

WHAT IS PIP?

This fact sheet has been written by parent carers for parent carers



Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a benefit for working-age people who face extra challenges carrying out everyday activities or getting out and about.

A claimant must have had additional needs for at least three months, and expect to have the same needs for at least the next nine months. Residency rules also mean they have to have been living in the UK for two out of the last three years.

PIP is not taxed or counted as income for means-tested benefits. It's not based on National Insurance contributions and can be paid both in and out of work.

How is PIP awarded?

PIP is paid in two parts: a **mobility component** based on a claimant's ability to get around, and a **daily living component** based on their ability to look after themselves. Each component of PIP is paid at one of two rates known as the standard and enhanced rate.

The PIP assessment focuses on a claimant's ability to carry out 12 everyday activities. These include preparing a meal, communicating, handling money or planning and following a journey.

PIP uses a **points-based system**, to decide whether someone qualifies for the benefit, and if they do at what rate they will be paid. You score points when you are not able to complete a task **'reliably'**, which means safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time. Some activities attract more points than others. To make a successful claim for PIP, a young person needs to score 8 points to qualify for the standard rate of the component and 12 points for the enhanced rate. You can read more about this in our companion fact sheet **Tips for claiming PIP** (see below).

For most people, the new PIP assessment process will also involve a **face-to-face meeting** with a health professional.

Under PIP no one, (other than people who are terminally ill) will have any automatic entitlement. **Nearly all awards will be time limited**, with very few indefinite awards. Most awards are likely to be shorter and reviewed more frequently than awards for DLA.

When will you need to claim PIP?

There is **no automatic migration between DLA and PIP**. Everyone aged 16 and over who gets DLA will be contacted, over time, and invited to claim PIP. Even if you have an indefinite or lifetime award of DLA you will be reassessed under PIP. You just don't know when, so it's best to be prepared.

If a claimant is nearly 16 or they are over 16 and their existing DLA award is coming to an end, they'll get a letter to tell them when and how to apply for PIP.

If a claimant is over 16 and getting DLA, and reports a change in 'circumstances', which might affect the rate of their award, they will be reassessed under PIP.

If a claimant is 16 or over and has never claimed DLA, they will need to claim PIP instead. You cannot apply for PIP until you are 16, so there are special arrangements allowing current DLA awards to run on after someone's 16th birthday, until a decision is made on their PIP claim. Sadly, despite assurances when PIP was introduced, these claims are not looked at by a specialist team.

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You can choose to make an application for PIP even if you have an indefinite award of DLA. This would make sense where you are likely to be awarded a higher rate under PIP than your current DLA award. For example, if you have high support needs throughout the day but not at night.

You need to act promptly as soon as the Department for Work and Pensions writes to you about PIP. If you do not reply to the invitation to apply for PIP, your DLA award will be suspended four weeks later. If a claim is made within four weeks after the suspension, the DLA award will be restored until a decision is made on the PIP claim. If you do nothing during the four weeks suspension, a DLA claim will end permanently eight weeks after they wrote to you. There will only be limited appeal rights against this decision. So if you need help to start a claim, do not delay.

How to start a claim

PIP claims begin over the phone. Ring the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on **0800 917 2222**. A carer or supporter can call on your behalf but you should be with them when this happens.

You will be asked for basic details like your name, address, date of birth and main area of difficulty. You will also need to give your National Insurance number, doctor's or health worker's names and have information to hand about time spent abroad, in a care home or hospital. The DWP will also ask for bank or building society details. You will be sent a '**How your condition affects you**' form. Claim packs are sent out with the claimant's details printed on it. It comes with notes to help you fill it in.

Use the time while you are waiting to get organised. You will need as much evidence as you can muster. If you can't find your own copies of reports or assessments, ring whoever created the document originally and get another copy sent. If you have no reports or assessments, but feel you have very significant extra needs, get people who help you, to write something or think about paying for an independent assessment. Without supporting evidence, a claim is unlikely to be successful.

Timescales are short and can feel unrealistic. **Ring DWP and ask for extra time** if you feel under pressure to get the claim pack back. You can do this several times. It's important to keep DWP informed if you are waiting for help to fill in the claim pack or for a report.

Special rules for life-limiting illness

If someone is diagnosed with a life-limiting illness and is unlikely to live more than six months, they can claim PIP under **Special Rules**. They will automatically be awarded the high rate care component and don't need to meet retrospective or prospective tests.

Ask your consultant for a **DS1500** report and send it with the claim. If you'd rather not read what they write, ask for the DS1500 to be handed to you in a sealed envelope, or give the parts of the claim you have completed to the consultant or specialist nurse: they will be happy to send it for you. The DWP aims to make decisions about these claims within eight days.

Extra benefits if you get PIP

PIP is a passport to extra money, so if you are claiming other benefits be sure to say if you or anyone in your household is getting PIP. Any household that includes someone getting PIP will also be exempt from the benefit cap.



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If you are entitled to the daily living component of PIP, then someone else may be able to claim Carer's Allowance for looking after you.

Getting the enhanced rate of the mobility component of PIP may entitle you to access the Motability scheme and a Blue Badge.

Ask about

- **SENDIASS** - If you are under 25, Amaze provides the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service** for East Sussex. We provide help around health, education, benefits and social care issues for families with children and young people with SEN and disabilities. Our helpline workers can give you advice around making PIP claims, and let you know where you can go to get further help. Please note, we cannot offer one-to-one help with filling out PIP forms. Call Amaze on **01273 772289** or email sendiass@amazesussex.org.uk
- **Welfare Benefits Project** - If you live in Eastbourne, Hailsham, Seaford, Hastings or Rother you can get advice and help from the Welfare Benefits Project on **0333 344 0681**
- **Newhaven Advice Hub and Information Centre** - If you live in the Lewes district you can contact the Newhaven Advice Hub and Information Centre for benefits advice on **01273 517375**
- **Possability People** - Possability People can give disabled adults and parent carers advice and information around making claims for disability benefits. Call **01424 234460**
- **General benefits and financial advice** - **Citizen's Advice Bureau** can give help with benefits claims. Call **03444 111 444** or visit www.citizensadviceeastsussex.org.uk/. **Money Advice Plus** can offer advice and support with debt and benefits. Call **01323 635 999** or visit www.moneyadviceplus.org.uk
- **PIP enquiry line** - **0800 1221 4433** for general help and advice on PIP
- **Getting support from your social worker, support worker or shared lives carer** - They may be able to help you complete the form
- **Help with transport** - You may be able to get a Blue Badge or a disabled parking bay outside your house. Contact the **Blue Badge helpline** on **01323 464244**, or to enquire about disabled parking bays call the **Highways team** on **0345 60 80 193**. You may use the mobility component of your PIP or DLA award to lease a car or scooter via the **Motability** scheme. Call **0300 456 4566** or visit www.motability.co.uk

Further reading and useful links

- **Tips for claiming PIP** - Download this companion Amaze fact sheet at <https://amazesussex.org.uk/resources/fact-sheets>
- **Personal Independence Payment - A guide to making a claim.** Helpful guide from Disability Rights UK which includes the scoring system for the 12 activities. www.disabilityrightsuk.org
- www.gov.uk/pip/overview - Personal Independence Payment

