

Jobseeker's Allowance

If you have Parkinson's, are unemployed and looking for work, you may be worried about how you'll manage financially. But there is financial support available, so it's important to find out what benefits you're entitled to.

This information explains what Jobseeker's Allowance is, who qualifies and how to claim it.

What is Jobseeker's Allowance?

Jobseeker's Allowance is a benefit for people who are unemployed or working fewer than 16 hours a week and are looking for work.

There are two types of Jobseeker's Allowance – contribution-based and income-based. Both are taxable.

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance has been replaced by Universal Credit for new claims, (except in the case where people are entitled to the Severe Disability Premium).

Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance

This is a personal flat-rate allowance. You may be able to claim contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance if you've paid enough in National Insurance contributions.

Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance can be paid for up to six months, either in one period, or several shorter periods where your entitlement is still based on the same tax years.

The amount you get may be affected by part-time earnings or an occupational or personal pension. Only your earnings are taken into account – any earnings of a partner are ignored.

Jobseeker's Allowance is not means-tested, so it's not affected by other income or savings you may have.

The information in this publication is correct as of April 2019, but is subject to change.

How much is contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance?

Age	per week
Under 25 years	£57.90
25 years and over	£73.10

If you have an income of more than £50 a week from an occupational or personal pension, the excess will be deducted from your benefit. For example, if your pension is £55 a week, £5 will be deducted from your benefit. A one-off lump-sum payment does not affect your benefit.

If your pension income is below £50 a week, then your contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance will be paid in full.

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

It's no longer possible to make a new claim for income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, unless you're entitled to the Severe Disability Premium. This is because income-based Jobseeker's Allowance has been replaced by Universal Credit.

If you're already getting income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, and still meet the rules, your claim will continue until you're told you must claim Universal Credit instead (this will probably be in 2 - 4 years time).

Find out more: [see our information on Universal Credit.](#)

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is means-tested and is based on your income and savings. You may receive this benefit if you have no income, or a low income, and no more than £16,000 in savings.

You don't have to have paid National Insurance contributions to get it. You can claim for yourself and your partner (if you have one).

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance can top up contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance. Entitlement to income-based Jobseeker's Allowance gives access to other benefits, including Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.

How much is income-based Jobseeker's Allowance?

The amount you get takes into account things like your age, your income and capital (and that of your partner), your disabilities (or your partner's), plus certain housing costs.

Savings over £6,000 (or £10,000 if you live in a care home) will be taken into account and assumed to provide you with a certain amount of income. If your capital (and your partner's) is above £16,000, you will not be entitled to income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

If your income is less than the basic amount the law says you need to live on, you'll receive the difference as income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

Do I qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance?

You may qualify if you:

- meet the labour market conditions (see below)
- are not working 16 hours or more a week
- are under State Pension age
- are not in full-time education (with limited exceptions)
- live in the UK
- pass the contribution conditions (for contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance)
- pass the income-based conditions (for income-based Jobseeker's Allowance), **and**
- do not have a limited capability for work because of ill health or disability that is expected to last more than 13 weeks (if you do, you should claim Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit instead).

Find out more: [see our information on Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit.](#)

The labour market conditions

There are three labour market conditions. You must:

- be available for work
- be actively seeking work, **and**

- have entered into a claimant commitment that remains in force.

If you fail to meet these conditions, your Jobseeker's Allowance will normally stop for a fixed sanction period of between four weeks and three years.

You may be eligible for Hardship Payments in the meantime. You can challenge a decision to impose a sanction. For more information, see Disability Rights UK *Factsheet F70 – Sanctions*, available at www.disabilityrightsuk.org/sanctions or by calling **020 7250 8181**

Available for work

You must be willing and able to take up any paid employment of at least 40 hours a week immediately.

You can restrict your hours of availability if it's reasonable given your physical or mental condition. If you have caring responsibilities, you're also allowed more flexibility here.

At the beginning of your Jobseeker's Allowance claim, you can restrict job-seeking to your usual occupation and your usual level of pay for up to 13 weeks.

Actively seeking work

You're expected to take a number of steps (usually at least three) each week in order to have the best prospects of getting a job. This can include applying for jobs, looking for vacancies, writing your CV and registering with employment agencies.

Claimant commitment

To keep receiving Jobseeker's Allowance, you must sign a claimant commitment. This will be drawn up at a face-to-face interview with a Department for Work and Pensions 'work coach'. It will include details of your availability for work (including any restrictions caused by your condition), the sort of work that you're looking for, how you'll search for work and what you intend to do to improve your job prospects.

How do I claim Jobseeker's Allowance?

You can claim Contributory Jobseeker's Allowance over the phone (**0800 055 6688** text **0800 023 4888**), and you'll be put through to someone who will go through your claim.

Once they've finished, they'll send you a customer statement so you can check the details are correct. You might be called back for extra information if you don't have it to hand. An appointment can then be made for you to attend an initial interview at the Jobcentre.

If you claim the Contributory version together with Universal Credit then you must claim online.

Initial interview

At the interview, a work coach will discuss your application with you and make sure you understand the rules for claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. They'll also discuss what type of work you want and the best ways for you to find a job.

'Signing on'

You'll normally be expected to 'sign on' at your local Jobcentre Plus office (usually every two weeks) to discuss how your job search is going. In addition, you must also attend regular, more detailed interviews to look at your situation.

What if my circumstances change?

It's always important to provide full, accurate information to benefits offices, and to let them know if your circumstances change. If you don't do this your benefits may be stopped, you may receive demands for repayment, or you may face prosecution.

More information and support

You can call our free confidential helpline for general support and information. Call **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email **hello@parkinsons.org.uk**.

Our helpline can put you in touch with one of our Parkinson's local advisers, who give one-to-one information and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's. They can also provide links to local groups and services.

Our website **parkinsons.org.uk** has a lot of information about Parkinson's and everyday life with the condition. You can also find details of your local support team and your nearest local group meeting at **parkinsons.org.uk/localtoyou**

Visit **parkinsons.org.uk/forum** to chat to other people with similar experiences on our online discussion forum.



Jobseeker's Allowance (WB19/2019)

Do you have any feedback about this information? Your comments will help us ensure our resources are as useful and easy to understand as possible. Please return to **Information Content team, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ**, or email **publications@parkinsons.org.uk**. Thank you!

1. Please choose the option that best fits you.

- I have Parkinson's and was diagnosed in I care for someone with Parkinson's
 I have a friend or family member with Parkinson's I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's
 Other (please specify)
-

2. Where did you get this information from?

- GP Specialist Parkinson's nurse Parkinson's UK local group Parkinson's UK local adviser
 Ordered directly from us Call to the helpline
 Other (please specify)
-

3. Has it answered all your questions?

- Yes, completely Yes, mostly Not sure Partly Not at all

4. How easy was it to understand?

- Very easy Easy Not sure Quite difficult Very difficult

Parkinson's nurses

Parkinson's nurses provide expert advice and support to people with Parkinson's and those who care for them. They can also make contact with other health and social care professionals to make sure your needs are met.

The role of the Parkinson's nurse varies. Each will offer different services, aiming to meet local needs. Some nurses are based in the community, whereas others are based in hospital settings.

Many Parkinson's nurses are independent prescribers. This means they can prescribe and make adjustments to medication, so someone with Parkinson's doesn't always need to see their specialist for changes to or queries about their Parkinson's drugs.

Parkinson's nurses may not be available in every area, but your GP or specialist can give you more details on local services.

You can find out more at parkinsons.org.uk/nurses



5. Has it helped you manage your condition better, or make choices that have improved your life in some way?

It helped a lot It helped a little No change It didn't help It made things worse

6. What is your ethnic background?*

Asian or Asian British Black or Black British Chinese Mixed White British White other
 Other (please specify)

*We ask about your ethnicity to ensure our information is reaching a broad range of people. However, this question is optional.

Want to hear more from us?

I would like a response to my feedback I would like to be a member of Parkinson's UK
 I'm interested in joining the Information review group, to offer feedback on Parkinson's UK information

If you've answered yes to any of these options, please complete your details below.

Name

Address

Email

Telephone

How would you prefer us to contact you? Email Post Phone

We will not pass on your details to any other organisation or third party. To find out more, read our privacy policy at parkinsons.org.uk/termsandconditions

Thank you

Thank you to benefits specialist Barbara Knight for helping to update this information.

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 **0800 138 6593** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/donate**. Thank you.

Our information

All of our most up-to-date information is available at **parkinsons.org.uk/information-support**. If you'd prefer to read one of our printed leaflets or booklets, find out how to place an order at **parkinsons.org.uk/ordering-resources** or by calling **0300 123 3689**.

We make every effort to ensure that our services provide current, unbiased and accurate information. We hope that this will add to any professional advice you receive and 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.

If you'd like to find out more about how we put our information together, including references and the sources of evidence we use, please contact us at **publications@parkinsons.org.uk**

We're the Parkinson's charity that drives better care, treatments and quality of life.

Together we can bring forward the day when no one fears Parkinson's.

Parkinson's UK
215 Vauxhall Bridge Road
London SW1V 1EJ

Free confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**
(Monday to Friday 9am–7pm, Saturday 10am–2pm).
Interpreting available.

NGT Relay **18001 0808 800 0303** (for use with smart phones, tablets, PCs and other devices). For more information see **www.ngts.org.uk**

hello@parkinsons.org.uk
parkinsons.org.uk

Order code: WB19

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