

Attendance Allowance

Note about call charges: the cost of calling a phone number depends on the digits it starts with, the phone provider and whether a landline or mobile is used to make the call. Some providers offer free calls to certain numbers as part of a call package, but customers are best advised to check with their phone provider. 0800 and 0808 numbers are free to call from both mobile phones and landlines. Many national organisations use 03 numbers for their main phone lines which generally reduces call costs for customers dialling from a mobile phone. Visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for more information about call charges.

Introduction

Many people do not know they are eligible for Attendance Allowance (AA) and do not realise they can claim it, missing out on the support they are entitled to. This factsheet will help you work out if you or the person you care for may be able to claim. It covers:

1. [What is Attendance Allowance?](#)
 2. [Who can claim?](#)
 3. [How much?](#)
 4. [Claiming and completing the form](#)
 5. [What happens next?](#)
 6. [More information](#)
- [Useful contacts](#)

1. What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance (AA) is a weekly benefit for people who have reached state pension age and need regular care or attention because of physical or mental illness or disability. AA does not include help for mobility needs.

Note: You don't need a recognised or diagnosed condition to claim AA. You can claim even if you live alone, or pay a carer, or receive help from the council or NHS — and if awarded, you are free to choose how to spend the money.

AA is not taxable and can be paid on top of any other benefits or pensions you already have. You can get AA even if you're in work. It does not matter what other money you have coming in, or what savings you have.

2. Who can claim?

To qualify for AA, you must:

- have reached [state pension age](#) (see [page 2 – 'The Age Rules'](#));
- satisfy the [disability conditions](#) ([page 2](#));
- have needed help for at least six months. You can apply before the six months is up provided you apply no more than six months in advance. However, people who are terminally ill can be paid straight away and automatically get the higher rate of AA.

- satisfy the residence conditions and be 'habitually resident' in the UK';
- have been present in Great Britain for at least two of the past three years.

There are some exceptions to the residence and presence conditions. For example, the presence conditions don't apply to people who are terminally ill. Special rules also allow claims from some people without the need for them to have previously lived in Great Britain. Examples include people who:

- were living in **Ukraine** before 1 January 2022 and left due to the Russian invasion who have leave or right of abode in the UK.
- have come to the UK from **Afghanistan** since 15 August 2021 through specified schemes (conditions apply).
- left **Sudan** because of the violence that started on 15 April 2023 and were living there before that date.
- left **Israel, the West Bank, Gaza (and associated territories)** due to the violence that began on or after 7 October 2023, and were living there before that date.
- have entered the UK through a 'safe and legal humanitarian route'.

This isn't a complete list – there are also other exceptions including for some EU nationals. These rules are complicated, so please call us for advice before you apply if you're unsure about your position (020 8921 6375, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 1pm).

Age rules

To claim Attendance Allowance, you must have reached state pension age (currently 66 years old). State pension age is gradually

increasing from 66 to 67 for both men and women between April 2026 and March. Find out when you will reach state pension age by using GOV.UK's Pension Age Calculator (www.gov.uk/state-pension-age)

If you are approaching pension age, it may be better to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP) if you can rather than AA since PIP also has a mobility component. However, it may also be worth claiming AA after you reach pension age if your PIP claim is refused – [get advice](#) if this applies to you.

Disability conditions

You can get Attendance Allowance if you:

- need regular help with personal care (like washing, dressing and undressing, eating, bathing, getting in or out of bed, sleeping, going to the toilet); or
- need help to communicate (for example, because you cannot see or hear), or
- need someone to supervise you to keep you safe (for example, due to memory problems or to make sure you do not have an accident).

You may still qualify even if you don't get help, but struggle to manage, take longer, or experience pain or discomfort.

An example: Albert is 75 years old and lives alone. He has bad arthritis and finds a lot of things painful and does them slowly. It takes him a long time to get washed and dressed, and on some days, he does not get dressed fully. When Albert claims Attendance Allowance, he must remember to explain all the difficulties he has with washing and dressing and should not just tick boxes to say that he can manage.

3. How much?

Attendance Allowance is paid at two weekly rates:

- £76.70* for people who only need help during the day or night and
- £114.60* for people who need help during the day and night.

If you already receive benefits, a successful Attendance Allowance claim may mean that your other benefits increase. For example, if you're on Pension Credit Guarantee and live alone, your Pension Credit might increase by £86.05* a week. Getting Attendance Allowance will never mean that your other benefits go down.

**April 2026-2027 rates*

4. Claiming and completing the form

How to claim Attendance Allowance

To apply, call the Attendance Allowance helpline on 0800 731 0122 (or 18001 731 0122 for Relay UK if you cannot hear or speak on the phone). Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will send you a form that's stamped with the date you called. You will need to return this form within six weeks, so your claim can be dated from the day you phoned. It's a good idea to make a note of the date you called, just in case.

It's best to call the helpline for a form to ensure that you don't miss out. If you get the form from an advice agency or download it online, it won't be date stamped. That

means your claim will only start from the day the DWP receives your completed form – not the day you started the process.

Send your completed form to:

Freepost

DWP Attendance Allowance

You don't need a stamp or postcode.

You can also **apply online** at the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk):

Completing the form

Many people find these forms difficult to fill in – read the following section to help you.

- Try to answer all the questions and give as much information as you can – use extra pages if you need to. Describe any difficulties you have doing things for yourself and explain what you cannot do. If you can only do something slowly or with difficulty, or perhaps with pain, make sure you explain this fully. Remember to explain about your “bad” days if your health varies.
- Don't be put off if you are not sure how long something takes - try to estimate this, or just explain how much longer something takes you now. Explain how often you need help and not just how often you receive help.
- Do say if you need help at night. If you need help more than once, or for around 20 minutes or more, this will count towards your claim. You must need this level of help for more than half of the week.

- Do explain about places you might go to or the social activities you'd like to do if you had the help you needed.
- Do say if you need someone to read things out to you or help with things like sorting out your money.
- If you're not sure how much help you need, keep a diary (say for two weeks) and use this to help you complete the form.
- Do include details of all the medical professionals and other people who know and understand how your condition affects you, and if possible, include supporting evidence from them.

Remember: you don't have to complete the form in one day.

Getting help with the form

If you need help with the form, ring our Public Advice Line (020 8921 6375) to check what sources of support may be available to you. Lines are open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10am to 1pm.

5. What happens next?

The DWP will write to you confirming that they have received your claim - you must then wait for a decision. Occasionally they may need further information from someone who knows you such as your doctor, and some people may be visited at home.

Do tell your doctor that you have applied for AA and that s/he may be contacted.

Also, let them know of the problems you have with personal care and any falls you have had.

If your claim is refused or you get less than you expect

If your claim is turned down or you're given a lower rate than expected, you can ask for the decision to be looked at again. This is called a **mandatory reconsideration**.

You usually need to ask for this within **one month** of the decision date, so don't delay. It may help to send extra information or evidence that supports your claim. The DWP will then review your claim and let you know if the decision has been changed.

If you miss the one-month deadline

You can still ask for a late reconsideration up to 12 months after the decision if you have a good reason. If it's not accepted, you should get a decision explaining why.

If the DWP sticks to the original decision, you can **appeal to an independent tribunal** – even if your reconsideration was rejected for being late.

Get advice

Remember that most people who challenge decisions or appeal are successful, so it's worth following up. If you're unsure what to do next, call our [Public Advice Line](tel:02089216375) on 020 8921 6375 (Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday 10am to 1pm).

If your claim is successful

If you are awarded Attendance Allowance, you may be able to get other linked benefits or extra money added to the ones you already receive.

For example, if you live alone (or are treated as living alone) and no one is paid Carer's Allowance for looking after you, you could get extra **Pension Credit**. Call our [Public Advice line](#) to check if you can now claim Pension Credit, or if you're already receiving it, if you can get more.

Even if you don't qualify for Pension Credit, you might still get extra **Housing Benefit** or **Council Tax Support**. Let [Greenwich Advice and Benefits Service](#) know that you're now receiving Attendance Allowance so that your claim can be reviewed. Call our Public Advice Line to check if you can claim these benefits if you're not already receiving them.

If someone looks after you regularly, they may be able to claim [Carer's Allowance](#). **But your benefits can be affected if you live alone and your carer claims Carer's Allowance – so it's important to get advice before they claim.**

6. For benefits advice or information

If you need benefits advice or would like to check if you are missing out on any entitlements, call Royal Greenwich's:

Welfare Rights Service

Public Advice Line

(for borough residents only)

020 8921 6375

Textphone 18001 020 8921 6375

Mon, Wed, Thurs: 10am -1pm

Drop-in face-to-face advice is available at locations around the borough (excluding public holidays) – find out more here: www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/advicehubs

Or visit the Royal Greenwich website (www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk) to

- View benefit pages;
- [download factsheets](#);
- use our [free online calculator](#); or

7. Useful contacts

Attendance Allowance

Telephone: 0800 731 0122

[Relay UK](#): 18001 0800 731 0122 if you cannot see or hear

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

gov.uk/attendance-allowance/how-to-claim

Greenwich Advice and Benefits Service

Greenwich Advice and Benefits Service
020 8921 4900 or 18001 020 8921 4900
for textphone users.

royalgreenwich.gov.uk/housingbenefit

Or visit:

The Woolwich Centre,
35 Wellington Street, SE18 6HQ

For Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims.

Pension Credit

Telephone claim line: 0800 99 1234

[Relay UK](#): 18001 0800 99 1234 if you cannot see or hear

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

gov.uk/pension-credit

For Pension Credit claims. You can also apply by post or [online](#).

Age UK Bromley and Greenwich

Telephone: 020 8315 1850

Email: info@ageukbandg.org.uk

ageuk.rg.uk/bromleyandgreenwich

Information and advice for older people living in Royal Greenwich (including help with form filling).

This factsheet is correct as of April 2026

**Welfare Rights Service**

Woolwich Centre

35 Wellington Street

Woolwich SE18 6HQ

Telephone 020 8921 6375

www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk