

CHILD PERSONAL CARE BENEFIT

Help for children with severe long-term illness or disability

The Income Support benefit is available to low income households who pass certain tests. It includes medical components to help people with long-term illnesses and disabilities to meet their additional costs.

Families with children with a very high level of long-term illness or disability, but who don't get Income Support, can now apply for the Child Personal Care benefit – regardless of their household income.

How do I qualify for the Child Personal Care benefit?

This benefit is only available to help children who have a severe or very severe long-term medical condition.

It can be awarded for physical, sensory, emotional and cognitive conditions. It is only available for children who require a very high level of help with their personal care when compared to other children of the same age. A child is defined as anybody below compulsory school leaving age.

The condition must be expected to last at least six months (this can be before or after the claim is made), but benefit may also be available to children who are terminally ill.

To qualify, a child must meet the requirements for one of the two highest levels (levels 2 and 3) of the Personal Care medical component. This is explained on the next page. The only other rule is that one adult in the household must pass a residence test – meaning they've been in Jersey for at least 5 years before claiming. More details of the residence test are available online or by contacting Social Security.

How much is the benefit?

As of January 2015, the value of the payments are:

- Personal Care level 2 £101.15 per week
- Personal Care level 3 £145.25.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, with Personal Care 3 being the highest.

Personal Care level 3 is for children who are living with the most severe illnesses or disabilities and who need help with most everyday activities.

Personal Care level 2 is the second highest level of medical component available. It is for children with severe illnesses and disabilities but whose needs do not quite qualify for personal care level 3.

Children who meet Personal Care level 2 or 3 are eligible for the Child Personal Care benefit.

Children who meet **Personal Care level 1** (the lowest level) are not eligible for the Child Personal Care benefit, although they may qualify for additional help from Income Support if their household has a low income.

Brief examples (you may need to contact Social Security for more information)

Personal Care level 3 – a child who requires the highest level of help 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 help with most daily activities, or who has very significant learning disabilities.

Personal Care level 2 – a child with a significant condition that means they require a lot of help to carry out a wide range of daily activities. For example, a child with learning difficulties who needs a lot of help with getting around and remaining safe, or a child with physical disabilities who needs a lot of help walking, getting dressed, toileting and washing.

Personal Care level 1 – a child with a condition which may affect some areas of daily life but who does not need a high level of help in most other areas. For example, a child with epilepsy who needs help with medication, or a child with asthma who needs assistance to carry out a number of everyday tasks.

When they reach the end of year 11, a young adult who qualifies for Personal Care level 2 or 3 and passes the residency test 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 some financial support.

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

The Child Personal Care benefit is still available if your household receives Income Support. It replaces any existing medical component and will be set up for you automatically if you qualify. In some cases your existing Income Support claim may be replaced by the Child Personal Care benefit.

We will automatically update your claim and we will write to you to confirm the new details. Personal Care level 3 claims were dealt with in September 2014. Existing Personal Care level 2 claims will start being adjusted from January 2015.

I'm 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 and for extra support under Income Support. Please ask Social Security if you would like more information.

How do I apply?

If you are already receiving a personal care component for your child through Income Support, you do not need to apply.

If you are not already receiving a Personal Care component for your child, please contact the Social Security Department to arrange an appointment. You will have to prove that you (or your partner) pass the residency test.

At this appointment, one of our specialist staff will ask you some questions to see if you are likely to qualify. If they think you might qualify, they will give you advice about how to get evidence to support your application. Without supporting evidence to show that your child has a medical condition that results in them needing a lot of extra care, it is unlikely you will qualify for the benefit.

You might also be asked to bring your child to attend a medical assessment – this is normally carried out by a doctor, a nurse or an occupational therapist.

If you think you might also qualify for the Income Support benefit, please discuss this with our advisors. They will be able to give you an estimate and you can apply for both benefits at the same time.

When will I know if my application was successful?

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

We expect to deal with a large number of applications when the level 2 Child Personal Care benefit is first introduced. As each application is considered separately, there may be a delay before your application can be dealt with. All successful applications received before July 2015 will receive payments backdated to 1 January 2015.

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 ask us to look at it again. If you still don't agree with that second decision, you have the right to appeal to an independent tribunal.

Where can I get more information?

If you think you might qualify, you should contact us. Our specialist advisors can talk you through what you need to do to apply, can arrange an appointment and will be able to help you estimate whether you'll also qualify for Income Support.

If you just require more information, you can contact us by email, phone or visit us at the address below.

Social Security Department

P.O. Box 55
La Motte Street
St. Helier
JE4 8PE
Jersey

www.gov.je/incomesupport

Tel: +44 (0)1534 447426

Fax: +44 (0)1534 447447

Email: Income.Support@gov.je