

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for Children

Eligibility

Usually, to qualify for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children the child must:

- be under 16 - anyone over 16 must apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- need extra looking after or have walking difficulties
- be in Great Britain, a European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland when you claim - there are some exceptions, such as family members of the Armed Forces
- have lived in Great Britain for 2 of the last 3 years, if over 3 years old
- be habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands
- not be subject to immigration control

The process is different in Northern Ireland.

There are some exceptions to these conditions if the child is living or coming from an EEA country or Switzerland.

You can claim DLA for children if you're in or out of work.

Children under 3

A child under 6 months must have lived in Great Britain for at least 13 weeks.

A child aged between 6 months and 3 years must have lived in Great Britain for at least 26 of the last 156 weeks.

The rules on residence do not normally apply if a child is terminally ill.

The child's disability or health condition

The child's disability or health condition must mean at least one of the following apply:

- they need much more looking after than a child of the same age who does not have a disability
- they have difficulty getting about

They must have had these difficulties for at least 3 months and expect them to last for at least 6 months. If they're terminally ill (that is, not expected to live more than 6 months), they do not need to have had these difficulties for 3 months.

Care component

The rate the child gets depends on the level of looking after they need, for example:

- lowest rate - help for some of the day

- middle rate - frequent help or constant supervision during the day, supervision at night or someone to help while they're on dialysis
- highest rate - help or supervision throughout both day and night, or they're terminally ill

Mobility component

The rate the child gets depends on the level of help they need getting about, for example:

- lowest rate - they can walk but need help and or supervision when outdoors
- highest rate - they cannot walk, can only walk a short distance without severe discomfort, could become very ill if they try to walk or they're blind, severely sight impaired

Change of circumstances

Contact the Disability Service Centre as soon as the child's circumstances change. This can affect how much they get, for example if their disability gets worse or they go abroad for medical treatment.

Their DLA will not usually be affected if they go:

- into a local authority care home for less than 28 days
- into a hospital
- abroad for less than 13 weeks
- abroad for less than 26 weeks to get medical treatment for a condition which began before they left