

Pension credit

Money, grants and benefits

Find out more about Pension Credit, how it can help and how to claim



Pension Credit

If you have Parkinson's, or care for someone who does, 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 Pension Credit is, who qualifies, how to claim and what information you need to provide when you claim.

The information in this publication is correct as of June 2024, but is subject to change. Our most up-to-date information is on our website at parkinsons.org.uk/benefits. Our helpline can also give advice on benefits. Call **0808 800 0303** or email hello@parkinsons.org.uk

What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit. It can top up your State Pension if you have a low income.

The qualifying age for getting Pension Credit increased for everyone to 66 in October 2020, in line with State Pension age. You can check your State Pension age at www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

Since 2019 couples who make a new claim for Pension Credit must both be over pension age. If one person is over pension age and the other is not, the couple must claim Universal Credit instead. For more details please call the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303**.

Pension Credit is made up of two parts:

- Guarantee Credit
- Savings Credit

Depending on your circumstances, you may be entitled to either one, or both parts. Savings Credit is currently being phased out (see page 6 for details).

To claim Pension Credit, you must:

- be present in Great Britain or Northern Ireland
- be 'habitually resident' and have a 'right to reside' in the UK, **and**
- not be subject to immigration control

What is Guarantee Credit?

This part of Pension Credit can top up your income (such as your State Pension) to a set amount, to provide you (and your partner, if you have one) with a basic income to live on. Extra amounts will be added if you have certain housing costs, a severe disability or caring responsibilities.

Even if you don't get much Guarantee Credit, it's always worth claiming as it can give access to other benefits (see 'Does Pension Credit affect access to other benefits?' later in this information).

How is Guarantee Credit calculated?

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

The Appropriate Minimum Guarantee is a standard rate of £218.15 a week if you're a single person and £332.95 a week for a couple.

You may receive additions to this standard rate:

Severe disability – single person: £81.50

Severe disability – couple (one qualifies): £81.50

Severe disability – couple (both qualify): £163.00

Carer: £45.60

If your weekly income is less than this, Guarantee Credit will top it up to this amount. Since February 2019, you may also be given an additional amount if you're responsible for children, unless you already get Child Tax Credit for those children.

The carer premium

The £45.60 a week 'carer premium' is available if you're eligible for Carer's Allowance (or Carer Support Payment in Scotland).

You can get this amount in your Pension Credit even if you're not actually paid Carer's Allowance/Carer Support Payment (for example, because of another 'overlapping' benefit, such as State Pension) as long as you have an underlying entitlement.

Find out more: see our information on Carer's Allowance and Carer Support Payment.

What income and savings are taken into account?

All of your income is taken into account when calculating the Guarantee Credit, unless it's specifically ignored (for example, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Adult Disability Payment (Scotland only) and Housing Benefit are all ignored).

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

Savings below £10,000 will have no effect on your entitlement.

You'll be counted as having an extra £1 a week income for every £500 (or part of £500) of savings that you have above £10,000. Certain types of capital, such as the value of your home, personal possessions and the surrender value of insurance policies will be ignored.

For more information on your likely entitlement, visit www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator

What is Savings Credit?

Savings Credit was created to encourage people with a small income to save for retirement.

Savings Credit is currently being phased out. It may still be paid if you (and your partner, if you have one) are over 65, had reached State Pension age by 6 April 2016 and have qualifying income above a certain level.

The Savings Credit calculation is complex and the amounts paid are relatively small – the most you can get is £17.01 a week if you're single or £19.04 a week for a couple.

For more information on your likely entitlement, visit www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator

How do I claim Pension Credit?

In England, Scotland and Wales, call **0800 99 1234** (textphone **0800 169 0133**). In Northern Ireland, call **0808 100 6165**.

When you phone you'll need:

- your National Insurance number
- information about any money you have coming in
- details of any savings and investments you have
- information on any service charges you must pay for your home (for example, mortgage interest payments)
- details of the bank account you would like the Pension Credit paid into

Does Pension Credit affect access to other benefits?

If you're awarded the Guarantee Credit part of Pension Credit, you may be entitled to:

- full help with your rent
- help from your local council towards your Council Tax
- help with NHS charges, vouchers for glasses and hospital travel fares

It might also allow you access to certain schemes or tariffs from your gas, electric and water providers.

If you're entitled to either part of Pension Credit, you may be able to get a Funeral Expenses Payment to help with funeral expenses if a partner, child, close relative or close friend has died.

You'll also be entitled to a free TV licence if you're over 75 and receive either part of Pension Credit.

You might also qualify for help to cover the interest payments on your mortgage or eligible home improvement loan through a Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) loan.

Receiving Pension Credit also means you'll automatically receive the Winter Fuel Payment in 2024. This is a one-off payment of £200 if you were born between 23 September 1944 and 22 September 1958. It's £300 if you were born before this.

If you receive the Guarantee part of Pension Credit you will also automatically receive the £150 one-off Warm Home Discount off your fuel bills.

You will get the Cold Weather Payment of £25 too. This is paid when the temperature averages 0°C for seven consecutive days.

More information and support

Parkinson's nurses

Parkinson's nurses have specialist experience and knowledge of Parkinson's. They can:

- support people coming to terms with their Parkinson's diagnosis
- help people to manage their medication, so they get the best results and fewer side effects
- make referrals to other professionals such as speech and language therapists and physiotherapists

Some nurses are based in the community, such as your GP surgery. Others are based in hospital settings and clinics.

Talk to your GP or specialist for more details on speaking to a Parkinson's nurse.

Parkinson's UK information and support

Whatever your journey with Parkinson's, you're not alone.

From the moment you or someone you care about is diagnosed, we have information and support for you.

Speak to one of our friendly expert advisers, including specialist Parkinson's nurses, care advisers, and benefits and employment advisers. We've got information and advice on all aspects of living with Parkinson's.

Get help managing your diagnosis. Our information packs, webinars, courses and support groups can help you and your loved ones understand your Parkinson's diagnosis and better manage your symptoms.

Read our up to date, reliable health information. Our website, booklets and magazines can help you better understand Parkinson's. They're full of tips and advice on managing your condition and supporting a loved one.

Find ways to get active, stay active and live well with Parkinson's. Whatever your fitness level, we'll help you find the right activities for you.

Connect with other people with Parkinson's, families, friends and carers. Across the UK, in your local area or online. We'll help you meet others who understand what you're going through, because they're going through it too.

Find out more

- Call our helpline on **0808 800 0303** or email **hello@parkinsons.org.uk** to speak to an expert adviser.
- Visit **parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support** to read our information or find support that's local to you.
- Call **0330 124 3250** or visit **parkinsons.org.uk/order-print-booklets** to order free printed information.

Thank you

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to or reviewed this information.

Thanks also to our information review group and other people affected by Parkinson's who provided feedback.

Feedback

If you have any comments or feedback about our information, please call **0800 138 6593**, email **feedback@parkinsons.org.uk**, or write to us at Parkinson's UK, 50 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BL.

If you'd like to find out more about how we put our information together, or be part of the team that reviews our health content, please contact us at **healthcontent@parkinsons.org.uk** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/health-content**.

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 Care team on **0800 138 6593** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/donate**.

Thank you.

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We're Parkinson's UK,
the charity that's
here to support every
Parkinson's journey.
Every step of the way.

Free confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**
Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm,
Saturday 10am to 2pm (interpreting available)
Relay UK **18001 0808 800 0303** (for textphone users only)
hello@parkinsons.org.uk | parkinsons.org.uk

Parkinson's UK, 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0DB



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