



THE BENEFIT SYSTEM AND YOUR CHILD



Dear Parent/Carer

There are a number of Social Security Benefits available to children with disabilities/special needs, and their carers. This leaflet gives a brief introduction to these benefits and tells you how to claim.

This leaflet deals with children from birth to sixteen.

When your child reaches the age of sixteen s/he will be entitled to claim benefits in their own right (Employment and Support Allowance) – see our leaflet Pb11ESA. S/he can also consider work or training – see our leaflet Pb12A.

1. **DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA)** **CLAIM ON FORM DLA 1A [CHILD]**

DLA is split into two sections – the CARE COMPONENT and the MOBILITY COMPONENT. For both components the level of care needed/mobility problems must be greater than that for a child of the same age but without the disability or special needs.

CARE COMPONENT

The care component is paid at 3 rates – **HIGHER**, **MIDDLE** and **LOWER** so it covers a wide range of care needs.

The **higher** rate is for children who need 24 hour care. The **middle** rate is for those who need care either throughout the day or for long periods at night.

This component is for children who need a high degree of looking after. This can be actually doing something practical for them or keeping an eye on them - or a combination of the two.

The **lower** rate is for children who only need help for a part of the day, for example for about an hour in total.

It is often difficult to identify care needs for children who are well looked after. But what counts is the personal care the child needs, not what s/he gets. One way to tell if extra care is needed is to compare the child with one without the disability or special needs – for example a brother or sister at the same age.

If your child needs help – for example getting dressed or undressed, using the toilet, washing, being reminded to take a bath, is hyperactive, needs help with medication or is unsafe to be left alone – make a claim for DLA.

MOBILITY COMPONENT

The Mobility Component of DLA is for anyone aged 3 and over [higher rate] or aged 5 [higher or lower rate], who either struggles to walk, cannot walk, or who isn't safe out alone – anyone with significant problems “getting around”.

The **LOWER RATE** [from the age of 5 only] is for the child who is able to walk but who needs guidance or supervision when outside. They might be able to cope with walking in their own local environment, but need help when outside their familiar routes. Examples would be visually impaired children, or those who have behavioural or communication problems.

The **HIGHER RATE** is for anyone who has walking problems and can be considered “virtually unable to walk” – this takes into account the speed, distance, time taken and manner of their walking. It is also payable to someone who has severe behavioural problems and who needs 24 hour care.

People in receipt of the higher rate are entitled to a blue badge, free car tax and can use the allowance to obtain a car via “Motability”.

APPEALS If you are refused either the Care or Mobility Component, or feel you should be on a higher rate, you have the right to Appeal.

GENERAL POINT: Disability Living Allowance can trigger off entitlement to other benefits, so get advice and see what else you may be entitled to.

2. CARERS ALLOWANCE (CA)

CLAIM ON FORM DS 700

This is for a carer who looks after someone on the Higher or Middle Rate of the Care component of the Disability Living Allowance, so you can claim both the Carers Allowance and Disability Living Allowance at the same time.

You have to be aged 16 or over to claim Carers Allowance. You can work while claiming, but there is an earnings limit. This limit may increase yearly so **get up to date advice**.

Carers aged 60 or over who may be also getting another benefit (such as a pension) and who normally cannot get Carers Allowance, may still be better off by claiming Carers Allowance if they are eligible for an income related benefit – see ‘Carer’s Premium’ overleaf.

3. FAMILY FUND

This is a Government-backed Trust designed to help the well-being of severely disabled children. As such they can give grants for a wide range of things - from holidays to washing machines and from driving lessons to laptops.

For information and an application form contact Family Fund, Unit 4, Alpha Court, Monks Cross, Huntingdon, York, YO32 9WN; telephone 0845 130 4542, or visit their website at www.familyfund.org.uk

* * * * * **SPIN OFFS** * * * * *

A. INCOME RELATED HELP

If you are getting DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE for your child, and you have a low income and low savings, **you** may be entitled to other help.

Having a disabled child, or being a carer can mean more of:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| * INCOME SUPPORT (IS) | * RENT REBATE |
| * PENSION CREDIT (PC) | * COUNCIL TAX REBATE |
| * CHILD TAX CREDIT | * JOBSEEKERS ALLOWANCE
[income-based] |

In fact, for some people getting Disability Living Allowance could mean becoming entitled to these “income-related” benefits for the first time.

When calculating these benefits the following extras could be included.

(i) CHILD TAX CREDIT

Child Tax Credit is paid to many families on low or middle incomes. Extra can be given where a child gets Disability Living Allowance at any rate, even more if s/he gets the highest rate Care Component.

(ii) CARERS

Those on Carers Allowance and who can claim one of the above “income-related” benefits [except Child Tax Credit], may be entitled to an extra element in those benefits. This is called the **CARERS “PREMIUM” or CARERS “ADDITION”**.

You will also be entitled to the Carers Premium/Addition if the only reason you cannot be paid Carers Allowance is because you are **either** getting another “overlapping” benefit (e.g. Retirement Pension) **or** you are part of someone else’s claim (e.g. for Incapacity Benefit).

If you think either apply to you notify your local Jobcentre Plus (IS) / Pension Service (PC) or Local Authority Benefits Section.
Your local advice agency can help with the claim – see over.

B. NON-INCOME RELATED HELP

The following can be given whatever your income or savings.

(i) COUNCIL TAX

If your home has been adapted for, or added to, for a disabled child, you may be entitled to a DISABILITY REDUCTION, meaning a lower Council Tax bill. Contact your local Council Tax Section.

(ii) BLUE BADGE

If your child is aged 2 and over, and has severe mobility problems, you can get a Blue Badge. This allows both free and less restricted parking. To apply, call Shire Hall on 01926 410410 and ask for the section that deals with disabled parking for your area. Under 2s can get a Blue Badge if medical bulky equipment needs to be taken out with the child.

HOW TO CLAIM

- * For a Disability Living Allowance claim pack call 0800 882200
- * For other benefits if aged under 60, contact your local Jobcentre Plus office – address and telephone number in the telephone book
- * For other benefits if aged 60 and over, call your local Pension Service

NEED HELP?

For further help and advice contact:

Your local Citizens Advice Bureaux at

1st Floor, Chestnut House
North Street
Rugby, CV21 2AQ
Tel: 0844 855 2327

The Parish Rooms
Welcome Street
Atherstone, CV9 1DU
Tel: 0844 499 4192

Old Market Tavern
25 Congreve Walk
Bedworth, CV12 8LX
Tel: 0844 855 2322
To book an appointment in
Nuneaton call 024 7635 1049

10 Hamilton Terrace
Leamington Spa, CV32 4LY
Tel: 01926 457900

25 Meer Street
Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6QB
Tel: 01789 293299 for advice or
01789 261966 to book appointment

For Carers Advice, Information and Support

Guideposts Carers Support Service

*(For Nuneaton, Bedworth, North
Warwickshire and Rugby)*

21-25 Newdegate Street
Nuneaton
CV11 4EJ

Tel: 024 7638 5888

e-mail: carer.support@guidepoststrust.org.uk
www.guidepoststrust.org.uk

S. Works Carers Support Service

*(For Leamington Spa, Warwick,
Stratford and South Warwickshire)*

9-10 Holly Court
Holly Farm Business Park
Honiley, Kenilworth, CV8 1NP

Tel: 01926 485486

e-mail: info@swcss.f9.co.uk

For Disabled people

D.I.A.L.

(Nuneaton & Bedworth only)

New Ramsden Centre
School Walk, Attleborough
Nuneaton, CV11 4PJ

Tel: 024 7634 9954

The Rowan Organisation

(Whole County)

Eliot Park Innovation Centre
Barling Way
Nuneaton, CV10 7RH

Tel: 0800 783 1755

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