



# THE BENEFIT SYSTEM & YOUR CHILD Under 16



## *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 FIFTEEN.

When your child reaches the age of sixteen s/he will be entitled to claim benefits in their own right (Employment and Support Allowance), and s/he will have to claim Personal Independence Payments (PIP) rather than DLA – see our leaflet *Pb11*.

S/he can also consider benefits if in 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 Care component is for children who need a high degree of looking after. 'Care' can be actually doing something practical for them, or simply keeping an eye on them – or a combination of the two. It also includes activities to promote their physical and mental development.

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.

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** (from 3) is for those with walking problems considered to be “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. The higher rate is also available to anyone considered ‘severely visually impaired’, with severe behavioural problems and who needs 24 hour care

People in receipt of the higher rate are entitled to a blue parking 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.

**Contact Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Service for help with Appealing – [www.wwras.org.uk](http://www.wwras.org.uk).**

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

**To claim:** call 0845 712 3456 (textphone: 0845 722 4433) or download from website: [www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim).

## **CHANGES**

DLA will be payable up to the 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. From then your child will have to claim Personal Independence Payments (PIP) instead. For technical reasons, some 16-19 year olds may be kept on DLA for longer, during the transition to PIP.

Please note that PIP is a different benefit (especially the higher rate Mobility) so get advice when claiming PIP.

## **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, or the Daily Living component of PIP, so you can claim both the Carers Allowance and Disability Living Allowance/PIP 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 over pension age who may be also getting another benefit (such as a state or private 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 01904 621115, or visit their website at [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

## \* \* \* \* \* **SPIN OFFS** \* \* \* \* \*

### A. **INCOME-RELATED HELP**

If you are getting DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE/PIP 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:

- \* CHILD TAX CREDIT
- \* INCOME SUPPORT (IS)
- \* JOBSEEKERS ALLOWANCE (income-based)
- \* RENT REBATE (Housing Benefit)
- \* ESA (income-related)

These benefits are being replaced by Universal Credit. Check the Gov.uk website to see when Universal Credit is coming to your area.

Also: \* COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION \* PENSION CREDIT (PC)

In fact, for some carers also getting Disability Living Allowance/PIP 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. The same applies for those where PIP is received.

#### (ii) **CARERS**

Those on Carers Allowance and who can claim one of the above “income-related” benefits, 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. See our leaflet *Pb35* for more detail about this much unclaimed assistance.

### **(ii) BLUE BADGE**

If your child is aged 2 and over, and has severe mobility problems, you can get a Blue Parking Badge. This allows both free and less restricted parking. To apply, call Warwickshire County Council 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 other benefits if aged under the lower, 'female' pension age, contact your local Jobcentre Plus office – address/ telephone number in the telephone book
- \* For other benefits if aged over the pension age, call your local Pension Service

## **NEED HELP?**

**For further help and advice contact:**

### **Your local Citizens Advice at .....**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Chestnut House  
North Street  
**Rugby, CV21 2AQ**

Old Market Tavern  
25 Congreve Walk  
**Bedworth, CV12 8LX**  
(To book an appointment in  
**Nuneaton** call 024 7635 1049)

The Parish Rooms  
Welcome Street  
**Atherstone, CV9 1DU**

10 Hamilton Terrace  
**Leamington Spa, CV32 4LY**

25 Meer Street  
**Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6QB**

Switchboard number for ALL CAs: 0344 855 2322

### **For Carers Advice, Information and Support .....**

#### **Warwickshire Carer Wellbeing Service**

9 Lawford Road, Rugby, CV21 2DZ

Tel: 024 7610 1040

Website: [www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk](http://www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk)

e-mail: [carer.support@carerstrusthofe.org.uk](mailto:carer.support@carerstrusthofe.org.uk)

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