



every pound counts



Welfare and benefits advice for parents of children with extra care needs

Helping you to claim what is rightfully yours

What about other benefits?

No benefit or tax credit you are getting will go down because you get DLA, in fact they may go up. There can be extra amounts on Child Tax Credit, Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and Housing or Council Tax Benefit for parents who get DLA for a child. If a parent is not in work they can often claim Carer's Allowance once their child gets DLA. The Every Pound Counts Service can advise about all of this and send you a booklet that gives more details.

Example:

Sarah is a single parent with two children. She works 20 hours a week and gets Tax Credits on top of her Child Benefit. She contacted the Every Pound Counts Advice Services because her younger son James is aged 7 and has behavioural problems. She spends a lot of extra time with him and at school he also gets extra help. He is very easily distracted from what he is doing and needs lots of close supervision. When upset he will throw things and out of doors he has been known to dash into the street.

Sarah now claims DLA and gets the middle rate care component of £44.85 weekly and the lower rate mobility component of £17.75. Because she now gets DLA for a child she can also have her Tax Credits increased and will get an extra £48.71 each week too. So in total she now has over £110 extra each week.

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In Lambeth, many parents and carers of children with long term ill health, disability or developmental problems are missing out on extra cash every day. This includes parents of children with behavioural problems and other special educational support needs.

This is because they do not know about extra benefits they can claim, they wrongly think they do not qualify or they find the benefits system too complicated and give up. Lambeth Council is working in partnership with Lambeth PCT

and local agencies to give advice on benefits and tax credits to help people claim their full benefit entitlement.

What help can I get?

If your child or children suffer from long term ill health, disability or developmental problems (including emotional and behavioural problems or special educational support needs), you may be able to claim a benefit called Disability Living Allowance (DLA). If you can get this benefit for your child, you can often get other benefits too.



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Helping you to claim what is rightfully yours



Parents often miss out on claiming their full allowance because:

- they may not have heard about the benefit
- they may not realise the benefit is relevant to their child
- they think they can't claim because they are working
- they think they can't claim because they already get other benefits
- they have found the form hard to complete
- they might have been turned down for the benefit when they should have been awarded it
- they have been awarded DLA but at too low a rate

DLA is worth claiming because it makes a big difference to your weekly income.

Can I claim DLA?

To get DLA for your child you will need to show that your child needs a high level of supervision and/or care because of their health problem or disability. Health problems may include emotional and behavioural problems. Supervision might be making sure they keep safe or monitoring their health problem.

They may qualify because they need more help than other children of their age to complete daily tasks

such as getting washed/dressed, using the toilet, eating or drinking, developing living skills or communicating with others. They may also qualify because they need help with taking medication or need special support services.

The help can include extra checking, prompting or encouragement to make sure they have done tasks satisfactorily, especially if they are easily distracted from what they are doing.

How do I claim DLA?

There are no restrictions on who can claim DLA*. The amount of income or savings you have does not affect whether you can claim DLA. You can claim whether you are working or not.

DLA is made up of two components **care** and **mobility**. You can get just one component or both depending on the level and type of additional or special care your child needs.

Help with care costs: The amount awarded depends on how often and when the extra care is needed. It will also depend on what additional supervision is required. The highest rate is awarded for children who need extra care or supervision throughout the day and night.

**other than for people who are awaiting decisions on their immigration status.*

Help with mobility costs (i): If your child is aged 3 or older you may be able to get a higher weekly amount if you can show they have problems which severely restrict their mobility. This includes children who have severe behavioural problems, severe communication difficulties or children whose walking ability is severely impaired by physical disabilities.

Help with mobility costs (ii): If your child is aged 5 or older you may be able to get the low rate for help with mobility if you can show that the child needs more supervision than other children of their age when outdoors in unfamiliar places; for example they behave impulsively or have behavioural problems.

To claim DLA: Contact the benefits enquiry line on freephone **0800 882 200** (or textphone **0800 243 355**). They will send you the date stamped claim form (called DLA1A Child); if you return it to them within six weeks your claim will be backdated to that date if successful.

When completing the form to claim DLA it is helpful to give details of any health or education assessments that your child may have had. You also need to think about the differences in the care and help you give your child compared to other children of their age.

What help can I get to claim this benefit?

Many parents find it easier to complete the form if they are helped by a benefits adviser.

Contact us now for free benefits advice:

Contact Every Pound Counts to talk to an experienced benefits adviser or make an appointment to receive face-to-face advice at one of the weekly advice sessions. These are available at Gracefield Gardens, Olive Morris House and the Mary Sheridan Centre.

Contact the Every Pounds Counts Advice line on 020 7926 5555 and ask to speak a benefits adviser

The Every Pound Counts adviser can:

- give you free, clear advice about the different benefits and calculate how much extra money you may be able to claim
- give you advice about how to fill in the form
- work out what other benefits you might be able to claim or get increased if the DLA claim succeeds

