

## CARER'S ALLOWANCE

You may be entitled to Carer's Allowance if you care for someone who is ill or disabled in their own home. **If you are paid Carer's Allowance, your other benefits may decrease or increase. In some cases the benefits of the person cared for may be affected.**

### **Who can get Carer's Allowance?**

Not every carer is eligible for Carer's Allowance. This is because there are certain rules which apply to the carer, and the person being cared for. The rules include the following.

### **Regarding the carer:**

- You must be aged **over 16**.
- You must be spending **at least 35 hours a week** looking after the ill or disabled person. You do not need to care for the person every day - **just for 35 hours or more per week**.
- You cannot earn over a certain amount from other work (**after allowable expenses**). The **amount you can earn is £95** from April 2010 (**but the figure is revised each April.**) However, to be eligible for Carer's Allowance your savings are not taken into account and it does not depend on whether you have paid any National Insurance contributions.
- You cannot get Carer's Allowance if you are on a course of full-time education. This means 21 hours a week or more of supervised study.

### **Regarding the person you care for:**

- The person you are caring for must be receiving one of the following benefits which are paid to them because they need care:
- **Attendance Allowance: OR**
- **The Care Component of Disability Living Allowance**, paid at the **middle or higher rate: OR**
- Constant Attendance Allowance with: Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (**at or above the normal maximum rate**), **OR**
- War Disablement Pension (**at the basic full day rate or above**).

If the person you care for is not receiving one of the above benefits and you are spending a lot of time caring for them, then they are likely to be entitled to one of these benefits and they should claim. This will give them extra money and also enable you to claim Carer's Allowance.

- **But note: certain benefits for the person you care for can reduce if you get Carer's Allowance. For example, if the person you care for gets Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, they may lose the Severe Disability Premium if that is included in their benefit.**

It does not matter if you (**the carer**) are related to the ill or disabled person, or whether you live in the same household.

**For example:** you could care for a relative who lives with you.

**Or, for example:** you could care for a friend or neighbour who lives in a different home from you.

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### How much is Carer's Allowance?

The standard rate of Carer's Allowance from April 2010 is £53.90 a week (**The rate usually increases each April.**) There is also a Christmas bonus. However, it can be complicated as various factors can affect whether you get this standard rate, or whether you can get more or less. For example:

- Carer's Allowance is a taxable benefit.
- You may not be able to claim Carer's Allowance in full if you are already receiving certain other benefits at certain rates. These are called overlapping benefits. For example, State Retirement Pension. Also, as mentioned, the person cared for may have a reduction in certain benefits if you receive Carer's Allowance.

### However:

- You may get more money if you receive certain other benefits such as Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- You may be able to receive extra payments for a partner or dependent children, subject to certain conditions. (**For example, depending if they have an income or benefits above a certain level.**)

Because of the complicated rules it may not be easy to work out if you are entitled to Carer's Allowance, and if you are, how it may affect your entitlement to other benefits. Therefore, if you are considering claiming, it is best to take expert advice. (**See below for sources of help and advice.**)

### How can I obtain a claim form?

- For information on how to claim go to the Directgov website, you can fill the form in online or download a copy of the form. (**Click the link below**) ([www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk))  
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/MoneyMatters/CarersAllowance/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/MoneyMatters/CarersAllowance/index.htm)
- Contact your local office of the Department of Work and Pensions (**DWP**) (**the local 'social security' office**) for a claim form. Your local office is in the phone book under 'Jobcentre Plus',  
**OR**
- **Telephone the Benefit Enquiry Line 0800 88 22 00**

### How is Carer's Allowance paid?

Payment is usually made directly into a bank or building society account. It is paid to the carer, not to the person being cared for.

### When does Carer's Allowance stop?

If your circumstances change and you no longer fulfil the conditions needed to claim.

**For example:** if the person you care for goes into a residential home. If the person you care for dies, you will still receive Carer's Allowance for a further eight weeks. This is to give you some time to adjust and to make plans for the future. However, you can take up to four weeks holiday away from the person that you care for in every 26 week period without affecting the benefit payments.

## FURTHER INFORMATION, HELP AND ADVICE

### **BENEFIT ENQUIRY LINE (BEL)**

**Telephone: 0800 88 22 00**

**Text phone: 0800 24 33 55**

A benefits help line for people with disabilities, their carers and representatives. It is part of the Department for Work and Pensions. They offer confidential advice and information on benefits and how to claim them. In addition to giving advice they are also able to send out an extensive range of leaflets and claim packs. They can also help you to complete a claim form over the phone.

### **CARER'S ALLOWANCE UNIT**

**Telephone: 0845 608 4321**

This is a section of the Department for Work and Pensions  
Palatine House, Lancaster Road, Preston PR1 1NS

### **CARERS UK**

**Telephone: 0808 8087777**

Carers UK (formerly the Carers National Association) aims to help anyone who is caring for a sick, disabled or elderly, frail friend or relative at home. Among other things, Carers UK provides an information and advice service for carers.

Ruth Pitter House, 20-25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JT

**Website:** [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

### **WORCESTERSHIRE CARERS UNIT**

**Telephone: 0800 3892896**

Pierpoint House, 10 Pierpoint Street, Worcester WR1 1TA

**Website:** <http://worcestershire.whub.org.uk/home/wcc-social-carers.html>

### **WORCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF CARERS**

**Telephone: 01905 26500**

Provide various services for carers including information, benefit work, carer's emergency card. Please contact for more details.

A full list of carers' groups can be found at [www.carersworcs.org.uk/Groups.html](http://www.carersworcs.org.uk/Groups.html)

**Website:** [www.carersworcs.org.uk](http://www.carersworcs.org.uk)

### **WORCESTERSHIRE YOUNG CARERS PROJECT**

**Telephone: 01905 799691**

This project aims to provide information, support & advice for young carers, as well as practical activities.

### **REDDITCH CARERS CARELINE**

**Telephone: 01527 66019**

Provides carers support groups and activities, sitting service, "life after caring" support and counselling services for carers in Redditch.

**Website:** [www.carerscareline.co.uk](http://www.carerscareline.co.uk)

**We cannot be held responsible for the level of service provided by the organisations included in this publication.**

All details correct at time of publication, if you find that this info is inaccurate please call us.

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