

QUICK GUIDE 11: Carers Allowance and Carers Credit

What is it?

Carers Allowance (CA) is a taxable benefit for people who are looking after or supporting a friend, relative or neighbour, for 35 hours a week or more who could not manage without their help. The person they care for does not have to be related or live with them.

Who can get Carers Allowance (CA)?

- Carer must be aged 16 or over.
- Carer must be present and resident in the UK.
- CA is not payable if the carer is in full-time education or earns more than £100 a week.
- Work pensions are disregarded in the calculation of CA.
- The person being cared for must be in **receipt** of:
 - Disability Living Allowance, at the middle or highest rate of carer component or
 - Attendance Allowance, Constant AA as an addition to Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or Constant AA or above the basic (full day) rate as an addition to a War Disablement Pension.
- Care must be provided to the same person, for at least 35 hours a week, this can be during the day and/or night.
- Applications cannot be made from professional care workers or personal assistants who are paid.

Underlying Entitlement

- CA links with State Pension and is not payable if SP exceeds CA. However, applications should still be made as underlying entitlement may be established.
- If awarded, a carer premium will be added to any Pension Credit, Housing or Council Tax Benefit calculations.

An award may effect the benefits of the person being cared for, further information can be found here: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/Caringforsomeone/DG_10018705

How to Claim

Claims can be made once a decision on DLA or AA has been received.

To find out if there is eligibility use the benefit advisors service:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Di011/DoltOnline/DoltOnlineByCategory/DG_172666

Claims to CA can be made via www.dwp.gov.uk/carersallowance/. Only customers residing in England, Scotland or Wales can use this service. For customers from Northern Ireland please see further information on: <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/caring-for-someone/money-matters/carersallowance/carers-allowance-how-to-claim.htm>

Using this facility allows customer to complete the claim over a period of time. Change of circumstances can also be reported using this facility.

The CA Unit can issue a claim pack on request. These can be issued in alternative formats such as Braille or large print. Contact the Benefit Enquiry Line on Telephone: **0800 88 22 00**, Textphone: 0800 24 33 55 to order an application or receive help with completion. Opening hours are 8:30 am to 6:30 pm Monday to Friday. Please note a call back may be arranged.

Checking claims progress or requesting an application

Contact the CA unit on: **0845 6084321** or textphone on: 0845 6045312. Opening hours are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Thursday, and between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm on Fridays. Fax: 01772 899 354. Email: cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Carers Credit (CC)

Carers Credit is available to anyone caring for someone for 20 hours or more a week. This will cover the carers National Insurance contribution towards their State Pension.

Carers Credit can be applied for in addition to Carers Allowance for the same customer by anyone who satisfies the qualifying conditions, which are :

- Carers aged 16 or over and under State Pension age.
- Caring for one or more disabled people for a total of 20 hours or more each week.
- The person(s) they care for must receive one of the following:
 - DLA care component at the middle or highest rate
 - Attendance Allowance (AA)
 - Constant Attendance Allowance (CAA).
- Or have been certified by a Health or Social Care Professional (HSCP) on a Care Certificate (alternative evidence is acceptable where it is already available e.g. Social Services Care Assessment) as requiring the number of hours care being provided each week.

The Local Authority (LA) can carry out an assessment. This will check their eligibility for services that could make caring easier for them. A carer's assessment is about the carers needs. Examples of help may include help with housework or changes to the home. Carers can apply for a Carers Assessment online at Directgov's [local authority database](#) . This service is only available to councils in England.

Useful Helplines

Carers Helpline	0808 808 7777	Run by Carers UK ^{web} , it provides support to carers in their role by providing advice and information on welfare benefits and community care issues
Contact a Family Helpline	08088 083 555	Run by Contact a Family ^{web} a UK-wide charity providing support, advice and information for families with disabled children