

Information for Carers

CARERS' BENEFITS INFORMATION

Independent help and information about benefits and your entitlement can be obtained from:

Stockton Welfare Rights Unit

Tel: 01642 526141

E mail: welfarerights@stockton.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

Tel: 01642 607445

Stockton Carers' Centres

Tel: 0845 3025523 and 0845 3025524

E mail: stockton@georgehardwickfoundation.org
northtees@georgehardwickfoundation.org

Carers' Allowance

A person is entitled to Carers Allowance if he/she is :

- Caring for someone who gets Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance Higher or Middle Rate Care Component
- Caring for the person for at least 35 hours a week. This needs to be every week and cannot be averaged out over a period of time.
- Is not a full time student
- Has net earnings of less than £95 per week. If your earnings are higher than this **seek independent advice** about how to calculate earnings.

Carers Allowance counts as taxable income. It also counts as income for Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. However due to the complex rules you still may be entitled to extra money even if you receive one of these benefits. **Seek independent advice from any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.**

OVERLAPPING BENEFITS

Some benefits cannot be paid with Carers Allowance, these include Contribution Based Job Seekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Widows & Bereavement Benefits, Retirement Pension and Maternity Allowance. If you are told that you cannot claim or receive Carers Allowance because you receive another benefit **seek independent advice from any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section** because there are complex rules concerning these benefits.

Who Can Claim?

Carers over the age of 16.
No upper age limit.

How Do You Claim?

Contact the JobCentre Plus on 0800 0556688 and 0800 99 1234 if you are over 60.

Carers Allowance is a very complex benefit and it is strongly recommend that you seek advice before making a claim. Please contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section for advice and some guidance on how to fill in the form. They may be able to refer you for help to fill in the form. If you are unsure about claiming contact them for advice.

Income Support

You can get income support if you do paid work, depending on your level of income, even if you work more than 16 hours per week.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section

Carer Premium

You may be entitled to the Carer Premium paid with your Income Support.

You must put in a claim for Carer's Allowance and have made a claim for Income Support.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Other benefits you may be entitled to.

If you get Income Support you should contact Stockton Welfare Rights Unit about other benefits you may be entitled to such as:

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit.
- Free prescriptions, dental treatment, eye tests, vouchers for glasses or contact lenses, school dinners and help with funeral costs among other benefits.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Pension Credit for carers over 60 years old.

Pension Credit has replaced Income Support for people over 60. The rules for who is entitled to Pension Credit are more generous so more people qualify. This part of the Pension Credit is called Guaranteed Credit.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section

Help with Rent of Council Tax

Council Tax discounts

If you are caring for a disabled person who gets a higher rate of disability benefit for at least 35 hours a week, you may be able to claim a Council Tax discount.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Social Fund

Grants

Community Care Grants are for carers or disabled people who get Income Support, Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance or Pension Credit.

You might be able to get a grant:

- For travel costs for things like visiting your family in hospital or residential care
- For major expenses like the extra cost of having a disabled child
- To help someone leave or stay out of institutions or residential care. For example, you may get money for removal costs and furniture, if you move near a relative or friend to look after them

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Family Fund

This is for carers who care for a disabled child under the age of 16 who lives at home.

The family fund provides grants for things like washing machines, a holiday or clothing **but must be related to the needs of the disabled child.**

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Other Information

Signing on at JobCentre Plus

Carers, (including young carers aged 16 or 17) who are looking after someone who gets, or has applied for Attendance Allowance or middle or higher rate of Disability Living Allowance, should contact the JobCentre Plus about claiming benefit instead of signing on for Jobseekers Allowance.

For more information contact your local JobCentre Plus benefits enquiry line on 0845 600 1651

Carers who are sick or disabled.

If you are not fit for work you may be able to claim a higher rate of Income Support.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Getting back to work

If you are a carer and your Income Support, Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance stop because you or your partner start work or take on extra hours, you should contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section as you may be entitled to further help.

You may be able to claim Working Tax credit and Child tax Credit. At this point you will need to seek advice.

Tax Credit Helpline on Tel 0845 300 3900

If the person you care for does not get disability benefit

You will not get Carer's Allowance if the person you care for is refused Attendance Allowance or Disability Allowance. You will need to seek advice.

For more information contact any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.

Respite care or hospital stays

If the person you care for has been in hospital or frequently uses respite care, this may affect your benefits. Seek advice from any of the organizations detailed at the beginning of this section.