Disability Living Allowance

About this factsheet

This factsheet covers Disability Living Allowance (DLA), a tax-free and non-means-tested benefit to help cover the costs of disability. DLA has two components that cover care and mobility needs.

You have to be under 65 to claim DLA. If you are 65 or over and you have care needs you may be able to claim Attendance Allowance (AA). Please see Age UK’s Factsheet 34, Attendance Allowance, for more details.

The information in this factsheet is correct for the period April 2012 – March 2013. Benefit rates and other figures are expected to increase again in April 2013 but rules and figures sometimes change during the year.

The information given in this factsheet is applicable in England and Wales. Different rules may apply in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Readers in these nations should contact their respective national Age UK organisations for information specific to where they live – see section 10 for details.

Section 10 also has details of how to order other Age UK’s factsheets and information materials and the telephone number for Age UK Advice.

If you need more detailed advice or representation, it is often best to find a local service offering this. Age UK Advice can give you contact details for a local Age UK, or you could contact one of the independent organisations listed in section 9.
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1 Recent developments

The Disability Living Allowance (DLA) rates for 2012/13 are as follows.

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<thead>
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<th>Care component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>£77.45</td>
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2 Future changes

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 creates a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP) from April 2013. The detailed regulations for PIP have not yet been agreed, but the main proposals are:

- PIP will replace DLA for people aged 16 to 64. There are currently no proposals to replace DLA with PIP for children aged under 16 and people over the age of 65 who are already receiving DLA.

- You will not be able to claim PIP once you reach the age of 65 (or pension age if that is higher) but you will be able to stay on PIP after that age if you claim it beforehand.

- Between 2013 and 2016 everyone aged 16 to 64 receiving DLA will be reassessed for PIP instead of DLA.

- PIP will have two components - the ‘mobility’ component and the ‘daily living’ component. The amounts of PIP have not yet been announced but each component will have a standard rate and an enhanced rate. The rate you are paid will depend on whether your ability to perform daily activities and/or mobility is limited or severely limited as a result of your disability.
Entitlement to the daily living component will be assessed in relation to nine different activities: preparing food and drink, taking nutrition, managing therapy or monitoring a health condition, bathing and grooming, managing toilet needs/incontinence, dressing and undressing, communicating, engaging socially, and making financial decisions.

Entitlement to the mobility component will be assessed on your ability to move around, and to plan and follow a journey.

The qualifying period before benefit can be awarded will remain at 3 months but the medical condition or disability must be expected to continue for a further 9 months (compared with 6 months for DLA).

There will not be any automatic entitlement for people with specified health conditions, but there will be special rules for people who are terminally ill. If you have a terminal illness, there will be no qualifying period before you can be paid PIP, and you will automatically receive the enhanced rate of the daily living component.

Your entitlement will be assessed on the information provided by you and the health care professionals who look after you; most people will also have a face-to-face assessment with an independent healthcare professional.

Both rates of the daily living component of PIP will act as a passport to Carer’s Allowance in the same way as the middle and higher care component of DLA. It is intended that PIP mobility component will entitle people to join the Motability Scheme and benefit from other transport concessions like the Blue Badge scheme.

If you are in a care home the mobility component will be payable if you satisfy the qualifying conditions.

3 **What is Disability Living Allowance?**

Disability Living Allowance is for people who make a claim before the age of 65, and who, because of their physical or mental disability:

- need help with personal care, or need supervision by day, or need someone to watch over them at night; or
● are unable to walk, have great difficulty walking, or need someone with them when walking in unfamiliar places outdoors; or

● need help with both of these.

DLA does not depend on national insurance contributions, is not affected by savings or income (other than Constant Attendance Allowance and War Pensioners’ Mobility Supplement) and is paid on top of other benefits or pensions. DLA is not taxable.

3.1 How much is DLA?

There are two parts to DLA: the ‘care component’, which is paid at one of three rates, and the ‘mobility component’, which has two different rates.

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These components can be claimed separately or together and a DLA award can be for an indefinite or fixed period.

4 Who qualifies for DLA?

To qualify for DLA you must fulfil all the following conditions:

● you meet one or more of the care or mobility conditions described in sections 4.2 and 4.3, and

● you are aged under 65 when you first claim, and

● you have satisfied the disability conditions for at least three months, and are expected to satisfy them for at least the next six months (but if you are terminally ill, there are special rules - see section 5.3), and
• you are not subject to immigration control, and
• you are normally resident in the UK when you make your claim and have been in the UK for at least 26 of the preceding 52 weeks (unless you are applying under the special rules for terminally ill people).

Some people can be treated as having been in the UK while abroad, including service personnel and some people from European Economic Area states.

4.1 Rules about your age

Although you must have become disabled, and made a claim, before the age of 65, once you are awarded DLA it will continue, without an age limit, as long as you satisfy either the care or mobility conditions.

If you are receiving DLA and your care needs change after you are 65, you may be able to qualify for the middle or highest rate of the care component after six months.

You cannot normally start to receive the lowest rate of the care component or any rate of the mobility component after the age of 65. However, you may be able to receive it if you are already getting one of the components and you can show that you met the conditions for the other component before the age of 65. See section 7.1 for more information.

4.2 The care component

The care component of DLA is for people who need help with personal care, supervision or watching over because of physical or mental disability. It does not matter if you live alone or with other people, or whether you have a carer - what matters is that you need help with personal care, supervision or watching over. Whether you are actually getting any help is irrelevant, and you do not have to spend the allowance on paying for care: it is up to you how you use it.

However, your local authority may take your DLA care component into account when assessing whether, and how much, you need to pay for any care services you receive. See Age UK’s Factsheet 41, *Local Authority assessment for community care services*, for more detailed information.
Middle and highest rate care component

You will receive the middle rate if you meet either a day or a night condition. The highest rate is for those who meet both a day and a night condition, or are terminally ill.

**Day conditions** You may meet the day-time conditions if, because of your disability, you require frequent help throughout the day in connection with your normal bodily functions, such as eating, getting in or out of bed, going to the toilet, washing and taking medication. Seeing and hearing are also bodily functions. For example, if you are visually impaired and need someone to read your post, or you are deaf and need help with communicating, this could help you satisfy the requirement for needing ‘frequent help’. You may also meet the condition if you need someone with you when you are on renal dialysis or you need continual supervision throughout the day to avoid putting yourself or others in substantial danger. Supervision might be needed if you are in danger of falling, or you get confused, or have fits or seizures or your condition is likely to deteriorate or relapse without warning.

**Night conditions** You may meet the night-time conditions if, because of your disability, you require prolonged (generally at least 20 minutes) or repeated (generally at least twice nightly) attention during the night to help you with your bodily functions – for example, going to the toilet or getting in and out of bed. You may also meet this condition if another person needs to be awake for a prolonged period or at frequent intervals throughout the night to watch over you to avoid putting yourself or others in substantial danger.

Lowest rate care component

You may receive the lowest rate if you need help with ‘bodily functions’ for a significant portion of the day. For example, you might need some help to get up in the morning and go to bed in the evening but do not need any help for the rest of the day.

You may also receive the lowest rate if, because of your disability, you could not prepare a cooked main meal for yourself if you had the ingredients, using a traditional cooker. The meal can consist of whatever is appropriate to your culture. Even if you would not normally cook anyway, you need to describe how your ability to plan, prepare and cook a meal would be affected by your illness or disability.
4.3 DLA mobility component

Although the mobility component is given to people who are unable or virtually unable to walk, or need help getting around, you can spend it how you choose. It is not available to people who become disabled, or make a claim, after the age of 65. Local authorities cannot take into account your mobility component when assessing whether, and how much, you need to pay for any care services.

Lower rate conditions

You may receive the lower rate of the mobility component if you can walk but need someone with you most of the time for guidance or supervision when out of doors in an unfamiliar place.

Higher rate conditions

You may receive the higher rate mobility component if you meet one of the following conditions:

● you are unable to walk or have great difficulty in walking without severe discomfort or seriously affecting your health because of a physical disability. Several factors are taken into account: the distance you can walk, the time it takes to cover that distance, your walking speed and the way you walk. There are no set distances or times; everything is considered together. Any symptoms you experience when walking, like pain, breathlessness, or dizziness, are relevant, as are recovery times after walking.

● you are registered severely sight-impaired (blind) and assessed as 80% disabled through deafness and need someone with you when you go outdoors.

● you are certified severely sight impaired or blind, and you meet particular requirements regarding your visual acuity and visual field.

● you have lost both legs at or above the ankle or were born without legs or feet.

● you are severely mentally impaired and have severe behavioural problems and get the highest rate of the care component.
Using a car

If you get the higher rate of the mobility component of DLA, you can apply for road tax exemption for one car. It does not matter whether you are the owner of the car, but the car will have to be used primarily for your benefit to get the exemption. You will get details about this and the Motability Scheme when you first get the allowance.

Under the Motability scheme you can use your higher rate mobility component to get a contract-hire or hire-purchase car, powered wheelchair or mobility scooter. To access this scheme your higher mobility award must have at least 12 months left to run.

You can also apply to your local authority for a Blue Badge, which allows parking with some limitations but without charge at meters or where waiting is restricted. This can be used in any car in which you are travelling. Some local authorities make a small charge for issuing the badge.

See Age UK's Factsheet 73, Driving and parking, for more information about Blue Badges.

4.4 Examples of people who may be entitled to DLA

Ellen is 62 and cannot walk very far owing to severe osteoarthritis in her hips and hands. Although she manages to care for herself, she finds cooking very difficult because she cannot do tasks such as cutting, lifting and pouring. Ellen should apply for DLA. She will be entitled to the higher level of the mobility component if she is able to demonstrate that she is virtually unable to walk. She should also get at least the lowest rate of the care component because of her difficulties with cooking. Although she manages her personal care, she may have significant difficulty with small fastenings, washing and drying her hair, applying make-up, because of the arthritis in her hands. Depending on the level of difficulty she may qualify for the middle rate of the care component.
Albert is 64 and has dementia. During the day, his wife or another relative stays with him all the time because he is very forgetful and sometimes wanders off or turns the gas on without lighting it. He normally sleeps through the night. His wife applied for DLA on his behalf and he was awarded the middle rate of the care component (because he needs supervision during the day) and the lower rate of the mobility component because he needs guidance and supervision when out of doors.

5 Making a claim

5.1 Ways of claiming

You can claim DLA by:

- telephoning the Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 88 22 00 (textphone 0800 24 33 55) and asking for a claim form to be sent to you
- downloading a claim form from the direct.gov website
- claiming online via the direct.gov website
- getting a claim form from an advice agency
- completing and returning the tear-off slip from DWP leaflet DLAA5DCS, available from Jobcentre Plus offices.

If the claim form is sent to you because you rang the Benefit Enquiry Line or returned a tear-off slip, it will be dated. As long as you return the form in the envelope provided within six weeks, your claim, if successful, will start on the day your request was received. If you download the claim form or get one from a local advice agency, your claim will start from the date the completed form is received by the Disability and Carers Service.

5.2 When to claim

Although you normally need to have satisfied the qualifying conditions for three months before you can start getting DLA, if you have recently become disabled, you should still apply straight away, as it may take some weeks to deal with your claim. Claims for DLA can never be backdated to cover any period before the date of your claim.
If you are receiving a lower level of one or both components, but your condition has deteriorated so you might now qualify for a higher level, you can ask for your case to be reconsidered. You will need to satisfy the conditions for the higher level of the benefit for 3 months before it can be paid. See section 7.1 if you are over 65 and receiving DLA to find out the rules about applying for a different rate of the benefit.

If you ask for your case to be looked at again, there is a possibility that your benefit might be stopped or reduced, rather than increased. You may want to seek help from a local advice agency to discuss your position and to ensure that you include all the relevant information before you ask for your DLA to be reconsidered.

5.3 **Terminal illness**

People who are terminally ill can claim DLA without the three-month waiting period, under ‘special rules’ that make the application process quicker and simpler. You will be considered to be terminally ill if you have a progressive illness that is likely to limit your life expectancy to six months or less. It is impossible to say exactly how long someone will live and some people who receive DLA under these rules live much longer than six months.

To claim ask your doctor for a DS1500 report, which is free of charge and gives details of your condition. If you are sending the DS1500 report with a DLA claim form, make sure you have ticked the special rules box. You will not need to complete the whole form – information next to the special rules box explains which parts you need to fill in.

If you are awarded DLA under the special rules, you will automatically receive the highest rate of the care component. However, if you want to claim the mobility component of DLA, you will need to fill in the mobility-related sections of the claim form. Claims should be handled within 10 to 14 days and a medical examination will not normally be necessary.

An application can be made by another person, on behalf of someone who is terminally ill, with or without their knowledge. This makes it possible for people to receive DLA under the special rules without knowing their prognosis.
5.4 **Filling in the claim form**

The intention is that you can describe how your disability affects you on the claim form and that a medical examination will not normally be necessary. The forms are quite long and you may want some assistance with filling them in. You can get help from:

- a friend or relative who could fill the form in for you
- a local, independent advice agency
- the DWP’s Benefit Enquiry Line: the staff can provide information and advice, and can also arrange for help to complete forms over the phone or, if necessary, arrange for someone from the local office to come and help you complete the form.

Many people prefer to get advice from an independent agency rather than from the DWP, because an independent agency may also be able to help if there are problems with the claim, for example, processing delays or appeal matters.

**Filling in the form yourself**

If you are not able to get help to fill in the forms, or you would rather complete the form yourself, here are some tips.

**Take your time**

Read the notes and form before you start and then go through the questions carefully. Once you have finished, read through what you have written to make sure it is clear and check that you have not missed anything out – don’t worry if you make mistakes and need to cross things out. The form does not have to be tidy.

**Give full details**

Give any information that explains your situation bearing in mind the rules described in section 4. Remember that the care component of DLA is for people needing help with personal care and/or supervision and these are the things to concentrate on rather than help you need with tasks such as housework and shopping.
The form asks how long it takes you to do certain things. If you don’t know, time yourself – it may take longer than you think. Time the activity from start to finish: for example, when you get dressed you need to get your clothes out, as well as actually put them on.

The form also asks you to say how often you need help with certain things. If you’re not sure how many times you need to do a certain activity, for example going up and down stairs or going to the toilet, then count it up one day, or take an average over several days if it varies.

If you think that you have not given a complete picture and need some more space add a covering letter or extra paper. Put your name and your national insurance number on the letter or extra sheets; then sign it and attach it securely to the rest of the claim pack.

Help you might need

In some places the form asks if you ‘need help’ with certain activities. Remember it doesn’t matter whether or not you actually receive help. You may live alone and not have anyone to help; or you may prefer to manage on your own, even though you need help. For example, you may not take a bath because you cannot get into it safely on your own – but you might be able to if you had some help. Describe the help you would need to take a bath safely.

Or you may get dressed on your own but only very slowly, or you get out of breath or experience discomfort, or you can only put on certain types of clothes. Add any extra information that helps describe your situation.

The form asks about any aids or adaptations you have to help you. Describe any problems that you have using them, any help you need to use them, and any help you need from another person despite the aids and adaptations. It is important to explain the help that another person could give you – because this is how you qualify for DLA.

Keep notes or a diary

If your illness or disability means you need substantial help on a regular basis it may be easy to complete the form and qualify for the allowance. For other people it may not be so clear-cut.
Perhaps your condition changes so that you have good days and bad days, or you have a mental illness or learning disability and many of the questions don’t seem relevant. It may help to spend a few days keeping a note of all the times when you needed help or you had difficulty doing something on your own, or you felt you needed someone there to keep an eye on you. If you are the relative or carer of a disabled person you could do this on their behalf. This may be particularly useful if the person is not always aware of when help or supervision is needed.

If you have any trouble keeping notes or a diary please contact one of the organisations in section 9 for help.

**Your disability or medical condition**

The claim form asks for information about your illness or disability, but what is most important is the effect it has on your everyday life. The people who make decisions about entitlement have a book of guidance which outlines the main needs likely to arise from the different conditions. But people’s situations vary – you may have more than one medical condition, your situation may be unusual or your condition may be particularly severe. This is why it is important to describe your particular needs.

**Statements from other people**

There is a section which can be completed by someone who knows you – for example, a friend or relative or a professional such as a nurse or doctor.

The person who knows you is asked to give details about your illness or disability and how this affects you. It may be better to include a personal statement from a carer or relative who has observed how your disability affects you and the help you need. A healthcare professional will still be able to provide a supporting letter if required.

It helps if the person knows a little about the rules for the allowance so that they can include the most relevant information.

This section is optional, but it is a good idea to complete it if possible.

**Helping someone else to apply**

People may need help in applying, for example because they don’t like filling in forms, they have problems expressing themselves, or they have difficulty writing.
In these circumstances discuss the questions with them and help them decide the best way to explain their needs. When the form is complete you should ask them to read through (or be read) the information and sign the form to say that the details are correct.

If the person you are helping cannot sign the form – perhaps because they are too ill, or they have a mental impairment or disability – you can complete the form and sign it. There is a section on the form to complete if you are signing it on behalf of someone else. You do not have to do this if you are simply helping the disabled person to write down their answers on the form.

5.5 If the DWP needs more information

After you return the form the decision maker may contact you, your doctor, or someone you mentioned on the form, to ask for more information or to arrange for a doctor to visit you.

If an appointment is made for a doctor to visit, you may want a friend or relative to be present at that time. This will be particularly important if you have difficulty making yourself understood. The doctor will not be your own doctor but one appointed by the DWP. He or she will probably examine you and ask further questions. It may be useful to make a note beforehand of the things you want to tell the doctor about the help you need and any difficulties you experience. Some people may be reluctant to admit that they have problems or cannot do something, but it is important to give a picture of your normal range of activities – not just the things you can do on a ‘good day’.

6 Decisions and payment

You will be sent a decision on your claim in writing. DLA may be awarded indefinitely or for a fixed period depending on your circumstances. If you are awarded the allowance for a fixed period you will be sent a renewal claim form – normally about four months before the end of the period. There is a system of reviews for DLA, which means that you may be sent a questionnaire at any time to check whether your needs have changed.
6.1 If you disagree with a decision

If you disagree with a decision about your allowance, you can ask for the decision to be reconsidered or make an appeal. You will be sent details of how to do this when you receive the decision. It is important to challenge a decision or get advice as quickly as possible because there are time limits that generally mean you must take action within one month. See Age UK’s Factsheet 74, *Challenging welfare benefit decisions*, for more information.

6.2 Payment

DLA is normally paid by direct credit into your bank, building society or post office account. It can be paid to an appointee (someone else on your behalf) if you are not able to act for yourself. DLA is normally paid four-weekly in arrears, but if you are terminally ill and claiming under the special rules you can get weekly payments in advance. DLA can sometimes be paid by weekly cheque if you are unable to open or manage an account. The government intends to phase cheques out in 2012 and introduce a new system called ‘simple payments’ which will be collectable from some Paypoint outlets.

If you leave hospital or a care home, but expect to return within 28 days, DLA can be paid at a daily rate for days at home.

If you are receiving another social security benefit, your DLA might be combined with that benefit so that you receive single payment.

7 Changes of circumstances

The decision letter will include information about your responsibility to inform the DWP of any changes in your circumstances that might affect your claim.

7.1 If your condition changes

If you are receiving DLA, and your condition changes so that you think you may qualify for a different award, you can contact the DWP’s Disability and Carers Service and ask for your case to be looked at again. Write to them at the address on your award letter or telephone the DLA helpline. You will probably be asked to complete a form giving details of how your needs have changed.
Important! When you ask for your claim to be looked at again, the decision maker may look at the whole award again, and could decide to reduce it, increase it or keep it at the same level. You may want to get independent advice about whether you might qualify for a higher rate and how to explain your needs fully before you contact the DWP.

You need to satisfy the conditions for three months to get a higher rate of DLA. If your needs have increased and you tell the DWP within a month of completing the three-month qualifying period for the higher rate, the increase is backdated to the date you completed the three-month period.

If you are 65 or over and receiving DLA, and your condition changes, you cannot usually start to receive the lowest care component but you can start to receive the middle or highest care component. So if, for example, you are receiving middle rate care and you now need help during the day and the night you can apply for highest rate care. When you are over 65 you have to satisfy the conditions for six months before your allowance can be increased.

Once you are 65, you cannot normally be awarded the lowest rate of the care component or either rate of the mobility component of DLA for the first time. Nor can you move from lower rate mobility to higher rate mobility after the age of 65. The only exception to these rules is where:

- you already have an award of DLA, and
- you can show that you met the qualifying conditions for the new award before you were 65, and
- none of the relevant qualifying conditions have been introduced since your 65th birthday.

7.2 Going abroad

7.2.1 Temporary absence abroad

DLA can be paid for the first 26 weeks of a temporary absence abroad. If you are away for more than 26 weeks, you may have difficulty re-qualifying when you return because you usually need to be present in Great Britain for 26 of the last 52 weeks to get DLA (see section 4).
You can be paid for longer than 26 weeks if your absence is temporary and you are going abroad to be treated for an illness or disability that began before you left the country and the DWP agrees to pay you for longer.

7.2.2 Exporting DLA to the EEA and Switzerland

Sometimes DLA, Carers Allowance and Attendance Allowance can be paid if you leave the UK to live in another European Economic Area (EEA) state or Switzerland. If you have already moved to another EEA state or Switzerland and your DLA was stopped when you left, you may be able to get it reinstated.

The rules are complex, especially because the rights you have under European Union law depend on when you made your claim for benefit. In addition, the law in this area is still being challenged and clarified, particularly in relation to the mobility component.

For further information and/or to request a claim form write to: Exportability Co-ordinator, Room C216, Pension, Disability and Carers Service, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill Road, Blackpool FY2 OYE or email exportability.eam@dwp.gsi.gov.uk. If you have internet access there is more information on the Government website: www.direct.gov.uk. For independent advice, see section 10 for the telephone numbers for Age UK Advice who can give you contact details for a local Age UK, or contact one of the independent organisations listed in section 9.

7.3 Hospital and care homes

Your entitlement to DLA can be affected if you are in, or move into, a hospital or care home. If you are receiving DLA and you go into, or come out of, a hospital or care home you should always notify the DWP.

7.3.1 DLA in a hospital

If you are receiving DLA, it stops 28 days after you enter an NHS hospital or ‘similar institution’ (this is not defined but could be a care home where you are fully funded by the NHS). If you have a Motability agreement, the amount payable from your DLA mobility component will still be paid while the agreement continues.
If you are already in an NHS hospital, you cannot start receiving DLA. But if you make a claim and satisfy the disability conditions you may be able to start receiving the allowance when you go home.

There is a linking rule that applies if you go back into hospital after being at home for fewer than 29 days. The two (or more) hospital stays are linked, the numbers of days in each stay are added together and DLA stops after a total of 28 days. But you are still paid DLA for the days spent at home in between the hospital stays.

If you are terminally ill and the DWP is aware of this, you can still receive DLA if you go into a non-NHS hospice.

7.3.2 DLA in a care home

The mobility component of DLA is not affected by admission to a care home, unless your place is fully funded by NHS continuing healthcare, in which case you are treated as if you are a hospital patient (see section 7.3.1).

Whether or not you can receive DLA care component in a care home depends on how the care home fees are being met. If you are paying the full charges in a care home, with or without the help of benefits like Pension Credit or Income Support, you can claim and receive DLA care component (provided you fulfil the other conditions for it). You can also get DLA care component if you are self-funding apart from contributions from the NHS towards nursing care payments.

If the NHS pays all of your care home fees, through NHS continuing healthcare funding, you will be treated as if you are in hospital and your DLA care component will be affected as described in section 7.3.1.

If you get local authority financial support towards your care home fees, you cannot start to receive the care component of DLA. If you are already getting the care component of DLA, it stops 28 days after admission or sooner if you have been in hospital. But you will still retain an 'underlying entitlement' to the allowance, so that if you move out of the home you could start to receive it again.

If the local authority provides temporary funding that will later be reimbursed by you (for example, under a deferred payment agreement), DLA care component can be paid for that period.
The linking rule described in section 7.3.1 also applies to people who go into care homes for temporary periods, perhaps for regular respite care. If your respite care is funded in full or in part by a local authority or by NHS continuing care funding, your DLA will stop after 28 days of respite care, whether the 28 days occur in one block or in one or more linked periods. If you need regular periods of respite care in a care home, it may be possible to plan these periods so that DLA is not affected. Seek advice if this applies to you.

**Action:** For more information on living in a care home please see our other factsheets on care and care homes. Details of how to order them are in section 10.

### 8 DLA and other benefits

#### 8.1 DLA as income

Income from DLA is ignored in the calculation for means-tested benefits including Pension Credit, Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

#### 8.2 Overlapping benefits

Constant Attendance Allowance paid with industrial injuries disablement benefit or a war pension overlaps with DLA care component. DLA mobility component overlaps with the war pensioners’ mobility supplement. If you qualify for two overlapping benefits, you will be paid whichever is higher.
8.3 Effect on means-tested benefits

Entitlement to DLA can sometimes help you to get a higher amount of means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit, Income Support, income-based Jobseekers Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. You may be entitled to extra amounts in these benefits if you are getting DLA. And any deductions that are being made from these benefits because other adults share your household will be removed if you get the care component of DLA.

If you are already receiving one of these means-tested benefits when you are awarded DLA, it is important to make sure that the relevant benefit office is told of the award and reviews your claim. This also applies if your DLA claim is reviewed and your award is increased or reduced. DWP offices should be aware of the DLA award without the need for you to tell them, but it is your responsibility to inform your local authority so that they can review your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit claim and HMRC for tax credits.

If you are not receiving one of these means-tested benefits or have had a claim refused in the past, a new award of DLA may mean that you become entitled for the first time. You will need to make a new claim for these benefits and you may be able to receive payments backdated to the time your DLA started. It is often a good idea to make a claim for the relevant means-tested benefit at the same time as claiming DLA to ensure you do not lose out. Your claim may initially be refused, but if DLA is subsequently awarded, your award could be backdated to when you first made the claim. If you are not sure of your position, get help from a local advice agency – they may be able to check your entitlement and help you with any claims.

Age UK has a number of factsheets about means-tested benefits: Factsheet 48, Pension Credit; Factsheet 17, Housing and Council Tax Benefit (for people over Pension Credit qualifying age); and Factsheet 56, Benefits for people under State Pension age.
8.4 **Council Tax**

If you have a severe mental impairment and you are awarded the middle or highest care component of DLA, you may become entitled to a Council Tax discount. A severe mental impairment could be a learning disability, mental illness or a condition like dementia. See Age UK’s Factsheet 21, *Council Tax*, for more information.

8.5 **Benefits for carers**

If you are awarded the middle or highest rate of the care component of DLA and you have a carer, they may be entitled to claim Carer’s Allowance, or national insurance credits as a carer. Some carers also qualify for Council Tax discounts: see Age UK’s Factsheet 21, *Council Tax*, for more information.

In some situations your benefits could be reduced if someone is paid Carer’s Allowance to look after you. This could happen if you receive the severe disability premium or additional amount for severe disability as part of Pension Credit, Income Support, income–related Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit. Your benefits will not be affected if your carer is awarded an underlying entitlement to Carer’s Allowance only.

**Note:** See Age UK’s Factsheet 55, *Carer’s Allowance*, for more information, and seek advice if you think your benefits may be affected if your carer claims Carer’s Allowance.

9 **Useful organisations**

**Action for Blind People**

Charity providing free and confidential support for blind and partially sighted people in all aspects of their lives.

Tel: 0303 123 9999  
Website: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID – Royal National Institute for Deaf People)

Charity offering information and support for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Tel: 0808 808 0123 (free call)  
Textphone: 0808 808 9000 (free call)  
Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Alzheimer’s Society

Charity which can advise on how to apply the rules to somebody with dementia.

Tel: 0845 300 0336 (lo-call rate)  
Website: http://alzheimers.org.uk

Arthritis Care

Charity with a factsheet *Claiming Disability Living Allowance* with advice on filling in the form.

Helpline: 0808 800 4050 (free call)  
Website: www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Benefit Enquiry Line

Government-run information line about benefits for people with disabilities, carers and representatives.

Tel: 0800 88 22 00 (free call)  
Textphone: 0800 24 33 55 (free call)  
Website: www.direct.gov.uk/disability-money

British Lung Foundation

Charity which may be able to provide useful information if you have chest problems and breathing difficulties.

Tel: 0845 850 5020 (lo-call rate)  
Website: www.lunguk.org
**Carers UK**

Charity working on behalf of carers. Offers wide range of information on carers’ rights and sources of help and contact details for local carers’ support groups.

Tel: 0808 808 7777 (free call)
Website: www.carersuk.org

**Citizens Advice**

National network of free and independent advice centres. Depending on available resources may offer benefits check and help filling forms.

Tel: 020 7833 2181 (for local contact details only – not telephone advice)
Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

**Community Legal Service**

National network of Legal Services Commission funded organisations and advice providers that fund, provide and promote civil legal aid services – free, confidential and independent legal advice for residents of England and Wales.

Tel: 0845 345 4345

**DIAL UK**

Charity providing a national organisation for a network of 140 local disability information and advice services run by and for disabled people.

Tel and textphone: 01302 310 123
Website: www.dialuk.info

**Disability Law Service**

Charity providing free, confidential legal advice to disabled adults, their families and carers.

Tel: 020 7791 9800
Textphone: 020 7791 9801
Website: www.dls.org.uk
**Disability Living Allowance helpline**

Government-run service with access to DLA records. Provides advice once you have made a claim for DLA.

Telephone: 08457 123 456  
Textphone: 08457 22 44 33  
Email: DCPU.Customer-Services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

**Disability Rights UK**

Charity promoting meaningful independent living for disabled people; promoting disabled people’s leadership and control; breaking the link between disability and poverty; and campaigning for disability equality and human rights.

Website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

**Macmillan**

Charity providing up-to-date cancer information, practical advice and support for cancer patients, their families and carers.

Tel: 0808 808 00 00 (free call)  
Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

**MENCAP**

Charity for people with learning disabilities and their families.

Helpline: 020 7454 0454  
Website: www.mencap.org.uk

**MIND**

Charity providing information and advice for people with mental health problems.

Helpline: 0845 766 0163 (lo-call rate)  
Website: www.mind.org.uk
Motability
Charity with overall responsibility for the Motability Scheme.
Tel: 0845 456 4566
Textphone: 0845 675 0009
www.motability.co.uk

Parkinson’s UK
Charity providing support, advice and information for people with Parkinson’s Disease, their carers, family and friends.
Helpline: 0808 800 0303 (free call)
Website: www.parkinsons.org.uk

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
Charity offering information and advice for people with sight problems.
Helpline: 0303 123 9999
Website: www.rnib.org.uk

Stroke Association
Provides community support in some areas and provides patient leaflets for people affected by stroke.
Helpline: 0303 303 3100
Website: www.stroke.org.uk
10 Further information from Age UK

Age UK Information Materials

Age UK publishes a large number of free Information Guides and Factsheets on a range of subjects including money and benefits, health, social care, consumer issues, end of life, legal, issues employment and equality issues.

Whether you need information for yourself, a relative or a client our information guides will help you find the answers you are looking for and useful organisations who may be able to help. You can order as many copies of guides as you need and organisations can place bulk orders.

Our factsheets provide detailed information if you are an adviser or you have a specific problem.

Age UK Advice

Visit the Age UK website, www.ageuk.org.uk, or call Age UK Advice free on 0800 169 65 65 if you would like:

- further information about our full range of information products
- to order copies of any of our information materials
- to request information in large print and audio
- expert advice if you cannot find the information you need in this factsheet
- contact details for your nearest local Age UK
Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our, publications, online or by calling Age UK Advice.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65
Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

In Wales, contact:
Age Cymru: 0800 169 65 65
Website: www.agecymru.org.uk

In Scotland, contact:
Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732
Website: www.agescotland.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact:
Age NI: 0808 808 7575
Website: www.ageni.org.uk

Support our work

Age UK is the largest provider of services to older people in the UK after the NHS. We make a difference to the lives of thousands of older people through local resources such as our befriending schemes, day centres and lunch clubs; by distributing free information materials; and through calls to Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65.

If you would like to support our work by making a donation please call Supporter Services on 0800 169 80 80 (8.30 am–5.30 pm) or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/donate
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Concern England (charity number 261794) and Help the Aged (charity
number 272786) and their trading and other associated companies merged
on 1 April 2009. Together they have formed Age UK, a single charity
dedicated to improving the lives of people in later life. Age Concern and Help
the Aged are brands of Age UK. The three national Age Concerns in
Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have also merged with Help the Aged
in these nations to form three registered charities: Age Scotland, Age
Northern Ireland, Age Cymru.

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