PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT FACTSHEET

Introduction

The information in this factsheet is intended to be a guide to the rules for Personal Independence Payment and does not cover every circumstance. It is possible that some of the information is over simplified or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes to the law. The rates shown are applicable from April 2020 to March 2021 and Blesma has made every effort to ensure that the information is correct at time of publication.

1) What is Personal Independence Payment?

Personal Independence Payment is a disability benefit for people aged 16 up to state pension age who have difficulty with their daily living activities such as washing and bathing, preparing food, managing therapy and making budgeting decisions (the daily living component) or difficulty with their mobility (the mobility component).

If a successful claim for Personal Independence Payment is made before state pension age, it can continue to be paid beyond state pension age as long as you continue to meet the criteria.

If you are state pension age or over and not receiving Personal Independence Payment you may be able to claim Attendance Allowance. See Blesma's Attendance Allowance factsheet.

Entitlement to Personal Independence Payment will be based on the effect your long term health condition or disability has on your daily life, not the condition or disability itself. It is paid to recognise the increased costs an individual may face due to an illness or disability.

Personal Independence Payment is:

- non means tested (any income or capital you have will not affect the claim);
- not taxable;
- paid whether or not you are working; and
- paid at different levels depending on your difficulties

If you are already in receipt of Disability Living Allowance you will be invited to claim Personal Independence Payment at some stage, as Personal Independence Payment is gradually replacing Disability Living Allowance for people aged 16 – state pension age, even for those with an indefinite or lifetime award.

<u>England, Scotland and Wales</u>

Claimants living in these areas who were aged 65 or over on 8th April 2013 will be unaffected by this change and can continue to receive Disability Living Allowance as long as the criteria continues to be met.

Northern Ireland

Claimants living in Northern Ireland who were aged 65 or over on 20th June 2016 will be unaffected by this change and can continue to receive Disability Living Allowance as long as the criteria continues to be met.

2) Who can claim?

You can claim Personal Independence Payment if:

- You are aged 16 and up to state pension age when you claim **and**
- You pass the Personal Independence Payment assessment (see section 10) **and**
- You satisfy the required period condition (your difficulties must have been present for three months before your claim and expected to last a further nine months after your claim) **and**
- You are present in the UK and have been for so for no less than 104 weeks in the last 156 weeks i.e. two out of the last three years **and**
- You are habitually resident and are not subject to immigration control

If you are already paid one of the following allowances you will not be able to receive the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment if they are paid at an equivalent or higher amount:

- Constant Attendance Allowance paid with War Pension
- Constant Attendance Allowance paid with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

If you are already paid the following allowance you will not be able to receive the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment

- War Pension Mobility Supplement

If you are already paid the following allowance you will not be able to receive Personal Independence Payment daily living or mobility component

- Armed Forces Independence Payment paid with Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

3) How much is Personal Independence Payment?

Personal Independence Payment can be paid at one of two rates for each component, dependent on the number of points scored in the assessment.

Daily living component		
Standard rate	£59.70 per week	Score 8 – 11 points
Enhanced rate	£89.15 per week	Score 12 or more points
Mobility component		
Standard rate	£23.60	Score 8 – 11 points
Enhanced rate	£62.25	Score 12 or more points

4) How long is Personal Independence Payment awarded for?

If a decision is made to award you Personal Independence Payment, it will usually be for a fixed term. There is no legal minimum period for an award, but it may be for a relatively short time such as one or two years. Alternatively a longer award of five or ten years may be considered appropriate. A long term award i.e. one that does not have a fixed term would only be considered where improvements in your ability to manage are unlikely and your needs are likely to remain broadly the same. Long term awards have a review at ten years.

Around fourteen weeks before your fixed term is due to end you will be sent a form to reapply.

5) Terminal illness

If you have a terminal illness you will qualify for the enhanced rate of the daily living component. A medical practitioner will need to complete a form called a DS1500 that states that you are not expected to live beyond six months. You will automatically be considered to have passed the daily living assessment for the enhanced rate and will not have needed to meet the required period condition. To receive the mobility component you will need to pass the mobility assessment (with the exception of meeting the required period condition).

6) What if I go into hospital?

If you spend more than 28 days in hospital then your Personal Independence Payment will be suspended. It can restart when you return home as long as you continue to meet the claim criteria. If you have more periods in hospital these can be added together if they are separated by 28 days or less.

7) Motability

Claimants entitled to the enhanced rate of mobility, that has more than a year left before review, have the option to lease a car through the Motability scheme. If you have a car through Motability, periods in hospital can affect this. You will need to contact Motability on 0300 456 4566 if your Personal Independence Payment is suspended by a stay in hospital. To find out more about Motability visit www.motability.co.uk or contact 0300 456 4566.

8) What if I go into a care home?

The daily living component is not normally payable while you are resident of a care home in which any of the costs of your accommodation, board, personal care or other services are met out of public or local funds. Payment will usually stop after you have been living in the care home for 28 days.

If you are fully funding the cost of your care home you can continue to receive the daily living component.

The mobility component is not usually affected by a stay in a care home.

9) How do I claim?

England, Scotland and Wales
For citizens claiming in these areas, to initiate your claim you will need to call the Department for Work and Pensions Personal Independence Payment claim line on:
Telephone: 0800 917 2222

Northern Ireland

For citizens of Northern Ireland, to initiate your claim for benefit you will need to call the Department for Communities Personal Independence Payment Centre on:
Telephone: 0800 012 1573

The call should take about fifteen minutes and you will be asked for some basic details such as:

- contact details and date of birth;
- National Insurance number;
- bank or building society details;
- doctor's or health worker's name;
- details of any time you have spent abroad, in a care home or hospital

Someone else can call on your behalf, but you will need to be with them when they call.

Approximately two weeks after the phone call you should receive a form '*How your disability affects you*'. The purpose of this form is to ask you to explain how your disability or condition affects your day to day life and your ability to undertake a range of set activities.

You can include extra evidence when sending the form in if you wish. This could include a medical report, a diary where you have recorded your day to day difficulties over a period of time or anything else you think would support your case. You should write your name and national insurance number on anything you send in. You may like to refer to our Personal Independence Payment Hints and Tips on completing the '*How your disability affects you*' form.

You have one month from the date it was sent out to return this form. If you fail to do so without good reason, your claim will be disallowed. It is advisable to copy your form and any supporting evidence you send in so that you have your submitted information to hand should you need to challenge the decision.

If you request a claim form by post you have one month from the date that your request is received in which to return the completed form.

10) How your claim is assessed

Decisions on Personal Independence Payment entitlement are made by the Department for Work and Pensions decision makers (referred to as case managers). However, the assessment itself is carried out by one of two provider companies depending on the area you live in; ATOS Healthcare or Capita.

Once your completed '*How your disability affects you*' form has been received by the Department for Work and Pensions, together with any supporting evidence you have

sent in, it is passed over to ATOS Healthcare or Capita. They will seek further evidence from the named professionals you have given on the form if they feel it is necessary. They will then consider whether there is enough information to make a decision using just this information. In the majority of cases, further information is required and claimants are asked to attend a face to face assessment, where you will be assessed by a health professional.

If you are asked to attend a face to face assessment this can take place at an assessment centre that could be up to a 90 minute journey away. Some people will be visited in their own homes for the assessment. You can request a visit at home if one has not been offered, but you may have to provide evidence that you cannot travel. This may need to be supported by your doctor or specialist.

Limb loss will not automatically entitle you to Personal Independence Payment (unless you have bilateral lower limb loss, where you would qualify for the enhanced mobility component). It is not the disability or condition that you have, but how it impacts on your daily life that will entitle you to the benefit. Individuals react and manage differently so those with the same disability or condition will not necessarily have the same benefit entitlement.

If you have a carer, they may also attend the assessment, but they will not be able to answer questions on your behalf (unless you have difficulty with communication). They will be able to add to what you have to say, particularly with respect to their role as a carer.

The assessment tests your ability to participate in everyday life. It is a points related assessment of your physical and mental condition and of your cognitive functions based on twelve different activities.

Within each activity there are a number of descriptors. These describe your level of ability to carry out the activity and how much help you need with it. They have a sliding scale of scores that reflect your increasing inability to manage an activity and the relevant descriptor and score will be identified. See appendix A for the list of Activities and Descriptors and Appendix B for a definition of the terms used.

If you cannot reliably complete an activity then you should be considered as unable to complete it. For the purpose of the assessment reliably means undertaking an activity:

- **Safely** – i.e. In a manner unlikely to cause harm to you or another person
- **To an acceptable standard** – e.g. where someone washes themselves inadequately but does not realise they are not clean after they have finished
- **Repeatedly** – i.e. being able to complete the activity as often as is required
- **Within a reasonable time period** – i.e. it takes you no more than twice the time taken by someone with no health problems or disabilities

The assessment takes account of changes in your disability or condition to reflect the fact that you may have good or bad days. The health professional must consider your abilities over a course of a year i.e. three months before and nine months after your claim. This is referred to as the ‘required period condition’.

For each activity, a suitable descriptor will be selected that reflects your ability to undertake that task. This will be considered to apply if you meet the descriptor for more than 50% of the required period.

If your condition fluctuates it may be difficult to determine which descriptor best describes your ability. For this reason, it may be beneficial to maintain a diary that records how your disability or condition affects you. You can send in a copy of the diary with your form, and this can be referred to by the health professional as part of the assessment.

If, when using the reliability test, you score more than once in a given activity you will be awarded the highest descriptor.

The health professional will observe your ability to stand, sit and move around. They will be informally observing your abilities from the point that they greet you. This can include watching you bend down to pick up a handbag, how you get out of a chair and how you walk. During the assessment, they may also carry out a brief physical examination. This will be different from an examination by your GP as they are not trying to make a diagnosis, but are interested in how your ability to carry out everyday tasks is affected by your disability or condition.

The health professional will expect you to wear and make use of any prosthesis you have. In that regard, you should mention any difficulty you have with your prosthesis e.g. rubbing, pain, whether there are days or extended periods where you cannot wear it.

Following your assessment, the health professional will complete a report of their findings. The report must be clear, fully reasoned and justified. It should highlight key evidence to support the health professional's choice of the descriptors. Where possible they should include specific examples to illustrate any difficulties with undertaking an activity. If necessary, the report should provide a clear explanation why greater reliance has been given to particular sections of evidence.

11) The decision

Once the health professional has completed their report, it will be sent to the Department for Work and Pensions Case Manager who will decide whether or not to award your claim based on the report.

You will then receive a notification letter informing you of the decision to either award or disallow your claim. The notification letter will tell you which descriptors are considered to apply to you and the reasons for choosing them.

12) What if I am unhappy with the decision?

If your application is refused, or you are awarded a lower rate than you feel you should be entitled to, you can challenge the decision. It is important to note that there is a risk in doing so, as a challenge to an award may result in a reduction in the award, or potentially losing it completely.

13) How do I challenge a decision?

You can have three attempts to challenge a decision, but there is a strict process to follow. There is a one month time limit for you to register each stage of the process and you will need to follow each stage in order.

You should be notified in writing of any decisions made on your claim. The decision notice should set out your rights to challenge the decision. You can ask for written reasons for the decision if none were given in the decision notice. You must ask for these within one month of the date of the original decision notice.

Late challenges can be requested in certain circumstances. You will need to show it was not practical for you to apply in time and you should provide a clear and reasoned explanation for the delay. There is no guarantee that a late appeal will be accepted.

Mandatory reconsideration

This is the first stage of challenging the decision. Within one month of the date on the notification letter you need to register the mandatory reconsideration. If you wish you can send in some extra supporting evidence such as a letter from yourself why you disagree with the decision or evidence from a medical professional. A mandatory reconsideration will result in the Department for Work and Pensions reviewing your award 'in house'. For Northern Ireland, they are considered by the relevant Social Security Agency.

Appeal to First Tier Tribunal

If your mandatory reconsideration is unsuccessful then you have another opportunity to challenge the decision. This must be registered within one month of the date on the mandatory reconsideration revision letter. Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service is responsible for appeals in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland it is the responsibility of The Appeals Service. Both are independent from either the Department for Work and Pensions or the Social Security Agency. You have the opportunity to have your case heard on paper or in person. There is a higher success rate if you attend in person. Appeals can take several months. However, if you are successful, the award is backdated to the date of your claim.

Appeal to the Upper Tribunal

If your appeal to the first tier tribunal is unsuccessful you have another opportunity to challenge the decision through Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service, within one month of the first tier tribunal notification of the decision. This appeal needs to be based on a point of law. As a result, these appeals can be complex and it would be advisable to seek specialist advice.

Appendix A

Activities and descriptors

Introduction

The following is the list of Personal Independence Payment activities and descriptors. Some of these words have a legally defined meaning for the Personal Independence Payment assessment. For a meaning of terms please see appendix B.

Daily living activities and descriptors		
Activity 1: Preparing food and drink		
Descriptor		**Score**
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 main meal	2
e	Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal	4
f	Cannot prepare and cook food	8
Activity 2: Taking nutrition		
Descriptor		**Score**
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

Activity 3: Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition		
Descriptor		**Score**
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 iii. supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to 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

Activity 4: Washing and bathing		
Descriptor		**Score**
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

Activity 5: Managing toilet needs or incontinence		
Descriptor		**Score**
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
Activity 6: Dressing and undressing		
Descriptor		**Score**
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
Activity 7: Communicating verbally		
Descriptor		**Score**
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
Activity 8: Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words		
Descriptor		**Score**
a	Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided 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
Activity 9: Engaging with other people face to face		
Descriptor		**Score**
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
Activity 10: Making budgeting decisions		
Descriptor		**Score**
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

Mobility activities and descriptors		
Activity 11: Planning and following journeys		
Descriptor		**Score**
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	For reasons other than psychological distress, cannot plan the route of a journey	8
d	For reasons other than psychological distress, 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	For reasons other than psychological distress, cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, an assistance dog or an orientation aid	12
Activity 12: Moving around		
Descriptor		**Score**
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

APPENDIX B
Meaning of terms Personal Independence Payment: Activities and Descriptors

Introduction

This following is a list of definitions for the terms used in the Personal Independence Payment activities and descriptors.

Aided	Means with: a) the use of an aid or appliance; or b) supervision, prompting or assistance (**Aids** are devices that help a performance of a function, for example, walking sticks or spectacles. **Appliances** are devices that provide or replace a missing function, for example artificial limbs, collecting devices (stomas) and wheelchairs).
Assistance	Means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech. Assistance only needs to be required for part of the activity
Assistance dog	Means a dog trained to guide or assist a person with a sensory impairment
Basic verbal information	Means information in your native language conveyed verbally in a simple sentence
Basic written information	Means signs, symbols and dates written or printed standard size text in your native language
Bathe	Includes get into or out of an unadapted bath or shower
Communication support	Means support from a person trained or experienced in communicating with people with specific communication needs, including interpreting verbal information into a non-verbal form and vice versa
Complex budgeting decisions	Means decisions involving: a) calculating household and personal budgets b) managing and paying bills; and c) planning future purchases
Complex verbal information	Means information in your native language conveyed verbally in either more than one sentence or one complicated sentence
Complex written information	Means more than one sentence of written or printed standard size text in your native language
Cook	Means heat food at or above waist height
Dress and undress	Includes to put on and take off socks and shoes
Engage socially	Means– a) interact with others in a contextually and socially appropriate manner; b) understand body language; and c) establish relationships
Manage incontinence	Means manage involuntary evacuation of the bowel or bladder, including use a collecting device or self-catheterisation, and clean oneself afterwards

Manage medication or therapy	Means take medication or undertake therapy, where a failure to do so is likely to result in a deterioration in your health
Medication	Means medication to be taken at home which is prescribed or recommended by a registered – a) doctor; b) nurse; or c) pharmacist;
Monitor health	Means– a) detect significant changes in your health condition which are likely to lead to a deterioration in your health; and b) take action advised by a – i. registered doctor; ii. registered nurse; or iii. health professional who is regulated by the Health Professions Council, without which your health is likely to deteriorate
Orientation aid	Means a specialist aid designed to assist disabled people to follow a route safely
Prepare	In the context of food, means make food ready for cooking and eating
Prompting	Means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person; This only needs to be required for part of the activity. It does not include physically helping the claimant achieve the activity.
Psychological distress	Means distress related to an enduring mental health condition or an intellectual or cognitive impairment
Read	Includes read signs, symbols and words but does not include read Braille
Simple budgeting decisions	Means decisions involving– a) calculating the cost of goods; and b) calculating change required after a purchase
Simple meal	Means a cooked one-course meal for one using fresh ingredients;
Social support	Means support from a person trained or experienced in assisting people to engage in social situations
Stand	Means stand upright with at least one biological foot on the ground. This means that if you have had both feet amputated, you are treated as unable to stand
Supervision	Means the continuous presence of another person for the purpose of ensuring your safety; the risk must be likely to occur in the absence of such supervision. To apply, supervision must be required for the full duration of the activity
Take nutrition	Means– a) cut food into pieces, convey food and drink to one's mouth and chew and swallow food and drink; or b) take nutrition by using a therapeutic source;
Therapeutic source	Means parenteral or enteral tube feeding, using a rate-limiting device such as a delivery system or feed pump;
Therapy	Means therapy to be undertaken at home which is prescribed or recommended by a a) registered– i. doctor; ii. nurse; or iii. pharmacist; or b) health professional regulated by the Health Professions Council

Toilet needs	Means– a) getting on and off an unadapted toilet; b) evacuating the bladder and bowel; and c) cleaning oneself afterwards
Unaided	Means without– a) the use of an aid or appliance; or b) supervision, prompting or assistance