



# Personal Independence Payment

Help towards some of the extra costs you might have because of a long-term health condition or disability



Northern Ireland  
Executive

[www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)





# Introduction

This guide:

- explains what Personal Independence Payment is
- answers some questions to help you decide if you may be able to get it
- tells you how to claim it



## What is Personal Independence Payment?

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a new benefit replacing Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for people aged 16 to 64 years. PIP and DLA cannot be claimed at the same time.

In the same way as DLA, people can receive PIP whether they are in or out of work. It is not means tested or taxed.

PIP will be introduced in Northern Ireland on **20 June 2016**. This will be for new claims to PIP and for existing DLA claimants aged 16-64 years whose benefit is due to come to an end or who report a change in their needs.

All remaining DLA claimants aged 16 to 64 years will be randomly selected for assessment and invited to claim PIP. This will happen over a number of years between December 2016 and December 2018.

If you are awarded PIP you or your carer may get other benefits or services such as a motability vehicle or Carer's Allowance.

PIP better reflects today's understanding of disability, which has changed a lot since DLA was introduced. PIP will include an assessment of an individual's needs. PIP aims to help disabled people live more independently and support those with the greatest need.

PIP has been designed to help towards some of the extra costs arising from having a long-term health condition or disability (ill health or disability that is expected to last 12 months or longer). It is assessed on how a person's condition affects their daily life, not the condition they have.

As with DLA, PIP will include special rules for people who are terminally ill.





- be usually resident in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands
- not be subject to immigration control (unless you're a sponsored immigrant).

There are some exceptions to these conditions if you're living or coming from another European Economic Area country or Switzerland.

If you are in a care home or hospital you can make a claim to PIP, however if entitled, you may not receive any payments until you leave.

## Who can get PIP?

### TO QUALIFY FOR PIP YOU MUST:

- be aged 16 to 64 years
- have a long-term health condition or disability and difficulties with activities related to daily living and/or mobility
- have had these difficulties for three months and expect them to last for at least another nine months. If you're terminally ill, (not expected to live for more than six months), you don't need to have had these difficulties for three months
- be in Northern Ireland when you claim - there are some exceptions, for example members and family members of the Armed Forces
- have been in Northern Ireland for at least two of the last three years

### WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN AND PEOPLE AGED OVER 65 YEARS?

DLA will remain for children up to age of 16 years, whether they are existing or new claimants. The parent or guardian of existing DLA claimants will be contacted before their child turns 16 to tell them what they need to do.


If you're aged 65 years or over on 20 June 2016 you will continue to receive DLA provided you continue to meet the eligibility criteria.



# How is PIP made up?

PIP is made up of two components (parts):


- Daily Living
- Mobility



If you qualify for PIP, you will get money for one or both components. The amount you get is based on how your health condition or disability affects how well you carry out the 'everyday activities' shown below, the difficulties you face and the help you would need to do them.

## DAILY LIVING ACTIVITIES

You may get the Daily Living component of PIP if you need help with things like:

- preparing food
  - eating and drinking
  - managing treatments
  - washing and bathing
  - managing toilet needs
  - dressing and undressing
  - communicating
  - reading
  - mixing with other people
  - making decisions about money.
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## MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

You may get the Mobility component of PIP if you need help with:

- going out
- moving around

## HOW ENTITLEMENT TO PIP IS CALCULATED

For each activity, there are a number of 'descriptors'. Descriptors are sentences which describe how much support, and the type of support, you need to do the activity. Each descriptor has a point score.





The number of points you get will depend on how much help you need. Your scores for the activities are added together to give a total for each component.

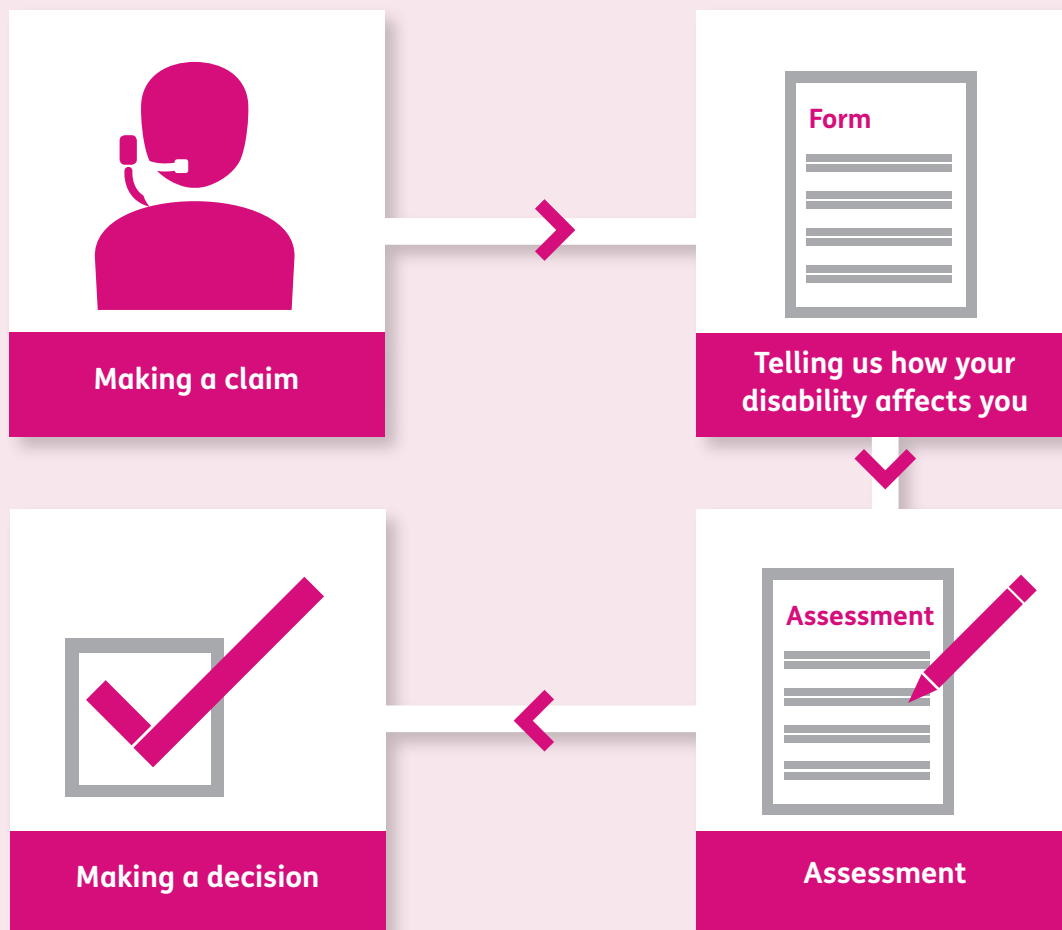
You will get the most points if you can't do the activity at all. You will get some points if you need special equipment, or if you need prompting, supervision or help from another person to do the activity. You won't get any points if you can do the activity without any help.

Each component can be paid at either the 'standard rate' or the 'enhanced rate'.

For each component, you will get the standard rate if you score between 8 and 11 points or you will get the enhanced rate if your scores add up to 12 points or more.

# How do I claim PIP?

## THERE ARE FOUR STEPS TO YOUR CLAIM



### 1 MAKING A CLAIM - PART 1

Call the PIP Centre to make a claim.

**Telephone: 0800 012 1573**

**Textphone: 0800 012 1574**

Textphone is available for people with speech or hearing difficulties.

You'll be asked for information such as:

- your contact details and date of birth
- your National Insurance number

- your bank or building society details
- name and contact details for your GP or other healthcare professionals
- details of any time you've spent abroad, or in a care home or hospital.

Someone else can call on your behalf, but you'll need to be with them when they call.





## 2 TELLING US HOW YOUR DISABILITY AFFECTS YOU

You'll be sent a 'How your disability affects you' form. It comes with notes to help you fill it in. It asks you to explain how your condition affects your daily life, both on good and bad days and over a range of activities.

It is important that you complete this form and return it to the PIP Centre in the envelope provided along with any other supporting information that you already have about your condition as soon as possible. If you don't return this form your claim to PIP may be disallowed.

### 3 ASSESSMENT

Your claim will be assessed by an independent Health Professional to help work out the level of help you need. They will look at the information you provided and may ask your GP or other contacts you've given on the form for any extra information they need.

Sometimes they can assess your claim by just using the written information, but most people will be asked to have a face-to-face consultation with them. If a face-to-face consultation is needed the Health Professional will contact you to arrange it.

The consultation will give you the chance to explain your needs in your own words. You can take someone with you for support and they can take part in the discussion too.

### 4 MAKING A DECISION

Once the assessment has been completed it will be returned and a Case Manager will consider all the information, including the advice from the Health Professional and any information you've sent in. They will make a decision on your claim and write to tell you how it was made.

If you qualify for PIP, your claim will be looked at regularly to make sure that you are getting the right amount of money.





# What if I'm terminally ill?

There are Special Rules for claiming if you have a terminal illness and are not expected to live for more than six months. If you meet the criteria for the Special Rules you:

- will not have to complete the form 'How your disability affects you'
- will not need a face-to-face consultation
- will be entitled to an award of the enhanced rate of the Daily Living component of PIP, without having to satisfy the normal qualifying period
- may also be entitled to the Mobility component of PIP depending on your mobility needs.

You can make a claim to PIP under the Special Rules by phoning the PIP Centre on:

**Telephone 0800 012 1573**

**Textphone 0800 012 1574**

Some extra questions will be asked whilst on the phone about your condition and how it affects your ability to get around. Someone else can make the call on your behalf.

We would encourage you to send us a DS1500 form from your doctor, specialist or consultant to support your claim (unless you have sent one for this or any other benefit in the last six months).

The DS1500 is a report about your medical condition. You won't have to pay for it. You can ask the doctor's receptionist, a nurse or a social worker to arrange it for you. You don't have to see the doctor.

# How will I be paid?

As with other benefits, pensions and allowances, PIP is paid directly into an account, for example your bank account.

PIP is usually paid every four weeks in arrears, however if you are awarded PIP under the Special Rules you will be paid weekly in advance.

To find out the current rates of PIP online, visit:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/personal-independence-payment](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/personal-independence-payment)

## Will the introduction of PIP affect my DLA?

There is no automatic entitlement to PIP, even for people with an indefinite/lifetime DLA award. Existing DLA claimants aged 16 to 64 years will be gradually invited to claim PIP, including:

- those who report a change due to their health condition or disability on or after 20 June 2016
- children who turn 16 years of age on or after 7 November 2016
- those with fixed period DLA awards that expire on or after 7 November 2016.

All remaining DLA claimants aged 16 to 64 years will be randomly selected for assessment and invited to claim PIP. This will happen over a number of years between **December 2016** and **December 2018**.

However, if your care or mobility needs change or your DLA award comes to an end then we will write to you and ask you to claim PIP instead.

During the assessment process, claimants will continue to receive their DLA award until their eligibility for PIP is determined, provided they make a claim when requested to do so and fully engage with the process.

The Northern Ireland Executive has put in place some measures to support people who are currently receiving DLA and who are financially worse off after they have been assessed for PIP.

If after their assessment, someone doesn't qualify for PIP and lodges an appeal, we can provide a supplementary payment, equal to their DLA payment, until their appeal is heard and a decision is made.

We can provide a supplementary payment for one year if someone qualifies for PIP but at a reduced rate, and their weekly loss is more than £10. This supplementary payment will be equal to 75% of the difference in benefit. For example, if the difference is £20 they will receive £15.





To qualify for PIP someone must score at least eight points in the assessment process. If they score between four and seven points and therefore don't qualify for PIP but can show that their disability or illness is a result of a Northern Ireland conflict related injury, they may be awarded four extra points. A supplementary payment would then be paid for one year.

### SUPPORT FOR CARERS

A person will no longer be entitled to Carer's Allowance or Carer's Premium if the person in receipt of DLA, who they currently provide care for, doesn't qualify for PIP after their assessment. However, in these circumstances a supplementary payment will be paid for up to one year.

### SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE RECEIVING ADDITIONS TO BENEFITS BECAUSE OF DISABILITY

If after their assessment someone does not qualify for PIP or does not qualify at the same rate as they were receiving under DLA it could affect certain additions known as Disability Premiums which are included in some other benefits paid to them. People who are impacted in this way will receive a supplementary payment to cover this loss for up to one year.

This legislation is currently making its way through the Northern Ireland Assembly and up to date information on these measures is available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges)

### WHERE CAN I GET MORE HELP AND ADVICE?

You can find out more information about PIP by visiting:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges).

Alternatively,

- from 20 June you can call the PIP enquiry line:

**Telephone: 0300 123 9221**

**Textphone: 0300 123 1008**

Textphone is available for people with speech or hearing difficulties

- you can visit your local Jobs & Benefits office / Social Security Office, or
- you can contact a local advisory service who can provide independent help and support.

This leaflet is for guidance only and should not be relied on as a full statement of the law about PIP.

## Further information

There is information on all aspects of Welfare Changes and PIP available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges)