

INCOME SUPPORT - CHILD PERSONAL CARE BENEFIT

Help for children with severe long-term illness or disability.

If you have a child (or children) with a high level of long-term illness or disability but you don't get Income Support, you can apply for the Child Personal Care benefit regardless of your household income.

This benefit can be awarded for physical, sensory, emotional, and cognitive conditions affecting day to day functionality. It is only available for children with an illness or disability who require a very high level of help with their personal care and the condition is expected to last at least six months (this can be before or after the claim is made). It may also be available to children who are terminally ill.

How do I qualify for the Child Personal Care benefit?

To qualify, a child must meet the requirements for either of the highest two levels of the medical component (Personal Care levels 2 and 3) under Income Support. A child is defined as being under compulsory school leaving age. The only other rule is that one adult in the household must pass the Income Support residence test. More detail of the residence test is available online or through contacting the Department. The minimum residence requirement is 5 years continuously before claiming.

How much is the benefit?

As of 1st January 2024, the value of the payments are:

- Personal Care level 1 £30.38 per week
(only applicable to Income Support claims)
- Personal Care level 2 £132.79 per week
- Personal Care level 3 £190.40 per week

What does 'high level of personal care' mean?

A child who needs a high level of personal care will always need a lot of help from an adult with activities that a child of the same age would normally manage entirely on their own, or with only a small amount of help. For example, they always need help standing when a child of their age would normally be able to stand without help. To qualify for this benefit, it is likely the child will need a lot of help throughout the day, and with a number of different activities.

What are the personal care levels?

There are three levels of Personal Care defined in the Income Support Law. The assessment process is designed to cover any illness or disability that means a person needs help with daily activities.

Personal Care level 1 (the lowest level) is a means tested benefit for those households entitled to Income Support.

Personal Care level 2 is the second highest level of medical component. It supports individuals living with severe illnesses and disabilities but whose needs do not qualify for personal care level 3. Children who meet Personal Care level 2 or 3 are eligible for the Child Personal Care benefit.

Personal Care level 3 is the highest-level medical component available. It is intended to support individuals who are living with the most severe illnesses or disabilities and who need help with most everyday activities. This could include activities such as washing and dressing, managing money and understanding danger but it is not limited to these activities.

Examples

1. Personal Care level 1 – A child with an impairment which affects some aspects of daily life but who does not need a high level of help. For example, a child with epilepsy who needs help with medication, or a child with a visual impairment who needs assistance to carry out a number of everyday tasks.

2. Personal Care level 2 – A child with a high level of impairment who requires assistance in order to carry out many daily activities. For example, a child with learning difficulties who needs a lot of assistance with washing and remaining safe, or a child with physical disabilities who needs a lot of help walking and getting dressed.

3. Personal Care level 3 – a child who requires the highest level of assistance in order to undertake most everyday tasks. A child qualifying for Personal Care level 3 will require a very high level of care throughout the day and night. For example, a child who has paralysis and requires assistance with most daily activities, or who has very significant learning disabilities.

Upon reaching compulsory school leaving age, a young adult who qualifies for Personal Care level 2 or 3 and meets the residency conditions of Income Support can make their own independent claim for Income Support, regardless of the income of their parents. This helps young adults in this group to remain in education and receive financial support.

I already get Income Support – how will this apply to me?

The Child Personal Care benefit is available if your household receives Income Support.

I am a carer – what help can I get?

If you are caring for a child who qualifies for Personal Care level 3, you may also be eligible for the separate Home Carer's Allowance benefit. Please call the Health Zone of Customer and Local Services on 01534 444444 for more information.

How do I apply?

If you are not already receiving a Personal Care component for your child, please ask us for an application form for the Child Personal Care benefit. You will have to prove that you (or your partner) meet the residency conditions of Income Support.

You will also need to complete the application form for the Income Support medical component on behalf of the child. The form is designed to be filled in by any person and doesn't require you to have any specialist medical knowledge. It asks for details of the condition and how it affects the child's day-to-day life. We check these details against supporting medical evidence which you will need to provide from your doctor or other health care professional.

We might need to write to the hospital to get additional specialist reports. An educational "record of need" and school reports can also provide useful information. You might also be asked to bring your child to attend a medical assessment – this is normally carried out by a Medical Board Doctor.

If you think you might also qualify for the Income Support benefit, please discuss this with our customer service advisor, they can talk you through what you need to do to apply.

When will I know if my application was successful?

Once there is enough information the application is assessed, and an award is made. We will also write to you if you don't qualify.

What can I do if I don't agree with your decision?

If you don't agree with our decision, you have the right to appeal.

Where can I get more information?

Visit <https://www.gov.je/Benefits/IncomeSupport>

or contact us by email, phone or visit to our building in La Motte Street.

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