

October 2014

## A Guide to Personal Independence Payments

### Introduction

This factsheet is a guide to Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

PIP is a benefit for disabled people who have difficulties with getting around or who need help with taking part in everyday life. PIP replaces Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and eventually all disabled people who qualify will receive PIP and not DLA. It is a benefit specifically for disabled people aged between 16 and 65. PIP is not means tested and is tax free. You do not need to have paid National Insurance contributions to qualify for PIP and it is not affected by any earnings you may receive if you are employed.

PIP has two components. A daily living component which is for people who need help with taking part in day to day living and a mobility component for people who need help getting around. Each component can be paid at either a standard rate or an enhanced rate. People can receive either component on its own or may be entitled to receive both components at the same time.

Children and young people under the age of 16 who have care and/or mobility needs cannot make a new claim for PIP but may be able to claim DLA instead. If you are aged 65 or over you cannot make a new claim for PIP, you would need to claim Attendance Allowance instead.

### Existing DLA Claimants

PIP is being introduced gradually for people who are already receiving DLA. If you have a fixed term award for DLA you will be invited to apply for PIP when your DLA is due for renewal or reconsideration.

You will be invited to claim PIP when:

- Your fixed period DLA award ends;
- You inform DWP that your care and/or mobility needs have changed;
- When you reach the age of 16 if you have been in receipt of DLA as a minor.

If you are receiving DLA and have an indefinite award you will not be reassessed until somewhere between October 2015 and late 2017.

If you receive a letter which tells you that you have to start a claim for PIP you will have four weeks to respond. You do not have a choice about this. You must make sure that you do this or your DLA will be stopped. If you do not respond the DWP will write to you and tell you that your DLA has been suspended but you will be given another four weeks to make your claim for PIP. If you do this then your DLA will be restarted while your claim is assessed but if you do not make your claim for PIP within the four week period than your entitlement to DLA will stop.

You can choose to change your claim to PIP if you don't want to wait until you are invited to apply for PIP instead of DLA however, if you do this, you may find that you do not qualify or that you only qualify for the lower amount. If you still decide you want to claim PIP your DLA will stop and you will not be able to have your DLA reinstated even if you change your mind about claiming PIP.

## New Claimants

If you are aged between 16 and 65 and you are making a new claim for PIP you will need to satisfy various conditions in order to qualify for the benefit.

New claimants must:

- Be within the required age limits; *and*
- Pass the relevant PIP assessment (see below); *and*
- Pass the relevant PIP assessment throughout the three months before your claim; *and*
- Show that you are likely to be able to pass the relevant PIP assessment throughout the nine months after you make your claim; *and*
- You pass residence and presence tests and are not subject to immigration controls.

## Terminal illness

If you claim PIP because you are terminally ill you do not need to have been able to pass the relevant part of the PIP assessment for the three months before you made your claim.

You will automatically receive the enhanced rate for the daily living component but you will still need to pass the relevant criteria for the mobility component (see below).

## The Assessment

### A. Daily Living Activities

The first part of the PIP assessment looks at how well you can cope with day-to-day living. It is a points based system which looks at 12 different types of activity. There are a list of descriptors for each type of activity and you will score points for each task listed if you cannot do it safely, repeatedly and to an acceptable standard. The assessment does not look at day and night separately, it looks at how you can cope over an entire 24-hour period. If your impairment is due to a fluctuating condition such as Multiple Sclerosis and your ability to do things changes from day to day the assessment will look at how you cope for at least 50% of days for the three months before your claim and how you are likely to cope for the nine months after you make your claim.

The table below lists all the activities that are used to assess how you cope with day-to-day living. Each activity will score between 0 and 12 points depending on how much help you need. The highest score from each activity will be added together. You need to score a total of at least 8 points to be entitled to the standard rate of the daily living component and 12 points for the enhanced rate. It is the total score that matters when you add together all the scores from each of the twelve descriptors.

Activity	Points
Preparing food	
a. Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided.	0
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
c. Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave.	2
d. Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
e. Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	4
f. Cannot prepare and cook food.	8

Taking nutrition

- a. Can take nutrition unaided. 0
- b. Needs –
  - (i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to take nutrition; *or*
  - (ii) supervision to be able to take nutrition; *or*
  - (iii) assistance to be able to cut up food. 2
- c. Needs a therapeutic source to be able to take nutrition. 2
- d. Needs prompting to be able to take nutrition. 4
- e. Needs assistance to be able to manage a therapeutic source to take nutrition. 6
- f. Cannot convey food and drink to their mouth *and* needs another person to do so. 10

### Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition

- a. Either –
  - (i) does not receive medication or therapy or need to monitor a health condition; *or*
  - (ii) can manage medication or therapy or monitor a health condition unaided. 0
- b. Needs either
  - (i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage medication; *or*
  - (ii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage medication or monitor a health condition. 1
- c. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes no more than 3.5 hours a week. 2
- d. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 3.5 but no more than 7 hours a week. 4
- e. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 7 but no more than 14 hours a week. 6
- f. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 14 hours a week. 8

## Washing and bathing

- a. Can wash and bathe unaided. 0
- b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe. 2
- c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe. 2
- d. Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair or body below the waist. 2
- e. Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower. 3
- f. Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist. 4
- g. Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body. 8

## Managing toilet needs or incontinence

- a. Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided. 0
- b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence. 2
- c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs. 2
- d. Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs. 4
- e. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel. 6
- f. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel. 8

## Dressing and undressing

- a. Can dress and undress unaided. 0
- b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to dress or undress. 2
- c. Needs either -
  - (i) prompting to be able to dress, undress or determine appropriate circumstances for remaining clothed; *or*
  - (ii) prompting or assistance to be able to select appropriate clothing. 2
- d. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their lower body. 2
- e. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their upper body. 4
- f. Cannot dress or undress at all. 8

## Communicating verbally

- a. Can express and understand verbal information unaided. 0
- b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear. 2
- c. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information. 4
- d. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information. 8
- e. Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support. 12

## Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words

- a. Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses. 0
- b. Needs to use an aid or appliance, other than spectacles or contact lenses, to be able to read or understand either basic or complex written information. 2
- c. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information. 2
- d. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information. 4
- e. Cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all. 8

## Engaging with other people face to face

- a. Can engage with other people unaided. 0
- b. Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people. 2
- c. Needs social support to be able to engage with other people. 4
- d. Cannot engage with other people due to such engagement causing either –  
(i) overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant; *or*  
(ii) the claimant to exhibit behaviour which would result in a substantial risk of harm to the claimant or another person. 8

## Managing budgeting decisions

- |                                                                                  |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| a. Can manage complex budgeting decisions unaided.                               | 0 |
| b. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make complex budgeting decisions. | 2 |
| c. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make simple budgeting decisions.  | 4 |
| d. Cannot make any budgeting decisions at all.                                   | 6 |

## B. Mobility Activities

If you have problems moving around you may be entitled to the mobility component of PIP.

You will be assessed on both:

- Planning and following a journey; *and*
- Moving around.

The table below lists the descriptors for each of these elements and you will be scored from 0 to 12 points for each descriptor. You only need to include the score for the activity that scores the highest for each descriptor. The points for the two elements are then added together and if you score at least 8 points you will be entitled to the standard rate of the mobility component. If you score 12 points or more you will be entitled to the enhanced rate for the mobility component.

Activity	Points
Planning and following journeys	
a. Can plan and follow the route of a journey unaided.	0
b. Needs prompting to be able to undertake any journey to avoid overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.	4
c. Cannot plan the route of a journey.	8
d. Cannot follow the route of an unfamiliar journey without another person, assistance dog or orientation aid.	10
e. Cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.	10

f. Cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, an assistance dog or an orientation aid. 12

### Moving around

- a. Can stand and then move more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided. 0
- b. Can stand and then move more than 50 metres but no more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided. 4
- c. Can stand and then move unaided more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres. 8
- d. Can stand and then move using an aid or appliance more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres. 10
- e. Can stand and then move more than 1 metre but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided. 12
- f. Cannot, either aided or unaided, –
- (i) stand; *or*
- (ii) move more than 1 metre. 12

### Making a claim

You can make a claim for PIP either by telephone or textphone or on paper. You can do this yourself or you can ask someone else, such as a support worker or carer to do it for you. If you ask someone else to make the phone call for you, you must be with them when they do it. When you make the call you will be asked some basic details about yourself such as your name and address and your bank details. The call will last around 15 minutes. Telephone: 0800 917 2222, textphone: 0800 917 7777. If you unable to start your claim by telephone you can ask for a paper form instead.

Once you have made your claim the DWP will look at the information you have provided about your disability and will decide whether or not it is likely that you will qualify for PIP. They will either send you a letter telling you that your claim has been disallowed or you will be sent a longer form to complete called: How your disability affects you. In this form you

will be asked to describe how your impairment affects your daily life. You must return the completed form within one month of receiving it.

Once you have returned this form it will be sent to an assessment centre which will then contact your doctor and/or any medical specialist who treats you and ask them to provide a report about you and your impairment. It is likely that you will also be asked to go to a face-to-face meeting with the assessor. This consultation is likely to be at an assessment centre but you are entitled to ask for it to be in your own home if you are not able to attend the centre.

### At the assessment

At the assessment you will be asked about your impairment and how it affects you. They will ask you about all aspects of your life including your home, your job if you are employed and your leisure activities. Make sure you answer these questions fully – it may help if you keep a daily diary for a few days before your assessment to help you remember things you have found to be difficult. 4

Once your assessment has been completed it will be sent to a case manager who will decide whether or not you qualify for PIP, and, if you do, at what level. If you are not awarded PIP you can appeal this decision.

### Things that may affect your PIP

- PIP is not means tested and is payable whether you work or not. You do not need to tell the DWP if you start or stop working.
- If you are admitted to hospital PIP can generally be paid for the first 28 days of your hospital stay but will be stopped after that. If you are a private patient and you are paying for the whole cost of your accommodation and non-medical care PIP can still be paid.

- PIP is not payable if you are sent to prison or held in legal custody for more than 28 days or if you are held in custody on remand for more than 28 days.
- If you go to live in a residential care home you are unlikely to receive the
- daily living component of PIP if the cost of your care is paid for out of public or local funds. The mobility component of PIP is still payable even if you live in a care home.
- If you leave the UK for any reason you will continue to receive PIP for the first 13 weeks of your time abroad: *or* for the first 26 weeks if you have gone to receive medical treatment for any illness or impairment that affected you before you left the UK. If you decide to go and live abroad you may be entitled to continue to receive PIP. You would need to ask for further advice about this before you go.

### Legal Disclaimer

Although great care has been taken in the compilation and preparation of this factsheet to ensure accuracy, DASL cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. All information provided is not a substitute for professional advice. Any organisations, telephone numbers and links to external web-sites have been carefully selected but are provided without any endorsement of the content of those sites.

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