



S O C I A L
S E C U R I T Y
A G E N C Y

A Guide To...

Disability Living Allowance For Children



An agency within

DSD

Department for
Social Development
www.nidirect.gov.uk

May 2011
DLACASDCS

Important information about this leaflet

This leaflet is only a guide and does not cover every circumstance. We have done our best to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct as of May 2010. Some of the information may be oversimplified, or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law.

You may wish to get independent advice before making a claim based on this leaflet. See page 24 for details of one source of advice, the Contact a Family helpline.

Call us from Monday to Friday

Telephone **0800 22 06 74** Textphone **0800 24 37 87**

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What is Disability Living Allowance?

Disability Living Allowance is money to help with extra costs you may have for a child under 16 because they are disabled. They may get it if they have a disability severe enough that:

- they need someone to help look after them, or
- they have walking difficulties.

You may not regard your child as disabled. But if they have a health condition or illness that means they need the sort of help or have the sort of walking difficulties we describe in this leaflet, then they may be able to get Disability Living Allowance.

You can find out more about Disability Living Allowance by visiting the Nidirect website or contacting us. See our details below or on page 17.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Who can claim Disability Living Allowance for a child?

If you are the parent of a child who is living with you, and you are aged over 16, you can claim Disability Living Allowance for them. You can also claim if you look after a child as if you are their parent, and you are aged 18 or over (this includes step-parents, guardians, grandparents, foster parents and even older brothers or sisters). Only one person at a time can get Disability Living Allowance for a child.

Can a child get Disability Living Allowance?

A child can get Disability Living Allowance if they need much more day-to-day help than other children of the same age who do not have a disability.

A child may get Disability Living Allowance if their disability means that one or both of the following apply to them:

- They need help with personal care or someone to supervise them for their own or someone else's safety (please see page 7).
- They cannot walk, or find walking very hard, or need help to get around.

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Normally, a child must also have had these care or supervision needs or walking difficulties (or both) for at least three months and they must be likely to continue for at least another six months. However, if they are terminally ill, there are special rules for claiming the benefit – see page 11.

A child may get Disability Living Allowance even if you have not paid any National Insurance contributions. But if they or a member of their family live or work in another European Economic Area country or Switzerland, different conditions may apply (see page 14).

We don't usually take your or your child's income into account or take Disability Living Allowance off other benefits or tax credits they may receive, and it is tax free.

What do 'help with personal care' and 'supervise' mean?

'Help with personal care' means day-to-day help for a child with things like:

- washing (or getting into or out of a bath or shower)
- dressing, eating or feeding
- going to, or using, the toilet, or using nappies when the child should be potty trained
- getting into or out of bed, or settling in bed
- telling people what they need or making themselves understood – for example, if they have learning difficulties

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- developing social skills and learning – including through play, and
- being reassured if they worry or get upset.

‘Supervise’ means that a child needs someone with them to avoid substantial danger to themselves or other people. They may also need someone to watch over them at night. They could need someone to supervise them:

- when they take medicines or have treatment
- to make sure they stay safe when they do day-to-day things such as playing, moving around indoors or having a bath because they may hurt themselves or someone else, or
- because they have problems with the way they behave.

As we said on page 6, to get Disability Living Allowance, a child must need much more day-to-day help or supervision than other children of the same age who do not have a disability.

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When can I claim Disability Living Allowance for a child?

For you to claim Disability Living Allowance for your son or daughter as a child, they must be under 16. If they are aged 16 or older, they need to claim as an adult.

There is no lower age limit for the care part of Disability Living Allowance. But there are lower age limits for the mobility part (age 5 for the lower rate and age 3 for the higher rate – see page 12).

Your child can normally only get Disability Living Allowance when they have had these care or supervision needs or walking difficulties (or both) for at least three months and these are likely to continue for at least another six months. However, if they are terminally ill, there are special rules for claiming the benefit – see page 11. If you claim for your child straight away, we will deal with the claim as soon as possible.

How is Disability Living Allowance worked out?

There are two parts to Disability Living Allowance:

- the care part, and
- the mobility part.

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www.nidirect.gov.uk

A child can get money for just one part, or for both. How much they get is based on how much help they need. For details of the amounts of Disability Living Allowance, please visit the nidirect website or contact us. See our details below or on page 17.

In official forms and letters, you may sometimes see 'component' being used instead of 'part', but they mean the same.

Care part of the allowance

There are three care rates.

Lowest rate

A child may get the lowest care rate of Disability Living Allowance if they need help with personal care for some of the day.

Middle rate

A child may get the middle care rate of Disability Living Allowance if they need:

- help with personal care frequently throughout the day
- help with personal care during the night
- someone to supervise them continually throughout the day to avoid substantial danger (see page 7)
- someone to watch over them at night to avoid substantial danger, or
- someone with them when they are on dialysis.

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Highest rate

A child may get the highest care rate of Disability Living Allowance if they meet both a day **and** a night condition for the middle rate (see page 10). In short, they need help with personal care or someone to supervise them throughout the day **and** also help with personal care or someone to watch over them during the night.

A child may also get the highest rate if they are terminally ill and a claim is made under the special rules (see below).

Special rules

We have special rules for children who are terminally ill (this means children who have a progressive disease and are not expected to live more than another six months). They can get the highest care rate of Disability Living Allowance whatever their care needs are. And they can get the care part and (if they meet the conditions) the mobility part, without waiting three months.

To claim for a child under these special rules, you need to fill in the relevant sections of the Disability Living Allowance claim form and get a completed form DS1500 from the child's doctor, specialist or consultant to send with it.

We will deal with your claim as fast as we can.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Mobility part of the allowance

There are two mobility rates.

Lower rate

A child may get the lower mobility rate of Disability Living Allowance if they are aged 5 or over and they can walk, but most of the time they need a lot more guidance or supervision from another person to help them get around outdoors in places they don't know, than other children of the same age who do not have a disability.

This may be because they:

- have problems with the way they behave
- are blind or deaf
- have problems talking to others, or
- need someone to keep an eye on them.

The child may need this extra supervision to avoid danger to them or other people.

Higher rate

A child may get the higher mobility rate of Disability Living Allowance if they are aged 3 or over and due to a physical disability, even when they use an aid (such as a stick or a false leg), they:

- cannot walk at all

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- can only walk a short way without severe discomfort, or
- could become very ill if they try to walk.

They may also be able to get the higher rate if they:

- have been assessed as 100% disabled because they are blind and at least 80% disabled because they are deaf, and they need someone with them when they go outdoors
- have had both legs amputated at or above the ankle
- were born without legs or feet, or
- get the highest care rate of Disability Living Allowance, are severely mentally impaired (that is, they have severe learning difficulties) and have severe behavioural problems.

Motability scheme

If your child gets the higher mobility rate of Disability Living Allowance, you may get help to buy or rent a car, powered wheelchair or a scooter from the Motability scheme.

You can find out about the Motability scheme online at www.motability.co.uk or by phoning:

- 0845 456 4566, or
- 0845 675 0009 (textphone).

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Does a child or their family need to live in Northern Ireland?

To get Disability Living Allowance, your child needs to meet certain conditions about:

- living in Northern Ireland
- how long they have been here, and
- their immigration status, if they are not a British citizen.

If your child lives in Northern Ireland and you need more information, please contact us (our contact details are on page 19) or go to www.nidirect.gov.uk.

Under European Union law, different conditions may apply if, for example, your child or a member of their family has moved from the UK to another European Economic Area country (see the note on the next page) or Switzerland, or has come from one of those countries to the UK. Whether or not they can get benefit and the type of benefit available may depend on where they (or their family members) work or live. For further information visit www.nidirect.gov.uk or write to:

Disability and Carers Service
Castle Court
Royal Avenue
Belfast
BT1 1TR

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Note: The European Economic Area is made up of the 27 member states of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK), plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Can a child get Disability Living Allowance if they are in a residential school or care home when a claim is made?

We'll pay the mobility part of Disability Living Allowance for a child if they are staying in a residential school or in a care home (a place that provides accommodation together with nursing or personal care). We won't usually pay the care part of Disability Living Allowance if they are staying in a residential school or care home when you claim, unless you are meeting all the costs of their accommodation, board and personal care without help from a Health and Social Care Trust or government department.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Can a child get Disability Living Allowance if they are in hospital when a claim is made?

If your child is in hospital when you claim, we won't usually pay the care or mobility part of Disability Living Allowance until they leave hospital, unless your child is a private patient and you are paying for their accommodation and treatment without NHS help from a Health and Social Care Trust or a government department.

We may pay Disability Living Allowance if your child is terminally ill and you are claiming for them under the special rules (see page 11) and they are in a hospice.

If your child is in hospital at the time you claim for them, please let us know when they leave.

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How do I claim Disability Living Allowance for a child or find out more?

To claim Disability Living Allowance for a child you need to fill in a claim form, or you can claim Disability Living Allowance online.

There are a number of ways you can contact us.

By phone

Benefit Enquiry Line

To get a claim form, and help with filling it in, you can call the Benefit Enquiry Line on:

- 0800 22 06 74, or
- 0800 24 37 87 (if you use a textphone).

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

If you ask for a claim pack, we will treat the date of your phone call as the date of your child's claim, as long as you send the form back within six weeks.

When you ring us, the person who takes the call can only give advice. This advice is not our decision about your claim.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

By post, using the tear-off slip

You can also fill in the tear-off slip from this leaflet to ask us for a claim form. You don't need a stamp. We will send you a claim form and notes to help you fill it in. We will treat the date we issue the form as the date of your child's claim, as long as you send it back within six weeks.

Online

For information for disabled people and carers covering:

- financial support
- general advice
- rights

and much more, go to

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Through this website, you can also:

- claim Disability Living Allowance for a child online or
- print out a blank claim form to fill in by hand and post it to us.

Call us from Monday to Friday

Telephone **0800 22 06 74** Textphone **0800 24 37 87**

If you send us a claim form by post, we will treat the date we receive the form as the date of your child's claim.

In writing

You can find our address at the top of any letter we send you. You can also write to:

Disability and Carers Services
Castle Court
Royal Avenue
Belfast
BT1 1HR

Filling in the claim form

The form has a lot of pages. This can put off some parents but it is important that you read all the questions carefully and give as much information as you can. We'll also send you extra notes with the claim form to help you fill it in.

You can send extra evidence with your claim, but you don't have to. If you choose to send extra evidence, it should explain how your child needs much more help from day-to-day. Your health visitor, doctor or someone like this may be able to give this extra evidence for you.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

What other help can I get for my child?

If your child gets Disability Living Allowance, you may get extra money as part of your:

- Housing Benefit, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/benefits-adviser to find out or get estimate of what benefit, pensions or credits you may be entitled to.
- You can find out more about Housing Benefit by visiting www.nidirect.gov.uk or
- Child Tax Credit (see page 23).

You may also be able to get:

- Working Tax Credit (which may include an amount to help with childcare costs)
- help with specialist childcare ,or
- Carer's Allowance.

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Carer's Allowance

If your child gets the care part of Disability Living Allowance at the middle or highest rate and you look after them for at least 35 hours a week, you may be able to get Carer's Allowance.

For Carer's Allowance purposes, a 'week' is seven days, Sunday to Saturday.

You should claim Carer's Allowance within three months of us giving you our decision about your child's Disability Living Allowance, so you do not lose any benefit.

To find out more, please see our leaflet about Carer's Allowance.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Or, you can get a claim form for Carer's Allowance or a leaflet by phoning:

- the Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 22 06 74 or 0800 24 37 87 (if you use a textphone), or
- the Disability and Carers Service 9090 6186 or 0800 24 37 87 (if you use a textphone).

You can also write to:

Disability and Carers Service
Castle Court
Royal Avneue
BT1 1HR

Carer's Credits

From 6 April 2010, carers will be able to build up qualifying years through new weekly credits for the basic State Pension and additional State Pension. They're called Carer's Credits.

If you are caring for one person or more for a total of 20 hours or more a week, and you are not entitled to

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Carer's Allowance, you can apply for Carer's Credits. This will protect your future entitlement to the basic elements of the State Pension and bereavement benefits.

The credits may also help you build up some additional pension, often called State Second Pension. When you claim your basic State Pension, we'll also pay you any additional pension you are entitled to.

To find out more about Carer's Credits, please visit the Nidirect website or contact the Disability and Carers Service.

Child Tax Credit

You may get extra Child Tax Credit if any one of the following applies:

- You get Disability Living Allowance for your child.
- Your child is registered blind.
- Your child came off the blind register in the 28 weeks before you claimed Child Tax Credit.

On top of this, you may also get more money for your child if you get the highest care rate of Disability Living Allowance for them.

To find out more, call the Tax Credits helpline on:

- 0845 300 3900, or
- 0845 300 3909 (if you use a textphone).

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Lines are open from 8am to 8pm every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

You can also visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits to find out more.

Contact a Family helpline

If you need confidential, independent advice about anything to do with caring for a child with additional needs (such as a physical disability or behavioural problems), you can phone the Contact a Family helpline, a voluntary organisation, on:

- 0808 808 3555, or
- 0808 808 3556 (if you use a textphone).

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm and from 5.30pm to 7.30pm on Monday.

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Call charges

Charges were correct as of the date on the back of this leaflet.

Calls to 0800 numbers are free from BT landlines but you may have to pay if you use another phone company, a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0845 numbers from BT landlines should cost no more than 6p a minute with a 10p call set-up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls from mobile phones can cost up to 40p a minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider.

If you prefer, you can ask us to call you back. Tell our operator that this is what you want to do and give them your phone number.

Textphones

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

You can also call using and Type Talk.

Visit us on the web at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Other formats

This leaflet is available in other formats.

Call 0800 22 06 74 to find out more.

If you find it difficult to hear or to speak clearly, there is a textphone service available on 0800 24 37 87.

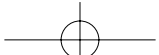
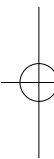
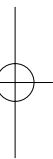
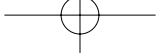
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Disability Living Allowance for children

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www.nidirect.gov.uk



Claim Form Request

Please send me a claim form for Disability Living Allowance for someone aged 16 or over.

If your child is under 16 please read the information on page 5.

Please use ink and write in BLOCK LETTERS.

Tick a box below to choose a claim form in standard print, large print or braille.

Standard print

Large print

Braille

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

The quickest way to get a claim pack is by calling us. Our telephone number is on page 16.

To send us your details;

1. Tear off this page
2. Moisten as indicated
3. Fold in half to stick
4. Send to us by post

A postage stamp **MUST** be affixed.
The Social Security Agency will not
accept mail with incorrect or no
postage paid.

Please
affix
stamp
here

**Social Security Agency
Disability and Carers Service
Castle Court
Royal Avenue
Belfast
BT1 1HR**