



# Personal Independence Payment

Help towards some of the extra costs you might have because of a long-term health condition or disability



Department for  
**Communities**  
[www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

# Introduction

This guide:

- explains what Personal Independence Payment is
- answers some questions to help you decide if you may be able to get it, and
- tells you (or the person supporting you) how to claim PIP.

## What is Personal Independence Payment?

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for people aged 16 or over and under State Pension Age in June 2016.

PIP reflects today's understanding of disability, which has changed a lot since DLA was introduced. It aims to help disabled people live more independently and support those in the greatest need.

PIP has been designed to help with some of the extra costs arising from having a long-term health condition or disability to last for 12 months or longer. It is assessed on how a person's condition affects their daily life, not the condition they have. You can claim PIP whether you are employed or unemployed. It is not means tested or taxed. If you claim PIP you will have your individual needs assessed.

If you are awarded PIP you or your carer may get other benefits or services such as a Motability vehicle or Carer's Allowance.

There are special rules for people who are nearing end of life and not expected to live for more than 12 months. You will not have to fill in the form 'How your disability affects you'.

If you have been given a diagnosis of less than 12 months to live, you will not need an assessment, you'll automatically be entitled to the enhanced rate of the daily living part of PIP without having to satisfy the normal qualifying period. You may also be entitled to the mobility part of PIP depending on your mobility needs.

## Who can get PIP?

TO QUALIFY FOR PIP, THE FOLLOWING MUST APPLY:

- you must be 16 or over and under state pension age.
- You must have a long-term health condition or disability that causes difficulties in your day to day activities and mobility.
- You must have had these difficulties for at least three months and expect them to last for at least another nine months unless you are nearing end of life and not expected to live for more than 12 months.
- You must be in Northern Ireland when you make your claim (or when you ask someone to help you make your claim). You must also have been in Northern Ireland for at least two of the last three years (there are some exceptions to this, for example, for members of the Armed Forces and their families).
- You must have your main or only home in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man or Channel Islands.
- You must not be under any immigration control (unless you are a sponsored immigrant).

There are some exceptions to these conditions if you are living in or coming from a country in the European Economic Area or Switzerland.

If you are in a care home or hospital you can still claim PIP, however if you are awarded, you may not receive any payments until you return to your own home.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN AND PEOPLE AGED OVER STATE PENSION AGE?

Children under 16 can still get DLA even if you are making a new claim for them. If your child under 16 is already getting DLA, we will contact you and them before they turn 16 to explain what they need to do once they are 16.

You cannot claim PIP from State Pension age, except in certain circumstances where you have recently been awarded a state benefit.

If you are already receiving PIP when you reach State Pension age, you will continue to receive it as long as you meet the eligibility criteria.



# How PIP works?

PIP is made up of two parts:

- a daily living part
- a mobility part

Whether you get one or both parts and how much you get depends on how difficult you find everyday tasks and getting around.

## DAILY LIVING PART

You might get the daily living part of PIP if you need help with:

- preparing food
- taking nutrition
- managing therapy or monitoring a health condition
- washing and bathing
- managing toilet needs or incontinence
- dressing and undressing
- communicating verbally
- reading and understanding signs, symbols and words
- engaging with other people face to face
- making budgeting decisions

## MOBILITY PART

You might get the mobility part of PIP if you need help with:

- planning and following journeys
- moving around

You do not have to have a physical disability to get the mobility part. You might also be

eligible if you have difficulty getting around because of a cognitive or mental health condition, like anxiety.

## HOW ENTITLEMENT TO PIP IS CALCULATED

For each activity, there are a number of 'descriptors', sentences which describe how much support you need to do the activity and the type of support you need. Each descriptor has a point score.

Your scores for the activities are added together to give a total for each part. You will get the most points if you cannot do the activity at all. You will get some points if you need special equipment, or supervision or help from another person, to do the activity.

You will not get any points if you can do the activity without any help. Each part can be paid at either the 'standard rate' or the 'enhanced rate'. For each part, you will get the standard rate if you score between eight and 11 points in total. You will get the enhanced rate if your scores add up to 12 points or more.



# Steps to claim



## Step 1 - Contact the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Centre

By phone, by post or by using sign language. Call the PIP Centre to make a claim. Telephone: **0800 012 1573**

If you need a paper claim form or are assisting someone to make their claim, please let the PIP Centre know.

If you use sign language. You may be able to use the video relay or remote interpreting service to make a claim to Personal Independence Payment. You can use either British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL). This service is accessible at: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip)

If you use Relay UK dial **18001** followed by our phone number or use the Relay UK app



## Step 2 - Explain how your disability affects you

You'll be sent a 'How your disability affects you' form (also known as PIP2). You should include any other supporting evidence you already have about your condition with the PIP2 form. This is important and could mean you do not need to have an assessment. If you do not return this form your claim to PIP may be disallowed. If you need more time to send us any evidence, please call the PIP Centre to discuss.

If you need help to fill in the form you can contact the Department for Communities Make the Call Service [www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/unclaimed-benefits](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/unclaimed-benefits)

If you would like independent help and advice on Personal Independence Payment or any other welfare changes, you can visit any independent advice office or visit your local district council website where details of approved independent advice agencies are listed.



## Step 3 - Assessment

Your claim will be assessed by an independent health assessor to help work out the level of help you need. Assessments can be in person or over the phone. The health assessor will look at the information you give and may ask your GP or other contacts you've given us for more information but only if they think they need it.



## Step 4. Decision

Once the assessment has finished, it will be returned and a PIP case manager will consider all the information, including the advice from the health assessor and information you have given.



### ● STEP 1 - CONTACT THE PIP CENTRE

You will be asked for information such as:

- your contact details and your date of birth
- your National Insurance number
- your bank or building society details
- the details for your GP or other healthcare professionals, and
- details of any time you have spent abroad, in a care home or in hospital.

Someone else can call on your behalf, but you will need to be with them when they call.

### ● STEP 2 - TELLING US HOW YOUR DISABILITY AFFECTS YOU

We will send you a 'How your disability affects you' form and notes to help you fill it in. The

form asks you to explain how your condition affects your daily life, on good days and bad days and the activities you have difficulties with.

It is important that you fill this form in and send it to the PIP Centre as soon as possible in the envelope provided. If you do not return this form your claim to PIP may be disallowed. You should include any other supporting evidence you already have about your condition with the PIP2 form.

Sending us supporting evidence can be important and may mean you do not need to have an assessment as your claim can sometimes be decided by just using the written information provided.

### ● STEP 3 - ASSESSMENT

If you need to have an assessment your claim will be considered by an assessor who is independent. The health assessor will look at the information you give and may ask your GP or other contacts you've given us for more information but only if they think they need it.

Sometimes they can assess your claim just from using the information you provide, but most people will need to have an assessment. If you need to have an assessment, the assessor will contact you to arrange it.

The assessment will give you the chance to explain your needs in your own words. You can take someone with you for support, and they can take part in the discussion.

You will need to have photo ID such as your passport or driving licence with you at the assessment. You may also want to have a copy of your claim form with you so you can refer to it.

You can have your assessment recorded. Contact the health assessor before your appointment to arrange this. After your appointment you will receive a link to your recording by text message or email.

### ● STEP 4 - MAKING A DECISION

All the information relevant to your claim, including the assessor's findings and any information you have provided, will be sent to a case manager. They will make a decision on your claim and write to tell you how they made that decision.

If you would like a copy of the report completed by the Assessor, you can request this by contacting the PIP Centre.



If you qualify for PIP, your claim will be reviewed regularly to make sure that you are getting the right amount of money.

## What if I am nearing end of life?

If you are nearing end of life and are not expected to live for more than 12 months, the following will apply.

- You will not have to fill in the 'How your disability affects you' form.
- You will not need an assessment.
- You will be entitled to the enhanced rate of the daily living component of PIP straight away.
- You may also be entitled to the mobility component depending on whether you need help to go out or move around.

You can claim PIP by phoning the PIP Centre.

Phone: **0800 012 1573**

If you use sign language you may be able to use the video relay or remote interpreting service to make a claim to Personal Independence Payment. You can use either British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL).

This service is accessible at:

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/personal-independence-payment-pip-centre](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/personal-independence-payment-pip-centre)**

If you use Relay UK dial **18001** followed by our phone number or use the Relay UK app. Someone else can make the call on your behalf.

We recommend you send us a SR1 form from your doctor, specialist or consultant to support your claim (unless you have sent one for this or any other state benefit in the last 12 months).

The SR1 is a report about your medical condition. You will not have to pay for it. You can ask the doctor's receptionist, a nurse or a social worker to arrange it for you. You do not have to see the doctor.

## How will I be paid?

As with other benefits, PIP is paid straight into an account, such as your bank account.

PIP is usually paid every four weeks in arrears (for the previous four weeks). However, if you are awarded PIP under the special rules because you are nearing end of life, you

will be paid every week in advance (for the coming week).

To find out the current rates of PIP, go to: **[www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip)**

## Disability premiums, other benefits and PIP

**YOU MAY GET A TOP-UP (CALLED A DISABILITY PREMIUM) IF YOU GET:**

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Housing Benefit
- If you previously qualified for the disability element of Working Tax Credit you may now qualify for the Limited Capacity for Work and Work Related Activity (LCWRA) element of Universal Credit (**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/universal-credit-if-you-have-health-condition-or-disability](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/universal-credit-if-you-have-health-condition-or-disability)**)

- If you get Constant Attendance Allowance (**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/constant-attendance-allowance](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/constant-attendance-allowance)**) you'll get less of the daily part of PIP.
- If you get War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (**[www.gov.uk/guidance/war-pension-scheme-mobility-supplement-wpms](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/war-pension-scheme-mobility-supplement-wpms)**) you will not get the mobility part of PIP.



This leaflet is for guidance only and is not a full statement of the law about PIP.

#### OTHER HELP YOU CAN GET:

Other help you can get

If you receive the mobility part of PIP, you might be eligible for a:

- Blue Badge
- Vehicle Tax Discount or exemption
- Motability Scheme vehicle - if you get the higher mobility part of PIP

If someone helps to care for you, they may be able to get Carer's Allowance or Carer's Credit.

#### WHERE CAN I GET MORE HELP AND ADVICE?

You can find out more about PIP by visiting the website at:

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip)**

**Phone: 0800 587 0932**

If you use Relay UK dial **18001** followed by our phone number or use the Relay UK app

You can get help from the Department for Communities Make the Call on **0800 232 1271** or online **[www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/make-call-service](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/make-call-service)**

- You can visit your local Jobs & Benefits office.
- You can contact a local advisory service who can provide independent help and support.

## Further information

There is information on all aspects of PIP at **[www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/pip)**  
This booklet is available in alternative formats, to request please contact the PIP Centre on **0800 012 1573**