Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance for Adults

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for adults is being replaced by Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for people aged 16 or older.

You'll carry on getting DLA if you were 65 or over on the 8th April 2013. For everyone else aged 16 and over, DLA will stop and you'll need to claim PIP instead, even if you have a 'lifetime' or 'indefinite' award for DLA.

If you're eligible for PIP, you'll start getting PIP payments as soon as your DLA payments end.

Disability Living Allowance for Children

Disability Living Allowance for children helps to meet the extra costs that you might have because of your child's disability.

If your child lives in Scotland, you will need to apply for Child Disability Payment instead of DLA for children, more information can be done here; https://www.mygov.scot/child-disability-payment

To qualify for Disability Living Allowance for children, the child must:

Be under the age of 16

Need extra looking-after or have walking difficulties

Be in England, Wales, a European Economic Area country or Switzerland when you claim (exceptions of this condition includes family members of the Armed Forces)

Have lived in Great Britain for at least 6 of the last 12 months, if over 3 years old

Be habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands

Not be subject to immigration control

You can claim DLA even if your child does not have a diagnosis. It is sufficient that they have some form of disability even if this has not yet been formally diagnosed.

Further exceptions of these conditions are made if the child is living in or coming from a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.

The rules are different in Northern Ireland, and can be found here;
https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/disability-living-allowance-children

DLA is made up of two components. Depending on their circumstances, your child may qualify for one or both.

Care Component

If your child needs a lot of extra watching over or help with personal care, they should qualify for the care component of DLA. The care component is paid at one of three different rates depending on how much extra care your child needs. It can be paid from age three months or from birth if a child is terminally ill.

Mobility Component

The mobility component is paid to children who need help getting around. It is paid at one of two rates depending on the nature of the mobility issues.

The lower rate mobility component can be paid from the age of five. It is for children who need extra guidance or supervision outside.

The higher rate mobility component can be paid from the age of three. It is for those with severe walking difficulties, those who are deaf, blind or severely visually impaired and some children with severe behavioural problems.

Other Eligibility Rules

DLA is not means tested, so it does not matter what income or savings you have. Any decision to award DLA will be based on how your child's condition impacts on their day-to-day life.

Your child will also have to meet certain rules linked to their immigration status and the length of time that they have lived in the UK.

There are some specific rules that allow some children with learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders to qualify for the high-rate mobility component.

Payment for DLA can be affected by stays in residential accommodation.

How much will I receive?

The weekly rates for the care components are:

Lowest care £23.70

Middle care £60.00

Highest care £89.60

The mobility component weekly rates are:

Lower mobility £23.70

Higher mobility £62.55

How to claim DLA

To claim DLA for a child in England , you can either print off and fill in the DLA claim form, or phone the Disability Living Allowance helpline and ask for a printed form.

The online form can be found here;
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1006745/dla1-child-interactive.pdf

A printed form can be ordered in by calling 0800 121 4600

When claiming, it is very important to put as much information as you can about your child's needs. Any information provided by a professional involved with your child's care may also help. If a child has a terminal illness, a claim can be made under "special rules".

If possible, get specialist help from a welfare benefits advisor or someone else who is familiar with completing the form.

Keep a diary for a few weeks or so before tackling the form. This will be used for providing evidence of your child's extra needs.

Claiming DLA and Child Tax Credit

Getting DLA can help you qualify for extra amounts of other means-tested benefits and tax credits.

You are eligible for extra child tax credits if either your child is awarded DLA or an existing DLA award is increased to the higher rate care component.

Tell the tax credits office within one month of getting the DLA decision and any extra tax credits should be backdated in line with the DLA award.