



Basic Guide to Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (April 2006)

Ref IS/21

This information sheet is aimed at people over 60 and refers to the situation in England. If you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland you may wish to contact:

Age Concern Scotland, Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PR, tel: 0845 125 9732 (local call rate), website: www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk;

Age Concern Cymru, Ty John Pathy, Units 13 & 14 Neptune Court, Vanguard Way, Cardiff CF24 5PJ, tel: 029 2043 1555 (national call rate); website: www.accymru.org.uk;

Age Concern Northern Ireland, 3 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR, tel: 028 9032 5055 (national call rate) Monday to Friday 9.30am - 1pm.

What are they?

They are social security benefits, paid to help with the extra costs of illness and disability. These benefits:

- are tax free;
- are not means-tested (*so you can claim whatever your income or savings*);
- don't depend on National Insurance contributions;

- don't count as income for other benefits (*such as Pension Credit, Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit*);
- may increase your entitlement to other benefits, depending on your circumstances.

You may still get Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance:

- whether you are living alone or with others;
- whether you have a carer or not;
- whether or not you are still working.

Attendance Allowance

- can be paid to people who have personal care or supervision needs.

Disability Living Allowance

- has two parts; one type of benefit for people with mobility needs and one for people with personal care or supervision needs. You may be able to get both.

Should I claim Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance?

- You can only receive one of these allowances - if you are **under 65** claim Disability Living Allowance; if you are **65 or over** claim Attendance Allowance

Who can get Attendance Allowance?

You can claim if you meet the following conditions:

- you are aged 65 or over (if you are under 65 you may be able to claim Disability Living Allowance instead);
- and**
- you normally live in the UK (although there are a few exceptions to this rule);
- and**
- you meet the disability conditions for personal care or supervision (described below).

Attendance Allowance cannot normally start to be paid until you have met these conditions for at least 6 months.

Attendance Allowance: rates and disability conditions

There are 2 rates:

Lower rate (£41.65 per week)

You may be able to get the lower rate of Attendance Allowance if you meet either the day or night conditions

Higher rate (£62.25 per week)

You may be able to get the higher rate of Attendance Allowance if you meet both the day and the night conditions

Day conditions:

You need frequent help with personal care throughout the day
or you need continual supervision throughout the day.

Night conditions:

You need prolonged or repeated help with personal care during the night
or you need another person to be awake for a prolonged period or at frequent intervals during the night to watch over you.

What is 'personal care'?

This means help with things like getting up, getting washed and dressed, getting around the house, going to the toilet. Any help you need because of sight or hearing difficulties may also count, but help with shopping or housework does not. The allowance is based on the help you **need**, not the help you get.

Who can get Disability Living Allowance?

You can claim if you meet the following conditions:

- you are under 65 (although if you claim DLA before you reach 65, you can continue to receive it beyond age 65);
- and**
- you normally live in the UK (although there are a few exceptions to this rule);
- and**

- you meet the conditions for the mobility component and/or the care component (but DLA cannot normally start to be paid until you have met the disability conditions for at least 3 months);

and

- you must be likely to continue to meet the disability conditions for at least 6 months after you claim.

DLA Care: rates and disability conditions

There are 3 rates:

Lower rate – care (£16.50 per week). You may be able to get this if you need some help with personal care, or if you are unable to cook a main meal for yourself.

Middle rate - care (£41.65 per week). You may be able to get this if you meet either the day or night conditions (see above).

Higher rate - care (£62.25 per week). You may be able to get this if you meet both day and night conditions (see above).

DLA Mobility: rates and disability conditions

There are 2 rates for the **mobility** component:

Lower rate - mobility (£16.50 per week) for people who need guidance or supervision when walking out of doors, on an unfamiliar route

Higher rate - mobility (£43.45 per week) for people who are unable, or virtually unable, to walk because of a physical disability.

How do I claim?

Ring the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200 and ask for a claim form for Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

Your local Age Concern, or local advice service such as a Citizens Advice Bureau, may be able to help you complete the form.

What if my claim is refused?

If you wish to appeal, or get the decision revised, **act quickly** - you usually have only 1 month to do this. You could contact your local Age Concern or a local advice service such as a Citizens Advice Bureau for further help.

What if I need more help?

Age Concern produces more detailed information about these benefits. To receive a copy, call our free Information Line on **0800 00 99 66**, and ask for Factsheet 34, Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance, or write to Age Concern at the address below.

PLEASE NOTE ALL FIGURES GIVEN WERE CORRECT AT APRIL 2006, AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

If you would like to receive this information in large print phone 0800 00 99 66 (free call) or write to Age Concern FREEPOST (SWB 30375), Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7ZZ.

Find out more about Age Concern England online at www.ageconcern.org.uk

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