

Carers Information Service
0300 0200 002
www.carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Attendance Allowance

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Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance is a state benefit that helps with the extra costs of long-term illness or disability, which can be either physical and/or mental. It is for people aged 65 and over.

Note: If you are aged 16-64 you should be claiming Personal Independence Payment (see our PIP Factsheet). If you are claiming for someone who is aged 16 and under you should be claiming Disability Living Allowance (see our DLA Factsheet).

Claiming Attendance Allowance can help you or the person you care for qualify for other benefits and/or Tax Credits. For example:

- If a person gets Attendance Allowance then the person caring for them may be able to claim Carer's Allowance.
- Getting Attendance Allowance may help get a Council Tax discount.

Attendance Allowance is more flexible than most benefits. For example:

- It is not means-tested. It can be paid regardless of your income, savings or National Insurance contribution record.
- It is tax free.
- You can get Attendance Allowance even if you are working or studying.
- There are no restrictions on how you can spend your Attendance Allowance money.
- Carers who are disabled or ill can also claim Attendance Allowance in their own right, even if they already get, or qualify for, Carer's Allowance.

Who can claim?

You can get Attendance Allowance if you are aged 65 or over and the following apply:

- You have a physical disability (including sensory disability, for example 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.
- You have needed that help for at least 6 months (unless you are terminally ill).

You must also:

- Be in Great Britain when you claim - there are some exceptions, such as members and family members of the armed forces.
- Have been in Great Britain for at least 2 of the last 3 years (this does not apply if you are a refugee or have humanitarian protection status).
- Be habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.
- Not be subject to immigration control (unless you are a sponsored immigrant).

If you are not expected to live for more than 6-months, there are 'special rules':

- There is no qualifying period for how long you've had your illness.
- If you are eligible, you will automatically get the higher rate of Attendance Allowance.

The application process can be long and complicated. Many carers help the person they are looking after to complete the claim form or complete it on their behalf. The more you know about these benefits the more likely it is that the person you are looking after will be able to make a successful claim.

Special rules – if you are terminally ill

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

- Complete an Attendance Allowance form.
- Ask a doctor or other healthcare professional for form DS1500 - they'll either fill it in and give the form to you or send it directly to DWP.

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

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).

You cannot usually get Attendance Allowance if you live in a care home and your care is paid for by your local authority. However, you can still claim Attendance Allowance if you pay for all your care home costs yourself.

Change of circumstances

Your circumstances can affect how much you get, for example, 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.
- You go abroad for more than 13-weeks.
- You are imprisoned or held in detention.

You must also contact the helpline if:

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

Please note: you could get a £50 Civil Penalty and have to repay overpaid benefits if you do not report changes and are overpaid as a result.

Attendance Allowance rates

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

The weekly rates for Attendance Allowance from April 2017 to March 2018 are:

		Level of help needed
Lower rate	£57.30	Frequent help or constant supervision during the day, or supervision at night.
Higher rate	£85.60	Help or supervision throughout both day and night, or you are terminally ill.

Assessment

You might receive a letter advising you to attend an assessment to check your eligibility. The letter will explain why and where you must go. Your claim may not progress if you do not attend.

For further information

Attendance Allowance

For a claim pack or queries regarding a claim.

0800 731 0122

Textphone: 0800 731 0317

CATCH UP Ltd.

For queries & help completing forms including home visiting service and appeals/tribunals.

01554 776850 / 774570

info@catchupltd.co.uk

www.catchupltd.co.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

For practical information & advice on welfare benefits and other topics.

CAB Ammanford Office: 14 Iscennen Road, Ammanford. SA18 3BG

CAB Carmarthen Office: 113 Lammas Street, Carmarthen. SA31 3AP

CAB Llanelli Office: 4 Cowell Street, Llanelli. SA15 1UU

03444 77 20 20 (appointments line)

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

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Carmarthenshire Carers Information Service

The Carers Information Service provides free and confidential information, advice and support to Carers.

We produce and distribute information for carers and organise regular events in partnership with other organisations.

The service is joint funded by Carmarthenshire County Council and Hywel Dda University Health Board.

Contact details

Carmarthenshire Carers Information Service
The Palms, Unit 3, 96 Queen Victoria Road, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire. SA15 2TH

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