

This pack is available in  
**large print or braille.**  
Please phone **0800 220 674.**

## **Notes**

If you want help filling in the claim form,  
phone the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL).

The person you speak to will arrange for someone to phone you back  
and go through the form with you. If you cannot use the phone, we may  
be able to send someone to visit you.

We can also arrange interpreters if you phone or visit us.

Phone **0800 220 674**

If you have speech or hearing difficulties, you can contact BEL by  
textphone on **0800 243 787**. You can also use Typetalk.

Our **textphone** service does not receive messages from mobile phones.

Or you can contact an organisation like Citizens Advice.

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## Things to do before you fill in the claim form

**Check if you can get Disability Living Allowance. Work through the checklist 'Can I get Disability Living Allowance?' which is included in this pack.**

**Before you fill in the form, it will be useful to have ready some of the things listed below. Do not worry if you only have some of them.**

- Your National Insurance number. You can find this on your National Insurance number card, letters from the Department for Social Development, or payslips.
- The name of your GP and the address of your GP's surgery.
- Details of your medication or an up-to-date printed prescription list if you have one.
- Details of anyone you have seen about your illnesses or disabilities in the last 12 months, apart from your GP.
- Your hospital record number (if you know it). You can find this on your appointment card or letter.
- If you have been in a hospital, care home, residential school, college or similar place – the dates you went in and came out, and the name and address of the place you stayed.

You may also find it helpful to keep a record – write down a list of things you have needed help with or found difficult over one or two days. If you have good days and bad days, or your disability varies over time, you may want to keep a record of your needs over a good day and over a bad day. Start from the time you get up in the morning, through 24 hours, to the time you get up the following morning. You can send in the record with your form if you want to.

**You do not have to fill in the form in one go. Take your time so that you can describe all the help you need.**

## How to fill in the claim form

Please use black ink to fill in the form. Do not worry if you are not sure how to spell something or you make a mistake. If you want to correct a mistake, please cross it out with a pen – do not use correction fluid.

Please tick the box to show your answer. For example:

Yes  No

# What is Disability Living Allowance and can I get it?

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is to help with extra costs you may have because you are disabled. You may get DLA if you are under 65 and have a physical or mental disability severe enough that:

- you need help with your personal care or someone to supervise you, (see page 16 of the form) or
- you are unable to walk, or find walking very hard, or you need help to get around, and
- you have had these care needs or walking difficulties (or both) for at least three months, and they must be likely to continue for at least another 6 months. However if you are terminally ill, there are special rules for claiming – see page 8.

You may not think of yourself as disabled, but if you have a health condition or illness that means you need help or have walking difficulties, you may be able to get DLA.

You can get DLA even if no-one is helping you to look after yourself or to get around.

You can get DLA and be in work, provided you need help to look after yourself or have walking difficulties, or both.

If you are 65 or over, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance (AA) instead of DLA.

You don't usually need to have paid any National Insurance contributions. We don't take your savings into account. We don't usually take income into account or take DLA off any other benefits or tax credits, and DLA is tax-free. But, if you or a member of your family live or work in another European Economic Area country or Switzerland, different conditions may apply.

You can find out more about AA and DLA by visiting the NIDirect website [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) or by phoning BEL - see page 1.

## When can I claim DLA?

You should claim straight away and we will deal with your claim as soon as possible.

## How is DLA worked out?

There are two parts to DLA – the care part and the mobility part. You can get money for just one part, or for both.

How much you get is based on how much extra help you need.

For details of the amounts of DLA, go to [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) or contact BEL.

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

### Care part

There are three care rates.

#### Lowest rate

You may get the lowest care rate of DLA if:

- you need help with personal care for some of the day, or
- your disability means that you cannot prepare a cooked main meal for yourself.

#### Middle rate

You may get the middle care rate of DLA if you need:

- help with personal care frequently throughout the day
- help with personal care during the night
- someone to supervise you continually throughout the day to help you avoid substantial danger
- someone to watch over you at night to help you avoid substantial danger, or
- someone with you when you are on dialysis.

#### Highest rate

You may get the highest care rate of DLA if you:

- meet both a day and a night condition for the middle rate (see above).

You may also be able to get this rate if you claim under the special rules (see page 8).

If you are getting Constant Attendance Allowance with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or a War Disablement Pension at a higher rate than your DLA care rate, you will get this instead of DLA for care.

If it is less, we will reduce your DLA by the amount of your Constant Attendance Allowance.

## How is DLA worked out? (continued)

### Mobility part - getting around outdoors

There are two mobility rates.

#### Lower rate

You may get the lower mobility rate of DLA if you can walk, but need guidance or supervision most of the time from another person to get around outdoors in places you don't know. This is to stop you putting yourself or other people in danger, perhaps because you:

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

#### Higher rate

You may get the higher mobility rate of DLA if due to a physical disability, even when you use an aid (like a stick or false leg), you:

- cannot walk at all,
- can only walk a short way without severe discomfort,
- could become very ill if you try to walk.

You may also be able to get the higher rate if you:

- have been assessed as 100% blind and at least 80% deaf and need someone with you when you go outdoors
- (from 11 April 2011) are certified by your eye care specialist as severely sight impaired or blind and your best corrected (with glasses or lenses) visual acuity (ability to see fine detail) is less than 3/60 or is 3/60 or more but less than 6/60 together with a complete loss of peripheral visual field (vision out to the side) and a central visual field of no more than 10 degrees in total
- have had both legs amputated above the ankle
- were born without legs or feet, or
- get the highest care rate of DLA and are severely mentally impaired (that is, you have severe learning difficulties) and have severe behaviour problems.

War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement is more than the higher-rate mobility part of DLA. If you are getting War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement, we won't pay you DLA for mobility.

### About medical examinations

If we cannot get a clear picture of how your illnesses or disabilities affect you, we may ask a health care professional to examine you. Medical Support Services, who arrange medical examinations for us, will contact you if an examination is required.

**These notes give you more help and advice with some of the questions in the claim form.**

## **About you**

### **8 Do you normally live in Northern Ireland?**

Generally, you must be ordinarily resident and present in Northern Ireland, not be subject to immigration control and have lived in Northern Ireland for 26 weeks in the last 52 weeks.

The 26-week rule does not apply if you are terminally ill and qualify under special rules.

If you have come to Northern Ireland from a country that is part of the European Economic Area (EEA), or Switzerland, then depending on your circumstances you may not have to wait 26 weeks before you can get DLA.

If you or a member of your family live in another country that is part of the EEA, or in Switzerland, then you may be able to get the care part of DLA if the UK is responsible for paying you sickness benefits.

You can find more information about claiming DLA when you live in another country that is part of the EEA, or in Switzerland on our website **[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)**

# About your illnesses or disabilities and the treatment or help you receive

## 18 Special rules

We have special rules for people who are terminally ill (this means people who have a progressive disease and are not expected to live longer than another six months).

So that we can deal with your claim as quickly as possible, it is important that you send a DS1500 report with your claim. The notes below tell you how to get a DS1500 report.

If you don't have the DS1500 report by the time you fill in the claim form, send us the form straight away. Please send the DS1500 when you can.

### Getting DLA under the special rules means:

- you get the highest rate of the care part, whatever your care needs are
- you get the care part and (if you meet the conditions) the mobility part paid straight away (so you don't have to wait until you have needed help for three months – but changes like those on page 10, question 55 of these notes may still affect how much money you get), and
- we deal with your claim more quickly.

### Claiming under the special rules for someone else

You can claim under the special rules for someone else. You don't have to tell them you are claiming for them. Tell us about them on the claim form. We will normally write to them about whether they can get DLA, but we won't tell them anything about special rules.

If you are filling in this form as part of your job, you do not need to tell us your National Insurance number or date of birth at question 12.

### How to claim under the special rules

Please fill in the claim form. Tick the box at question 18 of the claim form to show you are claiming under the special rules. If you do not tick this box, we cannot normally pay you under the special rules.

### How to get a DS1500 report

Ask your doctor or specialist for a DS1500 report.

This is a report about your medical condition. You won't have to pay for it. You can ask the doctor's receptionist, a nurse or a social worker to arrange it for you. You don't have to see the doctor. Most doctors' practices provide DS1500 reports very quickly. Ask for the report in a sealed envelope if you do not want anyone to see it.

## **About your illnesses or disabilities and the treatment or help you receive (continued)**

### **19 Do you have any reports about your illnesses or disabilities?**

If you can send us a copy of any reports you may hold it may help us to deal with your claim. If possible, please send us a copy of the reports with this claim form. If you have a Certificate of Vision Impairment from an eye care specialist you need to send us a copy. If this certifies you as severely sight impaired you may be able to get the higher rate mobility part.

If you don't have a copy of any reports by the time you fill in the claim form, send us the claim form straight away. Please send us a copy of any reports you hold as soon as you can.

### **22 Please list the aids and adaptations you use.**

We want to know if you use any aids or adaptations to help you do things. For example:

- a hoist, monkey pole or bed-raiser may help you get out of bed
- a commode, raised toilet seat or rails may help you with your toilet needs
- bath rails, a shower seat or a hoist may help you bath or shower
- a long-handled shoehorn, button hook, zip pull or sock aid may help you dress
- a stairlift, raised chair, wheelchair or rails may help you move about indoors
- a walking stick, walking frame, crutches or artificial limbs may help you get around outdoors
- special cutlery or a feeding cup may help you eat and drink, or
- a hearing aid, textphone, magnifier or braille terminal may help you communicate.

We also want you to tell us if you need help to use the aids or adaptations, and if you do, what help you get from another person.

## Getting around outdoors

### 24 How far can you normally walk (including any short stops) before you feel severe discomfort?

It is important you give us a clear picture of your walking ability. If you are not sure how far you can walk or how long it takes you, it may be useful to measure this so you can give accurate information.

By 'severe discomfort', we mean things like shortness of breath, pain, extreme tiredness, or muscle spasms.

We understand that it can be hard to know how far you can walk.

Several things can help you:

- Ask someone to walk with you and pace the distance you walk. The average adult step is just under one metre, so, if the person walking with you took 100 steps, you would have walked about 90 metres.
- A size 9 shoe is nearly a third of a metre.
- The average four-door car is about four metres long.
- The average double-decker bus is about 11 metres long.
- A full-size football pitch is about 100 metres long.

If you still find it difficult to work out the distance you can walk in metres, please tell us:

- the number of steps you can take, and how long in minutes, it would take you to walk this distance, at questions 24 and 25
- about your walking speed, at question 26, and
- the way that you walk, at question 27. For example, shuffling or small steps.

### 55 About being in hospital, a care home or a similar place

By care home we mean a home such as a residential care home, a residential school or college, nursing home or similar place.

If we award you the care part of DLA when you are in hospital, a care home, a residential school or a similar place, we cannot start paying it until you come out. The same applies to the mobility part if you are in an NHS hospital, but the mobility part can be paid if you are in a care home. If you are a private patient or resident, paying for your stay without help from public funds, we will be able to pay you both the care and mobility parts.

We may be able to pay you if you are claiming under the special rules and you are in a hospice.

## How we pay you

**Please read this section before you tell us your account details at question 59.**

### **We normally pay your money direct into an account**

Many banks and building societies will let you collect money at the post office.

We will tell you when we will make the first payment and how much it will be for.

We will tell you if the amount we pay into the account is going to change.

### **Finding out how much we have paid into the account**

You can check your payments on account statements. The statements may show your National Insurance (NI) number next to any payments we have made. If you think a payment is wrong, get in touch with the office that pays you straight away.

### **If we pay you too much money**

We have the right to take back any money we pay that you are not entitled to. This may be because of the way the system works for payments into an account.

For example, you may give us some information, which means you are entitled to less money. Sometimes we may not be able to change the amount we have already paid you. This means we will have paid you money that you are not entitled to.

**We will contact you before we take back any money.**

### **What to do now**

- Tell us about the account you want to use at question 59. By giving us your account details you:
  - agree that we will pay you into an account, and
  - understand what we have told you above in the section **If we pay you too much money.**
- If you are going to open an account, please tell us your account details as soon as you get them.
- If you do not have an account, please contact us and we will give you more information.

**Fill in the rest of the form. You do not have to wait until you have opened an account, or contacted us.**

## How we pay you (continued)

### About the account you want to use

- You can use **an account in your name**, or a **joint account**.
- You can use **someone else's account** if:
  - the terms and conditions of their account allow this, and
  - they agree to let you use their account, and
  - you are sure they will use your money in the way you tell them.
- You can use a **credit union account**. You must tell us the credit union's account details. Your credit union will be able to help you with this.
- If you are an **appointee** or a **legal representative** acting on behalf of the customer, the account should be in your name only.

You can find the account details on your chequebook or bank statements.

If you do not know the account details, ask the bank or building society.

## How we collect and use information

We, the Department for Social Development (DSD), collect information to deal with Social Security, Child Support, employment and training, housing and community development and urban regeneration (redeveloping towns, cities and villages). The information we collect about you depends on the type of your business with us, but we may use the information for any of these purposes.

We may check information about you with other information we may have.

We may get information about you from other people and certain other organisations.

We may give information to certain other organisations, as allowed by the law, to:

- check that the information is accurate
- prevent or detect crime
- protect public funds in other ways
- use in research or statistics

These other organisations include other government departments, authorities who deal with Housing Benefit, and private-sector bodies (such as banks) that may lend you money. We will not give information about you to anyone outside our department unless the law allows us to.

The Department for Social Development is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.

If you want to know more about what information we have about you, or the way we use your information, please contact us. You can contact any of our offices and ask for leaflet '**Data Protection Act 1998 - It affects you**'. Or you can find a copy of the leaflet on our website at

**[www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)**

## Help and advice about other benefits

If you want general advice about any other benefits you may be able to claim, you can do the following.

- Phone the Benefit Enquiry Line for people with disabilities and carers:

Phone: **0800 220 674**

Textphone: **0800 243 787**

- Visit the NIDirect website at

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)**

- Contact your local Jobs & Benefits office / Social Security Office. The phone numbers and addresses are in the NI Direct Government Services, contacting government section of the phone book. Look for the blue edged pages at the beginning of the book.
- Contact an advice service like Citizens Advice.

### To find out about Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit

- Contact the Tax Credit Helpline:

Phone: **0845 300 3900**

Textphone: **0845 300 3909**

### To find out about Pension Credit

- you can get a leaflet about Pension Credit
- contact The Pension Service:

Phone: **0845 601 8821**

Textphone: **0800 100 2198**, or

- visit the website at **[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)**

### Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit

If you are claiming the care part of DLA and someone cares for you, read the information sheet about Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit we have sent with this claim pack.

## What happens next

Fill in the form and post it back to us.

Write in this box the date you post your form to us.

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We will write to tell you that we have received your form.

If you do not get this letter within two weeks of sending your form to us, please phone us on **028 9090 6182**.

If you have speech or hearing difficulties, you can contact us using a textphone on **0800 243 787**.



