

Carer's Allowance

HELP WITH THE COSTS OF CARING



Who we are

Age Scotland is the national charity for older people. We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 so that they can love later life.

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people can make the most of later life.

Our three strategic aims are to:



Help older people to be as well as they can be



Promote a positive view of ageing and later life



Tackle loneliness and isolation

How we can help

We know that growing older doesn't come with a manual. Later life can bring changes and opportunities to your life and you may need to know about rights, organisations and services which are unfamiliar to you.

That's why we provide free information and advice to help you on a range of topics including benefits and entitlements, social care, legal issues such as Power of Attorney, housing and much more. All of our guides are available to download for free from our website, or you can contact our helpline team to have copies posted to you for free.

The Age Scotland **helpline** is a free, confidential phone service for older people, their carers and families in Scotland looking for information and advice.

Later life can bring times when you just need someone to talk to. Our **friendship line** is part of our wider helpline and older people can call us for a chat. We're here to listen, provide friendship and offer support.

For information, advice and friendship



Call us free on: 0800 12 44 222
(Monday – Friday, 9am - 5pm)



Visit [agescotland.org.uk](https://www.agescotland.org.uk)
to find out more.

Are you a carer?

If you look after a partner, relative or friend, who has a disability or health condition and would find it difficult to manage without your support, then you are a carer.

Many people don't see themselves as carers, as they see the support they give as part of their relationship. They may think:

“I'm just doing what anyone would in my position.”

However, if you are a carer there may be help, including financial help, available for you.

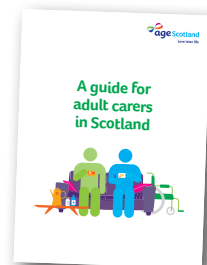
Some carers don't claim Carer's Allowance because they think they won't be eligible, as they are receiving financial support for their own health condition:

“I claim a disability benefit so I can't be eligible for carers' benefits too”

The Carer's Allowance rules can be complicated, but receiving Attendance Allowance, Adult Disability Payment, Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance doesn't prevent you from claiming Carer's Allowance too.

This guide explains the rules for claiming Carer's Allowance, but carers are also entitled to an assessment of their support needs as a carer, from their local council. The types of support available vary between councils, but may include practical support, emotional support and respite care.

Age Scotland's **Adult Carer's guide** explains more about your rights as a carer, including the help that may be available from your local council.



What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit specifically for carers.

To qualify for it, you must:

- spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone who has care or support needs. It doesn't matter whether or not you live with them. The 35 hours can include time spent helping them practically, supporting them emotionally or being there to keep them safe
- care for someone who receives:
 - » Attendance Allowance
 - » Adult Disability Payment (care component)
 - » Personal Independence Payment (care component)
 - » Disability Living Allowance (high or middle rate care component)
 - » Armed Forces Independence Payment
 - » Constant Attendance Allowance
- not be in full-time education or earning more than £139 a week.



How much is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is £76.75 per week from April 2023 to March 2024.

Claiming Carer's Allowance can also increase your entitlement to Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction, or give you an entitlement for the first time.

How do I apply?

You can apply for Carer's Allowance online, or download a postal application form, at www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim.

If you are not online, the **Carer's Allowance Unit** can send a form out to you. Contact them on **0800 731 0297**.

If you were entitled to Carer's Allowance before you made a claim, you can ask for it to be backdated for up to three months.

What happens if I am receiving State Pension?

State Pension and Carer's Allowance are 'overlapping' benefits. This means that although you may qualify for both of these, you won't be paid them both in full. If your State Pension is more than £76.75 a week, then you will not be paid Carer's Allowance. If your State Pension is less than this, you can claim Carer's Allowance to top it up to £76.75 a week.

If you receive State Pension of more than £76.75 a week, and also qualify for Carer's Allowance, you will be awarded an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance. This means you are officially regarded as a carer for social security purposes, even though you won't receive a Carer's Allowance payment.

The good news is that this underlying entitlement may entitle you to extra money paid with any means-tested benefits you claim, such as Pension Credit and Housing Benefit. This extra money is known as a Carer Premium or Carer Addition.

To check how Carer's Allowance will affect your entitlement to other benefits, call the Age Scotland helpline for a benefit check, on **0800 12 44 222**.

What happens to the benefits of the person I care for?

If the person you care for receives an extra amount for severe disability in a means-tested benefit they claim (for example Pension Credit or Housing Benefit), this extra money will be stopped if you receive Carer's Allowance payments. An underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance will not affect the benefits of the person you care for.

Call the Age Scotland helpline for advice if you want to check how claiming Carer's Allowance will affect the benefits of the person you care for.



What if my application is turned down?

If you think your application has been turned down incorrectly, you can ask for a **mandatory reconsideration**. Contact the Department for Work and Pensions in writing to the address on the decision letter, or by telephone on **0800 731 0297**. Do this quickly as you only have one month to challenge the decision from the date of the decision letter.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the mandatory reconsideration, you can appeal at **www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision/submit-appeal**. If you are not online, you can contact the Digital Support Helpline on **03300 160051**.

For more information about mandatory reconsiderations and appeals, contact the Age Scotland helpline on **0800 12 44 222** for a free copy of our **Challenging Benefit Decisions** guide.



Carers Allowance Supplement

Many people in Scotland who receive Carer's Allowance also receive a 6-monthly payment of Carer's Allowance Supplement from Social Security Scotland. To qualify, you need to be receiving payments of Carer's Allowance (not just have an underlying entitlement) on the qualifying date. There are two qualifying dates each year, in April and October, and two payment dates each year, in June and December.

The amount for 2023/24 is £270.50 every 6 months.

For more information call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**, contact **Social Security Scotland** on **0800 182 2222** or visit **www.socialsecurity.gov.scot**.



What happens if my circumstances change?

The rules for Carer's Allowance recognise that your circumstances, and those of the person you care for, may change from time to time. It is very important that you report changes to the Carer's Allowance Unit as soon as possible.

Changes may include:

- taking a break from caring
- you reach State Pension age
- you or the person you care for going into hospital
- the person you care for moving into a care home permanently or temporarily
- an increase in your earnings
- travelling abroad to look after the person you care for
- the disability benefit of the person you care for being stopped because they are in hospital or move to a care home
- the person you care for dies.

You can take breaks from caring and still receive Carer's Allowance in some circumstances. The rules are complicated and you should get advice from the **Carers UK Adviceline** on **0808 808 7777** or the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** if you need information about how your benefit may be affected.



Useful organisations

Age Scotland helpline 0800 12 44 222

The Age Scotland helpline provides information, friendship and advice to older people, their relatives and carers.

If you need an interpreter call **0800 12 44 222** and simply state the language you need e.g. Polish or Urdu. Stay on the line for a few minutes and the Age Scotland helpline will do the rest.

You can call us on **0800 12 44 222** for a copy of our publications list or download / order copies from our website at **www.agescotland.org.uk**.

Carer's Allowance Unit

Call to claim Carer's Allowance.

Tel: **0800 731 0927**

www.gov.uk/carers-allowance-unit

Carers Scotland

Carers Scotland offers general help and advice for all carers through its free Carers Line helpline. They are part of Carers UK.

Carers Line: **0808 808 7777**

www.carersuk.org/scotland

Carers Trust Scotland

Carers Trust Scotland can help you to find local support.

Tel: **0300 772 7701**

www.carers.org/scotland

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

You can call Scotland's Citizens Advice Helpline on **0800 028 1456** for advice or for details of your local bureau or see their website

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/about-us/get-advice-s

Social Security Scotland

Social Security Scotland are delivering new benefits including Funeral Support Payment, Carers Allowance Supplement and Adult Disability Payment.

In the future Social Security Scotland will start to deliver Carer's Assistance which will start to replace Carer's Allowance.

Tel: **0800 182 2222**

www.socialsecurity.gov.scot

Age Scotland information guides

Our other guides relevant to carers include:



This information guide has been prepared by Age Scotland and contains general advice only, it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision or action and cannot be used as a substitute for professional advice.

Neither Age Scotland nor any of its subsidiary companies or charities accepts any liability arising from its use and it is the reader's sole responsibility to ensure any information is up to date and accurate.

Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, websites, companies, products, services or publications in this information guide does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Age Scotland or any of its subsidiary companies or charities.

How you can help

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

All the information and advice we provide is free and completely impartial and in helping people access their rights and entitlements, it can be life changing.

We are an ageing population and more people than ever are coming to us for support. You can help us be there for those that need us most.



Make a donation

No matter how small or large, donations make a massive difference and help us continue our important work.

- ▶ Call **03330 15 14 60**
- ▶ Visit **age.scot/donate**
- ▶ Text **LATERLIFE** to **70085** to donate £5.*



Fundraise

Whether it is having a bake sale, running a marathon or knitting small hats for the Big Knit, there are so many ways to raise vital funds to support our work. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/fundraise**.



Leave us a gift in your Will

By choosing to leave us a gift in your Will, you can help Age Scotland to continue being there for vulnerable older people in the years to come. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/legacy**.

* Texts cost £5 plus one standard rate message

Let's keep in touch



Sign up to our newsletter

Our regular newsletters by email contain details of our campaigns, services and how you can support our work.

Sign up today by visiting **age.scot/roundup**



Follow us on social media

Our social media channels are a great way to keep up to date with our work and issues that affect older people.



[/agescotland](https://www.facebook.com/agescotland)



[@AgeScotland](https://twitter.com/AgeScotland)



[@age_scotland](https://www.instagram.com/age_scotland)



[/AgeScotland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/AgeScotland)

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Contact us:

Head office

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Email

info@agescotland.org.uk

Visit our website

www.agescotland.org.uk

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