

Attendance Allowance

You could get £60.00 or £89.60 a week to help with personal care because you're physically or mentally disabled and you're aged 65 or over.

This is called Attendance Allowance. It's paid at 2 different rates and how much you get depends on the level of care that you need because of your disability.

The other benefits you get can increase if you get Attendance Allowance.

Your carer could get Carer's Allowance if you have substantial caring needs.

Attendance Allowance rates

Rate	Level of help you need
Lower rate - £60.00	Frequent help or constant supervision during the day, or supervision at night
Higher rate - £89.60	Help or supervision throughout both day and night, or you're terminally ill

You could get extra Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction if you get Attendance Allowance - check with the helpline or office dealing with your benefit.

How you're paid

All benefits, pensions and allowances are paid into an account, eg your bank account.

Changes of circumstances

Your circumstances can affect how much you get, eg moving between the lower and higher rates. You must contact the Attendance Allowance helpline if your circumstances change. For example:

- the level of help you need or your condition changes
- you go into hospital or a care home for more 28 days
- you go abroad for more than 13 weeks
- you're imprisoned or held in detention

You must also contact the helpline on 0800 731 0122

- you change your name, address or bank details
- you want to stop receiving your benefit
- your doctor's details change

You could get a £50 civil penalty and have to repay overpaid benefits if you don't report changes and are overpaid as a result.

Eligibility

You can get Attendance Allowance if you're 65 or over and the following apply:

- you have a physical disability (including sensory disability, eg blindness), a mental disability (including learning difficulties), or both
- your disability is severe enough for you to need help caring for yourself or someone to supervise you, for your own or someone else's safety

Conditions

You must also:

- be in Great Britain when you claim - there are some exceptions, eg members and family members of the Armed Forces
- have been in Great Britain for at least 2 of the last 3 years
- be habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands
- not be subject to immigration control (unless you're a sponsored immigrant)

There are some exceptions to these conditions if you're living in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland.

Assessments

You might get a letter saying you need to attend an assessment to check your eligibility. The letter will explain why and where you must go.

At the assessment, you'll be asked for identification. You can use a passport or any 3 of the following:

- birth certificate
- a full driving licence
- life assurance policy
- bank statements

How to claim

Use form **AA1A** to apply for Attendance Allowance by post.

The form comes with notes telling you how to fill it in and where to send it.

You can also get claim packs from the Attendance Allowance helpline.

Attendance Allowance helpline

Telephone: 0800 731 0122

Textphone: 0800 731 0317

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

British Sign Language (BSL) video relay service

To use this you must:

- first check you can use the service

- go to the video relay service

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

What you need to know

Attendance Allowance can be backdated to the date of your claim. This is usually the date your form is received or the date you call the enquiry line (if you return the claim pack within 6 weeks).

It usually takes 40 working days to deal with your claim. It can be quicker if you're terminally ill.

You might need an assessment to complete your application.

Attendance Allowance does not cover mobility needs.

Special rules - if you're terminally ill

There are 'special rules' so you get Attendance Allowance more quickly if you're not expected to live more than 6 months. You must:

- complete an Attendance Allowance form
- include a DS1500 medical condition report or send it soon after - these are free and you can only get them from a doctor, specialist or consultant

You can do this on behalf of someone else without their permission. The letter about the money awarded won't mention 'special rules'.

Appeal a decision

You can appeal to the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal if you disagree with a decision. You must usually ask for 'mandatory reconsideration' before you appeal.

Complaints

You can complain to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if you're unhappy with the service you've received.