



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Carer's Allowance notes

We have many different ways we can communicate with you

The form and notes are available in large print or braille.

Please call us on Freephone **0800 587 0912**.

If you have speech or hearing difficulties, you can contact us by textphone on **0800 012 1574**. Our textphone service does not receive messages from mobile phones.

Contents

About these notes	3
About the form	3
Can I get Carer’s Allowance?	3
When should I claim?	5
What is Carer’s Allowance?	5
How do my earnings affect Carer’s Allowance	6
Expenses	6
How does full-time education affect Carer’s Allowance?	6
Can I get Carer’s Allowance for providing care for more than one person?.....	6
What happens if someone else is also providing care for the same person?.....	6
What if I do not live in Northern Ireland.....	6
How does Carer’s Allowance affect any other benefits I get?.....	7
How does Carer’s Allowance affect the benefits of the person I provide care for?.....	8
Could you get Pension Credit?	8
How to contact Disability and Carers Service	
Where to get more help and advice	9

About Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance gives financial help to people who cannot take up full-time paid work as they provide regular care to a disabled person.

The quickest and easiest way to claim Carer's Allowance is online. Check if you can get Carer's Allowance and make a claim at www.nidirect.gov.uk/apply-carers-allowance

About these notes

- These notes tell you more about Carer's Allowance.
- They tell you how Carer's Allowance might affect other benefits that you or the person you provide care for are getting.
- You can check if you might get Carer's Allowance by using an easy checklist on **pages 3** and **4** of this booklet. If you cannot get Carer's Allowance, go to www.nidirect.gov.uk to see what other help you might be able to get.

About the form

- Only use this form to claim Carer's Allowance if you are getting State Pension. If you are not getting State Pension, use the DS700 Carer's Allowance claim pack. Go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance or contact us for a paper form.
- You, the carer, should fill in the form, not the person you provide care for.
- Please complete the form carefully. If you fill in the form using a pen, use black ink and CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Please answer all the questions and send us all the documents we ask for.
- Contact us if you cannot fill in the form or send us the documents we ask for, because this might delay your claim.
- If you have speech or hearing difficulties, you can contact us by textphone on **0800 012 1574**. The textphone service does not receive messages from mobile phones.
- Calls to **0800** numbers are free from personal mobiles and landlines.

Can I get Carer's Allowance?

You cannot get Carer's Allowance if:

- you exceed the earnings limit each week after tax and some expenses. For more information on earnings limit and benefit rates go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance See **pages 5** and **6**.
- you are in full-time education. By full time we mean 21 hours or more of study a week. See **page 6**.

Use this quick checklist before you fill in the form.

If you can tick all four statements, you may be able to get Carer's Allowance.

I get State Pension

If you cannot tick this box, do not use this claim form. Claim online at www.nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance. Or ask us for the DS700 Carer's Allowance claim pack, which is for people who do not get State Pension.

If your State Pension is more than the amount of Carer's Allowance you can get, we will not actually pay you any Carer's Allowance. You may want to claim Carer's Allowance anyway, because you may qualify for extra payments with other benefits.

The person I provide care for is getting one of these benefits:

- Personal Independence Payment daily living component
- Disability Living Allowance at the middle or highest rate of the care component
- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance, at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, or at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- an equivalent disability benefit from an EEA country or Switzerland.

I am providing care for a disabled person for at least 35 hours a week.

Providing care for someone means helping them with day-to-day living and personal care.

I normally live in Northern Ireland.

Some family members of people in HM forces serving overseas can be treated as living in Northern Ireland.

If you have ticked all four boxes, you can claim Carer's Allowance straight away.

If you live outside Northern Ireland, but in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, and you have ticked the first three statements above, you will need to be covered by the Withdrawal Agreement and the UK must be responsible for paying your sickness benefits for you to get Carer's Allowance.

For more information go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance

There is a list of EEA countries on **page 6** of these notes, or go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/going-abroad

If you are subject to immigration control, please call us on **0800 587 0912** to find out if you can get Carer's Allowance.

EEA and Swiss nationals need to have an EU Settlement Scheme status

The United Kingdom (UK) has left the European Union (EU). If you are a European Economic Area (EEA) or Swiss national, you and your family members need to get a UK immigration status to carry on living in the UK after 30 June 2021. You and your family need a status even if you have already been issued with a permanent residence document by the Home Office, or have been living in the UK for a long time. You need to apply for an immigration status to be eligible for benefits. This includes new and existing claims to benefits. It is free to apply for a UK immigration status. Irish nationals and those with indefinite leave to remain in the UK do not need to apply.

For more information and to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/staying-ni-if-eu-citizen or call **0300 123 7379**.

You need to tell us if your circumstances change. For more information please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/benefits-report-change-circumstances

When should I claim?

Claim now, if the person you provide care for is already getting any of the benefits listed on **page 4**. If they have not claimed any of these benefits yet, or are waiting to hear about a claim, you can claim Carer's Allowance within three months of when the benefit is awarded. If you do not claim in time, you may lose money.

What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is a benefit that gives you financial help if you cannot take up full-time paid work because you provide regular care to a disabled person.

You do not have to be related to, or live with, the person you provide care for.

You must spend at least 35 hours a week providing care for them. If you stop providing care for the person for a short time, you may still get Carer's Allowance. For example, you may be able to get Carer's Allowance if you, or the person you provide care for, go into hospital or somewhere like that.

But you must tell us straight away about any week when you provide care for someone for less than 35 hours.

By week we mean from the start of a Sunday to the end of the next Saturday.

Carer's Allowance is taxable. It can also affect other benefits you may get.

How do my earnings affect Carer's Allowance?

When we work out your weekly earnings we only look at what you have earned after you have paid:

- National Insurance (NI) contributions
- income tax
- half of any money you pay towards personal and occupational pension schemes.

While you are at work, we also allow up to half of the rest of your earnings for paying someone from outside your family to look after your children or the person you provide care for.

Expenses

We may be able to take into account some other expenses, such as expenses you have to pay to do your job.

How does full-time education affect Carer's Allowance?

You cannot get Carer's Allowance if you are in full-time education, even if you provide care for someone for 35 hours a week as well.

By full-time education we mean 21 hours or more of study a week. The 21 hours includes classes, lectures, seminars and personal study time expected by the university, college or learning provider.

Traineeships may also count as full-time education.

Can I get Carer's Allowance for providing care for more than one person?

You can only get paid Carer's Allowance for one person you provide care for. You will not get paid more if you provide care for more than one person.

What happens if someone else is also providing care for the same person?

If someone else is also providing care for the same person as you are, only one of you can get Carer's Allowance. Two people cannot get Carer's Allowance at the same time for providing care for the same person. You must decide between you who is going to claim it.

What if I do not live in Northern Ireland?

You might still be able to get Carer's Allowance if you live in or are moving to a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement and the UK is responsible for paying your sickness benefits.

The EEA countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech

Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

Contact us for more information. Our phone number is **0800 587 0912**.

How does Carer's Allowance affect any other benefits I get?

Carer's Allowance counts as income, so any means-tested benefits you get will be reduced if you get Carer's Allowance. But an extra amount will be included in the calculation of your means-tested benefits, so you will not be worse off overall. Means-tested benefits include:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit.

If you are getting Housing Benefit or Rates Relief you should tell the paying office you are getting Carer's Allowance or that you have underlying entitlement. A Carer Premium may be payable when the paying office works out how much Housing Benefit you can get. You may also be able to get more Rates Relief.

- If you are an owner/occupier then contact the Land and Property Services
- If you are a tenant then contact the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The benefit cap limits the amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to State Pension age can get. Some individual benefits are not affected, but it may affect the total amount of benefit you get. Receipt of Carer's Allowance exempts a household from being capped. Find out more about the benefit cap at **www.nidirect.gov.uk/benefit-cap**

If you get any of the following benefits, we may not be able to pay you Carer's Allowance:

- State Pension
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Unemployability Supplement – paid with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or War Pension
- Widow's Pension or Bereavement Allowance
- Widowed Mother's Allowance or Widowed Parent's Allowance
- War Widow's or Widower's Pension
- Maternity Allowance
- Industrial Death Benefit
- contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance.

This is called the 'overlapping benefit rule'. It means you cannot normally get 2 income-replacement benefits, such as Carer's Allowance and State Pension, at the same time.

Even if you get any of these benefits, it may be worth claiming Carer's Allowance. Your other benefits might be increased if you have 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance. Having underlying entitlement means that you satisfy all the conditions to get a benefit but the law says we cannot actually pay you any money. This may be because you are already getting a similar benefit and the rules say you cannot have both. If the amount of the other benefit you get is less than the amount of Carer's Allowance you could get, we will pay you the difference.

If someone is getting any of the benefits listed above and these include extra money for you, we will arrange for the extra money to stop or reduce. We will then pay the Carer's Allowance to you.

Your Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit could be reduced if you get Carer's Allowance. Contact the Tax Credits office for more information. Go to www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/tax-credits-enquiries for more information.

How does Carer's Allowance affect the benefits of the person I provide care for?

Carer's Allowance can affect the benefits of the person you provide care for, if they get a severe disability premium with:

- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit.

Their severe disability premium may stop or go down if you get Carer's Allowance for providing care for them.

If they get extra Pension Credit for severe disability, it may also stop or go down.

This could also affect the amount of Rates Relief they may be entitled to. To find out more, please contact the Northern Ireland Housing Executive if they are a tenant or, Land and Property Services if they are an owner/occupier.

If you have underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance, but do not actually get any money, it will not affect the benefits of the person you provide care for.

We will check the record of the person you provide care for before making a decision on your claim.

Could you get Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is money that can help people over State Pension age top up their weekly income to a minimum amount. If you qualify for Pension Credit, you could also qualify for benefits like Housing Benefit, Rate Relief, Cold Weather Payments and help with the costs of NHS services. If you are aged 75 or over and get Pension Credit, you will also be able to get a free TV licence.

Go to **www.nidirect.gov.uk/understanding-pension-credit** to:

- see if you can claim Pension Credit
- use our online calculator to see how much Pension Credit you could get, and
- apply for Pension Credit online.

How to contact the Disability and Carers Service

If you want information about **Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance** or **Carer's Credit**, you can get in touch with Disability and Carers Service.

Our number is **Freephone 0800 587 0912**.

If you have speech or hearing difficulties you can contact us using a textphone on **0800 012 1574**.

If you want to write to us, our address is:

Disability and Carers Service
Mail Opening Unit
PO BOX 42
Limavady
BT49 4AN

Please let us know if:

- you want us to use braille, audio CD or large print, or
- English is not your first language and you would like to use our interpreter service.

Or you can visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/people-disabilities/financial-support**

Where to get more help and advice

- You can get more information about Carer's Allowance at **www.nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance**
- If you want general advice and information about benefits or entitlements, get in touch with your local Jobs & Benefits office.

Or you can visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/jobs-benefits-offices**

- You can contact a local advisory service who can provide independent help and support.
- You can get in touch with Carers NI for advice on a range of issues. Their helpline number is Freephone **0808 808 7777**.

Or you can visit the Carers NI website at **www.carersuk.org/ni**

- For information about financial support, rights, carers organisations, employment, independent living and much more, visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk**

Keep these notes in a safe place. They do not need to be returned with the form.

