

## ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE (AA)

“**Attendance Allowance (AA)** is a tax free benefit for people aged 65 and over and who are physically or mentally disabled and need help with personal care or need supervision to remain safe.”

**To be entitled to AA you must meet the following conditions:**

You are aged 65 or over and live in the United Kingdom, and have not been abroad for more than a month in the last year.

If you are not yet 65 you should claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA) instead.

**Attendance Allowance has 2 rates: Higher and Lower.**

**To qualify for the Higher Rate AA:**

For people who require help during the day and night. To qualify you need to satisfy (and have done for the last 6 months) 2 of the disability tests, either 1 or 2 and 3 or 4.

**To qualify for the Lower Rate of AA:**

For people who need help during the day **OR** during the night. To qualify you need to satisfy (and have done for the last 6 months) any one of the Disability tests 1-4.

### **Other Information**

- **AA** is awarded based on the help you need, whether or not you receive that help.
- You can receive **AA** even if you live alone.
- **AA** is for you not your carer and you can spend it as you like.
- **AA** is not means tested and there are no NI contribution tests.

**AA** does not affect any means tested benefits you receive (e.g. state pension or pension credit) but it may be taken into account in means testing for charging for local authority services. (Including local authority arranged care in a care home).

- If you receive constant attendance allowance with industrial injuries disablement or war pension, this overlaps with **AA** and you will be paid whichever is highest.
- If you receive **AA** then you might qualify for help with means-tested benefits. For example: severe disability premium with your Housing or Council Tax benefit, severe disability addition to your Pension credit.

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- You must let the Pension Service and your local authority know you are getting **A. A.**
- **AA** may be awarded for a fixed period or indefinitely, if your award is for a fixed period you will be invited to make a renewal claim.
- Hospital and other special accommodation, if you go into hospital or some types of care home you're **AA** will stop after 4 weeks.

**If your condition changes:**

If you are currently receiving the lower rate of AA you can qualify for the higher rate AA after you have satisfied **2 of the Disability tests 1, 2, 3 or 4 for 6 months.**

If you previously received **AA** (or the award was reduced to the lower rate) and you have a relapse within 2 years you must reapply (or ask for the rate to be increased) but you do not need to re-serve the 6 months qualifying period.

**If you're currently receiving DLA (Disability Living Allowance):**

If you are already receiving either the care or the mobility component of DLA and reach your 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday then you will continue to receive DLA and will be able to apply for any higher rates, but the qualifying period changes to 6 months similar to the AA qualifying period instead of the normal DLA period of 3 months.

**You can not apply for DLA once you are aged 65 or over.**

**Kidney Patients** – There are special rules for kidney patients that allow some patients to qualify for the lower rate of **AA**.

To make enquiries about Attendance Allowance contact the **bel** number to request forms, for other information contact the **DLA / AA Helpline**.

The **Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL)** telephone number is **0800 88 22 00**

The **DLA / AA Helpline** telephone number is **08457 123456**



# THE DISABILITY TESTS

There are 4 disability tests to determine which level of **AA** you qualify for they are as follows: You must be 'so severely disabled physically or mentally that:

## DURING THE DAY

1. You require from another person; '**frequent attention** throughout the day in connection with your **bodily functions**'.

**Frequent Attention:** several times not once or twice and throughout the day, i.e.: morning, afternoon and evening.

**Bodily Functions:** personal things such as eating, walking, sitting, getting in/out of bed, getting dressed etc. If there is only a part of an activity you need help with, e.g. you can dress yourself but you can't get your clothes or you need to be encouraged to dress or it would take you a long time to do it, this means you may reasonably require help.

2. You require from another person. '**continued supervision** throughout the day in order to avoid substantial danger to yourself or others'.

**Continued Supervision:** frequent or regular not non-stop, supervision must be needed to effect a real reduction in the risk of harm.

## DURING THE NIGHT

3. You require from another person; '**prolonged or repeated** attention in connection with your bodily functions'.

**Prolonged: at least 20 minutes**

**Repeated: 2 times or more**

4. In order to avoid substantial danger to yourself or others you require another person; 'to be awake for a **prolonged period** or at frequent **intervals** for the purpose of **watching over** you'.

**Prolonged Period:** 20 minutes (this time can include the time for the carer to get up, go back to bed).

**Frequent Intervals:** means at least 3 times a night.

**Watching Over:** someone being awake and listening for you also getting up to check on you.

All details are correct at time of publication. However, if you find any information is inaccurate or out-of-date, please call us.