

Factsheet 34

Attendance Allowance

May 2024

About this factsheet

This factsheet gives information about Attendance Allowance, a non-means-tested benefit for people over State Pension age (currently 66) who have care needs.

It explains what Attendance Allowance is, the eligibility criteria, and how to make a claim. It explains what to do if you have a change of circumstance.

If you have not reached State Pension age, you are not eligible for Attendance Allowance but you may be able to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

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Glossary

AA	Attendance Allowance
ADP	Adult Disability Payment (Scotland)
AFIP	Armed Forces Independence Payment
CSP	Carer Support Payment (Scotland)
CTR	Council Tax Reduction/Support
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EEA	European Economic Area
PIP	Personal Independence Payment

1 What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance (AA) is a benefit for people over State Pension age

Competent state

If you are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement and you receive a State Pension from an EEA country, that country is normally your competent state for paying sickness benefits (in the UK this includes AA). An exception to this is where you receive a State Pension from another EEA country and a UK State Pension and you reside in the UK, in which case your competent state is the UK.

If you are unsure, you can claim AA and if your competent state is not the UK, the DWP will pass on your details to your competent state to determine if you are eligible for sickness benefits in that country.

Under State Pension age

If you are under State Pension age, you cannot claim AA but you can claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Adult Disability Payment (ADP) in Scotland.

If you already get ADP, PIP or Disability Living Allowance when reaching State Pension age, these can continue to be paid. See factsheet 87, *Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance*, for more information. In **Scotland**, see the Age Scotland guide *Adult Disability Payment*.

3 Conditions of entitlement

3.1 The disability tests

You can claim AA if you need help with personal care, supervision or watching over because of physical or mental disability. It does not matter if you live alone or with other people, or if you have a carer. It does not matter whether you actually get any help. What matters is that you reasonably require help. You can satisfy day or night time conditions or both. They are explained below.

Day time

You must reasonably require either frequent attention throughout the day in connection with your bodily functions, *or* continual supervision to avoid substantial danger to yourself or others.

Night time

You must show you require either prolonged or repeated attention, or require another person to be awake for a prolonged period or at frequent intervals to watch over you to avoid danger to yourself or others.

Rates

You receive **lower rate AA** if you fulfil *either* the day *or* night conditions. You receive **higher rate AA** if you fulfil *both* day *and* night conditions.

4.4 Filling in the claim form

You must describe on the claim form how your disability affects you and a medical examination is not normally necessary. The form is quite long and you may want assistance filling it in. You can get help from:

a friend or relative who knows about your needs and difficulties

independent advice agency like Age UK, Age Cymru or Age Scotland

an appointee or an attorney (see factsheet 22, *Arranging for someone to make decisions on your behalf*, for more information)

the AA helpline. They may be able to arrange for a home visit to help complete the form.

Many people prefer to get advice from an independent agency rather than the DWP, because an independent agency can help if there are problems with the claim, like processing delays or appeals.

The form asks how often you need help with certain things. If you are not sure how many times you carry out a certain activity, for example, go up and down stairs or use the toilet, count the frequency over a day, or take an average over several days if it varies. If you could carry out an activity

It can be helpful to include a personal statement from a carer or relative who has observed how your disability affects you and the help you need, and a statement from a healthcare professional.

It helps if the person knows a little about the rules for AA so that they can include the most relevant information.

5 Decisions and payment

You are sent a decision on your claim in writing. AA may be awarded indefinitely or for a fixed period, depending on the circumstances of your claim.

6 Change of circumstances

The decision letter includes information about your responsibility to inform the DWP of any changes in your circumstances that might affect your AA claim.

6.1 If your condition changes

If you receive lower rate AA and your condition worsens, so you think you may now

6.3 Hospital and care homes

If you receive

6.3.3 AA in a nursing home

If you are a nursing home resident and maintained free of charge by the NHS, for example, you receive NHS Continuing Care, the DWP can decide you are in an and your AA will be treated as in section 6.3.1.

If the home does not employ doctors, qualified nurses or other health professionals, or you do not receive medical or other treatment at the home from them, your accommodation should be treated as a care home, and the same rules apply as in section 6.3.2.

If you pay the whole nursing home costs (-), you can carry on being paid AA indefinitely. You can also continue to receive AA if you are *self funding* but receive NHS Funded Nursing Care payments, providing none of the costs of qualifying services (accommodmn b64 668.3t r3(co)-1.92 reo0 595.32[p]-3(rofe)-

Useful organisations

Alzheimer's Society

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Telephone 0333 150 3456

Scotland www.alzscot.org

Telephone 0808 808 3000

Advice, information and support to people with dementia, their families and carers by helpline and local branches.

Asthma + Lung UK

www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/

Telephone 0300 222 5800

Information if you have chest problems and breathing difficulties.

Carers Trust

www.carers.org

Telephone 0300 772 9600

Offers practical help and assistance to carers.

Carers UK

www.carersuk.org

Telephone 0808 808 7777

Information and support for carers, including information about benefits.

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

www.chss.org.uk

Telephone 0808 801 0899

Information and support for issues regarding chest, heart and stroke.

Citizens Advice

England go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Wales go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales

Scotland go to www.cas.org.uk

In England telephone 0800 144 8848

In Wales telephone 0800 702 2020

In Scotland telephone 0800 028 1456

National network of advice centres offering free, confidential, independent advice, face to face or by telephone.

Dementia UK

www.dementiauk.org

Telephone 0800 888 6678

Works to improve the quality of life of dementia patients and their carers. In some areas, provides Admiral Nurses who support you at home.

Our publications are available in large print and audio formats

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The evidence sources used to create this factsheet are available on request. Contact resources@ageuk.org.uk

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