

Pension Credit

If you have Parkinson's, you may have some concerns about how you'll manage financially – if you can't work, or if you need help with your day-to-day needs, this can lead to extra costs. But there is some financial support available, so it's important to find out what benefits you're entitled to.

This information sheet explains what Pension Credit is, who qualifies, how to claim and what information you need to supply.

What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit for people who have reached the qualifying age. Until April 2010, this was 60. Until April 2020, the qualifying age is gradually increasing to 66.

Pension Credit is made up of two parts:

Guarantee Credit

This can top up money you already have coming in to a set level, with the aim of providing you with a basic income. Extra amounts will be added if you have relevant housing costs, severe disabilities or caring responsibilities.

Savings Credit

This will give you extra money if you have modest savings or income, if you (or your partner, if you have one) are aged 65 or over.

Do I qualify for Pension Credit?

If you (or your partner) have reached the qualifying age, you may claim the Guarantee Credit. If you (or your partner) are aged 65 or over, you may claim the Savings Credit. You may be able to get the Savings Credit even if you do not qualify for the Guarantee Credit.

You must be present and resident in Great Britain and not subject to immigration control.

How much is Pension Credit?

Guarantee Credit

The Guarantee Credit is calculated by comparing your income with a set figure (the 'Appropriate Minimum Guarantee'). If your income is less than this figure, you are paid the balance as Guarantee Credit.

The Appropriate Minimum Guarantee consists of a standard rate of £137.35 a week if you are a single person and £209.70 a week for a couple. You may receive additions to this standard rate:

Severe disability – single:	£55.30
Severe disability – couple (one qualifies)*:	£55.30
Severe disability – couple (both qualify):	£110.60
Carer:	£31

You may also get additions to the standard rate if you are an owner-occupier and have a mortgage or other qualifying housing costs.

* This only applies in limited circumstances: most typically when both people are receiving Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance at higher or middle rate care, but a claim by a carer for Carer's Allowance disqualifies them from receiving the severe disability addition.

Savings Credit

The Savings Credit is calculated by taking into account any qualifying income you may have above a fixed amount, called the Savings Credit threshold. This is £103.15 if you are single, or £164.55 for a couple.

For each £1 of qualifying income you have above this threshold, 60p is initially added to your maximum Savings Credit until you reach an upper limit of £20.52 a week if you are single or £27.09 a week for a couple.

If you are entitled to the Guarantee Credit, the resulting amount of savings credit is what you will actually receive.

If you're not entitled to the Guarantee Credit, 40p is taken from your maximum Savings Credit for each £1 a week of income you have above your Appropriate Minimum Guarantee (see above).

What income will be taken into account?

All of your income is taken into account when calculating the Guarantee Credit, unless it is specifically excluded by legislation. Among the income that is excluded are Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

Earnings are taken into account after tax, National Insurance contributions and half of any contribution to a private pension have been deducted. A small additional amount of your earnings is ignored: between £5 and £20 a week, depending on your circumstances.

The Savings Credit may give you extra money if you have income or savings other than the Pension Credit. Your income is calculated in the same way as for the Guarantee Credit, except that some income will not give you any entitlement to the Savings Credit, including:

- Working Tax Credit, Incapacity Benefit, contributory Employment and Support Allowance, contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance or Maternity Allowance, or
- maintenance payments for you or your partner from a former partner of either of you

What savings and investments will be taken into account?

Savings below a threshold of £10,000 will have no effect on your entitlement. For savings above £10,000, £1 a week is added to your income for every £500 of savings that you have above £10,000.

Certain types of capital, such as the value of your home, personal possessions, the surrender value of insurance policies and any payments you receive from the Macfarlane Trust, Eileen Trust, Independent Living Fund or The Fund will be ignored.

How do I claim Pension Credit?

You can call the freephone Pension Credit helpline on **0800 991 234** (8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday), or visit the website **www.direct.gov.uk/pensions**

If you have speech or hearing difficulties, the textphone number is **0800 169 0133**.

When you phone you will need:

- your National Insurance number
- information about money you have coming in
- information about any savings and investments you have

The Pension Service also produces an excellent leaflet called Pension Credit (Ref: PC1L). It gives many examples of how you may qualify. Call **0845 731 3233** for a copy.

Do I have to report changes in circumstances?

If you (or your partner) are aged 65 or over, you may not need to report any changes in the money that you have set aside for your retirement for up to five years. This is called an 'assessed income period'.

An assessed income period will normally be set for five years. If you are aged 75 or over, it will normally be set for an indefinite period. During this time you will not have to report changes to any second pensions (such as work pensions, stakeholder pensions, state second pensions or private pensions), income from annuities or changes in capital or savings.

However, a shorter period may be set if the money you have set aside for retirement is likely to change within 12 months, e.g. if you expect an endowment policy to mature six months after retirement, the assessed income period would last for six months. A shorter period may also be set if you are a couple and your partner reaches 65 within five years, e.g. if you are aged 67 and your partner is aged 62, the assessed income period will last until that partner becomes 65.

More information and support

We have information sheets on other benefits you may be entitled to. You can download these from our website at [parkinsons.org.uk](https://www.parkinsons.org.uk) or see the back page of this sheet for details of how to order these for free.

Our helpline

For more help and information on rights and benefits, you can contact our dedicated employment and benefits adviser on the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email hello@parkinsons.org.uk

Information and support workers

Our UK-wide network of information and support workers can also provide details about benefits and help you with the application process. You can find your local information and support worker online at [parkinsons.org.uk/isw](https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/isw) or call our helpline for details.

Local groups

Speak to others about their experiences at your local Parkinson's UK group. Visit [parkinsons.org.uk/localgroups](https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/localgroups) or call our helpline for details of your nearest meeting.

Online forum

Speak to others in a similar situation through our online discussion forum at [parkinsons.org.uk/forum](https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/forum)

Thank you

Thank you to Disability Alliance for updating this information sheet.



Pension Credit

If you have comments or suggestions about this information sheet, we'd love to hear from you. This will help us ensure that we are providing as good a service as possible.

We'd be very grateful if you could complete this form and return it to **Information Resources, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ**. Or you can email us at publications@parkinsons.org.uk. Thanks!

Please tick...

- I have Parkinson's. When were you diagnosed?
- I'm family/a friend/a carer of someone with Parkinson's
- I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's

Where did you get this information sheet from?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse | <input type="checkbox"/> Information and support worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parkinson's UK local group or event | <input type="checkbox"/> Ordered from us directly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our website | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

We're the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.

Can you help?

At Parkinson's UK, we are totally dependent on donations from individuals and organisations to fund the work that we do. There are many ways that you can help us to support people with Parkinson's. If you would like to get involved, please contact our Supporter Services team on **020 7932 1303** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/support**. Thank you.

Parkinson's UK

Free* confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

Text Relay **18001 0808 800 0303**

(for textphone users only)

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

*calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks.

How to order our resources

01473 212115

resources@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk/publications

We make every effort to make sure that our services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate facts. We hope that these will add to any professional advice you receive and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your health and social care team if you are worried about any aspect of living with Parkinson's.

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How useful have you found the information sheet? (1 is not useful, 4 is very useful) 1 2 3 4

Have you found the publication easy to read/use? Yes No

What aspects did you find most helpful?

Were you looking for any information that wasn't covered?

Do you have any other comments?

If you would like to become a member of Parkinson's UK, or are interested in joining our information review group, please complete the details below and we'll be in touch.

Membership Information review group (who give us feedback on new and updated resources)

Name

Address

Telephone Email