this, please contact our helpline: [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org).

## If the person you are looking after goes into residential care

If the person you're looking after goes into residential care, you should notify Social Security Scotland as soon as possible as well as any other relevant benefit offices. Your payment will stop unless they continue to receive a qualifying disability benefit and you are still caring for them for at least 35 hours a week.

Here are some of the main changes to note:

### Disability benefits

Usually after 28 days (four weeks) of being in a residential or nursing home, these benefits will stop being paid:

- the care component of Child Disability Payment (CDP)
- the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment (ADP)
- Attendance Allowance or Pension Age Disability Payment (PADP).

They may stop sooner if they have been in hospital or residential care in the 28 days before this current stay.

### Exceptions

There are certain circumstances when these benefits can continue, such as where the person is paying their own fees or if someone has a terminal illness and is being cared for in a hospice.

### How does this affect any means-tested benefits you're receiving?

If your Carer Support Payment stops after the person you are looking after has moved into residential care, you can continue to receive the carer premium or addition paid with some of your means-tested benefits for eight weeks after it stops. Examples include Income Support or Housing Benefit.

However if you receive Universal Credit, the carer element of this payment will end if you're no longer caring for 35 hours a week or the person you look after is no longer receiving a disability benefit.

## If the person you are looking after dies

Understandably, this can be a very difficult time as you and family members try to come to terms with your loss. We have some suggestions of sources of support to help on our website [Coping with bereavement | Carers UK](#).

You might also feel the need to understand how your loss would affect your benefits. If the person you were looking after died on 15 March 2026 or afterwards, you can continue to be paid Carer Support Payment for up to 12 weeks afterwards if you met the criteria when they died. You also need to continue to meet the age, earnings and residence criteria. The person you care for must have been entitled to a qualifying disability benefit when they died. The new 12 week-extension also applies to the Carer Additional Support Payment and to the Scottish Carer Supplement.

If you are receiving any of the following, you can usually continue to receive the carer premium or addition within your means-tested benefits for up to eight weeks after the person you look after dies:

- Income Support
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance,
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit or
- Council Tax Reduction.

If you are receiving Universal Credit, the carer element usually continues for the rest of the assessment period in which the death occurred, and for the next two assessment periods.

### **Bereavement Support Payment – if your partner has died**

A Bereavement Support Payment might be available if your partner has died. What you earn or your savings will not affect how much you are paid as it is not means-tested. For further information, visit [Benefits and help with money after someone dies - mygov.scot](#).

## Seeking support

It can be hard to consider these practical matters at such a difficult time. Read on for contact details of further sources of support and helpful organisations that can offer more information and guidance.

## Further help

Our website contains a wealth of useful information on financial and practical matters related to caring. Visit [carerscotland.org](https://www.carerscotland.org). For further guidance on any of the areas covered in this factsheet, contact the Carers UK Helpline by email at [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org).

## Other organisations

### Age Scotland

A charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life.

w: <https://www.agescotland.org.uk/> t: 0800 124 4222

### Citizens Advice Scotland

Provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice.

w: [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

### Care Information Scotland

Find local carer organisations that could help offer support close to where you live:

<https://www.careinfoscotland.scot/topics/support-for-carers/carers-centres/>

### Mygov.scot

The Scottish Government website provides up-to-date information about Carer Support Payment and other benefits and services available:

<https://www.mygov.scot/carers-support-payment>

### Social Security Advocacy Support

They offer independent advocacy support if you need any help to engage or communicate with Social Security Scotland. They can help with applying

for benefits or challenging decisions:

w: <http://advocacy.scot/> | t: 0808 196 8901 (free from UK landlines and mobiles). e: [support@advocacy.scot](mailto:support@advocacy.scot)

### **The Care Inspectorate**

A regulatory body that monitors and inspects care services in Scotland.

E: [concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot](mailto:concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot) T 0345 600 9527

w: [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

### **The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)**

The final stage for complaints about public service organisations in Scotland. w: [spsso.org.uk/spsso](http://spsso.org.uk/spsso) | t: 0800 377 7330

## **Benefit helplines**

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

### **Jobcentre Plus**

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

### **Pension Credit and Pension Service**

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

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

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

### **Social Security Scotland**

They deliver Carer Support Payment, Scottish Carer Supplement, Carer Additional Person Payment, Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment, the Young Carer Grant, and other benefits specific to Scotland such as the Scottish Child Payment.

w: [www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/benefits](http://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/benefits) | t: 0800 182 2222 (Text Relay Service: 18001 +0300 244 4000)

### **Universal Credit Helpline**

(England, Wales and Scotland)

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

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](mailto:info@carersuk.org)  
This factsheet was produced in April 2026. Next review due April 2027.

### Carers UK Helpline

For expert information and advice about caring.



**0808 808 7777**

(Monday – Friday 9am-6pm)



[advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)

### Carers Scotland

0141 378 1065

[info@carerscotland.org](mailto:info@carerscotland.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 in the UK 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](https://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](https://carersuk.org)

**This information can be requested in large print.**