

WELFARE RIGHTS UNIT

CARERS ALLOWANCE

From April 2022

Carers Allowance is a financial benefit that can be paid to a person who is caring for someone who is receiving Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance middle or high rate Care component or Personal Independence Payment daily living component.

To qualify:

- The carer must regularly spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone who receives either:
 - Disability Living Allowance middle or high rate care component
 - Personal Independence Payment daily living component
 - Attendance Allowance
 - Constant Attendance Allowance (of £75.50 week or more) paid with the Industrial Injuries/War Pensions schemes
- The carer cannot be in full-time education. Full time education is a course of 21 hours or more a week of supervised study, including coursework or homework set by the tutor
- The carer must be 16 or over
- If the carer works they are not entitled to Carers Allowance if they earn more than £132 week after tax, National Insurance and half of a contribution to an occupational or personal pension fund
- The carer must pass the UK residence and presence tests and must not be subject to immigration control.

The Benefit

Carers Allowance is £69.70 week, but for those carers who qualify it can be topped-up with Income Support. It is an overlapping benefit with State Pension, Maternity Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Contributory Employment and Support Allowance, Contribution-based Job Seekers Allowance, Widows' Benefit and Bereavement Benefits, Severe Disablement Allowance or a State Training Allowance. Therefore the higher of the two benefits will be paid. It is taken into account as income for income-related benefits, but it does attract an additional premium with most income-related benefits. Recipients of Carers Allowance are exempt from Benefit cap.

Carers Allowance can only be claimed for looking after one disabled person, so if the carer is caring for two people on Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance mid or high rate care, or Personal Independence Payment daily living component, they will only be able to claim for one of them, and they cannot add the hours caring for two or more people to make 35 hours. Nor can two people claim Carers Allowance for looking after the same person.

If the cared for person is on a means-tested benefit, e.g. Income Support, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, or income-related Employment and Support Allowance with a severe disability premium, they will lose the Severe Disability Premium if their carer is awarded Carers Allowance.

Time off from caring

Carers Allowance can still be paid for up to eight weeks after the cared for person dies.

It can also be paid for up to 12 weeks in any 26 week period if the carer or cared for person goes into hospital. However, if the cared for person's Attendance Allowance, or Disability Living Allowance, or Personal Independence Payment stops after 4 weeks in hospital then Carers Allowance will stop. Four weeks of the 12 weeks can be used for temporary breaks, such as holidays, or respite in a care home.

New claimants will have to have cared for at least 22 weeks before they are entitled to continue to receive Carers Allowance whilst having a break from caring. However up to 8 weeks of hospital stays can be included in that 22 weeks if the carer or cared for person is in hospital and the carer would have been caring if they or the cared for person was not in hospital.

National Insurance Contributions

Carers may also be credited with Class 1 National Insurance Contributions, which will be used to determine the amount of State Retirement Pension they are entitled to. Or if the carer is sick they may be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance.

Carers who are caring for someone, or more than one person, for a total of 20 hours per week can receive National Insurance Credits if the person(s) they are caring for is (are) entitled to Disability Living Allowance middle or high rate Care, Personal Independence Payment daily living component, or Attendance Allowance.

How to claim

To make a claim for Carer's Allowance:

Online: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim>

Or contact the **Carer's Allowance Unit** Telephone: 0800 731 0297

{Textphone: 0800 731 0317}, to order a paper form

ADVICE & HELP

London Borough of Havering

Welfare Rights Unit

Advice Line

Leave your name and phone number. We'll then call you to discuss your benefit issue.

01708 434444

Email WelfareRightsUnit@havering.gov.uk

Citizen's Advice Havering

Telephone Advice

Local Number - 0300 330 2179

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 10 am - 12:30 pm

Tuesday 10 am - 4 pm

Thursday 1 pm - 3:30 pm

Email Advice

On the website, click on the Email Advice button and selecting the area you would like advice on

www.haveringcab.org

Face-to-face (appointment only)

You can book 30 minute appointments at the local hubs at Harold Hill and Rainham - with the following links;

https://bit.ly/Book_CitizensAdvice_HaroldHill

https://bit.ly/Book_CitizensAdvice_RainhamLibrary

All benefits have complex rules and exclusions. Information provided here is as a guide only rather than a full statement of the rules and regulations. Information provided by Welfare Rights Unit, London Borough of Havering, at April 2022.