

Carer's Allowance for Carers of Blind and Partially Sighted People 2008/2009

This fact sheet tells you how to claim Carer's Allowance. It is useful for blind and partially sighted people and those who support them.

What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is a benefit paid to people who care for a disabled person. You do not have to be related to, or living with the person you are caring for, in order to qualify. Carer's Allowance is non-means tested so it will not affect any savings that you may have.

Caution

If the person you care for receives Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit that includes the severe disability premium, you may make them worse off by claiming Carer's Allowance. You should therefore seek advice from a Welfare Rights Adviser before claiming.

How much is Carer's Allowance worth?

- £50.55 per week for you, the carer
- £30.20 for an adult dependant (the adult dependant addition is not paid if your partner has certain benefits or earns more than £30.20 per week).

Please note if you were receiving Carer's Allowance prior to April 2003, you may have received additional amounts for your child(ren). Since this date, child dependants' amounts are included in Child Tax Credit. For further information about Child Tax Credit, contact the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3900.



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Action for blind people

You are eligible if:

- you are aged 16 or over and not in full-time education; **and**
- you are earning less than £95 per week; **and**
- you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a person who receives either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) care component middle or higher rate or Attendance Allowance at either rate; **and**
- you must pass the UK presence and residence test and not be subject to immigration control.

What can affect my claim?

As a result of the 'overlapping benefits' rule, you cannot be paid Carer's Allowance if you are receiving the same amount or more from any of the following benefits:

- Incapacity Benefit
- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- State Retirement Pension
- Widow's and Bereavement Benefits
- Maternity Allowance
- Unemployability Supplement when paid with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or War Pension or War Widows Pension.

However, it is still worth claiming Carer's Allowance if you get or could get any of the following benefits as you will qualify for a carer premium:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit.

Carer premium

If you claim Carer's Allowance, but are turned down because of the 'overlapping benefits' rule, you will have an entitlement to the 'carer premium' which is worth £27.75 per week. The 'carer premium' can be included in Income Support, Pension Credit, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

Example of how to qualify for a carer premium

Mr Greene is aged 70 and spends at least 35 hours a week looking after his wife. She gets the lower rate of Attendance Allowance and a State Retirement Pension of £54.35 per week. Mr Greene receives £90.70 State Retirement Pension and a work pension of £105 per week.

As Mr Greene is receiving State Retirement Pension, the overlapping benefits rule stops him from getting Carer's Allowance. However, by claiming Carer's Allowance, he would be eligible to an 'underlying entitlement' to the Carer's Allowance. This underlying entitlement makes him eligible for the carer premium.

Mr and Mrs Greene were not previously entitled to Pension Credit. However, by gaining an underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance, they would now be entitled to £12.95 per week Pension Credit.

How do I claim Carer's Allowance?

- Call the Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 88 22 00 or the Carer's Allowance Unit on 01253 856 123.
- Claim online at www.direct.gov/carersallowance.
- Write to: Carer's Allowance Unit, Palatine House, Lancaster Road, Preston, PR1 1HB.

You should claim Carer's Allowance at the same time, or as soon as possible after the DLA or Attendance Allowance claim as the rules for backdating benefits are restrictive.

Further Information

To find out more, contact Carers UK on 0808 808 7777, your local advice centre, Citizens Advice Bureau or Action's Welfare Rights Service

14 - 16 Verney Road
London SE16 3DZ
National Freephone Helpline: 0800 915 4666
Email: benefit.check@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

You can also find all our fact sheets, briefings and checklists on our website at: [**www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/welfare-rights**](http://www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/welfare-rights)

This is only a brief guide about how blind and partially sighted people and their carers can benefit from Carer's Allowance. It is not a complete or exhaustive statement of law.

7 April 2008

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