

What happens after you appeal

An appeal submission will be prepared and a copy of this will be sent to you, your representative if you have one, and The Appeals Service. You will also be sent a form about the hearing. This form must be returned to The Appeals Service within 14 days.

Help with expenses if you go to an appeal

You may be able to get help with things like

- travelling to and from the tribunal. You may get help with your fares and the fares of people who go with you to help you. But representatives who are paid by an organisation cannot get their fares
- if you are not yet claiming tax credits you can claim the cost of childminding if you have to pay someone so you can go to the tribunal
- lost earnings if you lose money to go to the tribunal.
- Interpreter fees.

You will be sent more details about this once The Appeals Service has set a date for your hearing.

Where to get more information

For more information about your claim, or for general advice, get in touch with your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office. The telephone number and address for the Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office are in the phone book under **GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND, DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**.

Or visit our website at www.dsdni.gov.uk

Our service standards

We aim to provide a high standard of customer service at all times. Details of the standard of service you can expect from us can be found on our website at www.dsdni.gov.uk

You can access our website from many libraries.



This leaflet gives general guidance on the rights and responsibilities of customers. It should not be treated as being a current and comprehensive statement of the law.

INCOME SUPPORT

INFORMATION SHEET

Disagreeing with a decision

About the decisions

We make decisions about Income Support on behalf of the Department. We decide whether the law says you are entitled to benefit or not. We also decide how much benefit you are entitled to. You have the right of appeal against some of our decisions.

There is more information about what happens when you appeal in leaflet **GL24** *If you think our decision is wrong*. You can get this from any Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office or our website at www.dsdni.gov.uk

This information sheet tells you what to do if you disagree with a decision on Income Support.

Use this sheet to find out about

- who makes decisions on your benefit
- Income Support decisions
- what to do if you think our decision is wrong
- how to appeal
- what happens after you appeal
- help with expenses if you go to an appeal
- where to get more information

Income Support decisions

You may be able to get Income Support if you are not required to be available for work and

- you have savings of £16,000 or less **and**
- you work less than 16 hours a week or your partner works less than 24 hours a week **and**
- you have less money coming in than the law says you need to live on.

You will normally claim Income Support if you are a carer, or a lone parent or claiming sick in certain circumstances, or in a category that exempts you from attending the Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office as unemployed.

This decision is based on your circumstances. If you disagree with the decision on how much the law says you need to live on, tell us straight away.

Who to contact about decisions

If you need more information about a decision on **Income Support**, contact your Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office. You can telephone, write or call in and ask for a detailed explanation.

The changes we need to know about

You must tell us straightaway if any of the things in these notes change. You can tell us about some changes over the telephone. We will ask you to confirm the change in writing if necessary.

Tell us if anything changes for

- you
- your partner. We use *partner* to mean
 - a person you are married to or a person you live with as if you are married to them, or
 - a civil partner or a person you live with as if you are civil partners
- your children
- anyone else who lives with you.

Questions you might have about our decision

If you want to know more about this decision or if you think the decision is wrong

Please get in touch with us, by phone or in writing, within one month of the date of this letter. If you contact us later we may not be able to help you. Our address and phone number are on the front page of your decision letter.

You, or someone else who has authority to act on your behalf, can

- ask for an explanation
- ask for a written statement of reasons for our decision
- ask us to look again at the decision to see if it can be changed.
There may be some facts you think we have overlooked or you may have more information which affects the decision.
- appeal against the decision. Please see below for more information.

You can do any of the actions listed above, or you can do all of them.

You can find more information about decision making and appeals in leaflet **GL24** *If you think our decision is wrong*.

What happens if you ask us to look at the decision again?

If we can change the decision, we will send you a new decision.

If we cannot change the decision, we will send you a letter telling you why. You will have **one month** from the date of that letter to appeal if you still disagree with the decision.

How to appeal

Your appeal must be in writing. You can fill in the form in leaflet **GL24** *If you think our decision is wrong* or you can write to us. You must tell us which decision your appeal is against and give your reasons for the appeal.

You can get a copy of leaflet **GL24** *If you think our decision is wrong* from

- any Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office
- our website at www.dsdni.gov.uk

Please send your appeal to the address at the top of your decision letter.

Your appeal will be heard by The Appeals Service.