

Benefits for adults with autism

Personal Independence Payments

What is PIP?

- PIP is a benefit for people with disabilities. It replaces DLA. When a DLA claim is about to end, people will receive a letter and be invited to apply for PIP. It won't transfer automatically
- PIP is a cash benefit and can be spent however you need to spend it
- PIP can be paid to people regardless of whether they are working or in education
- PIP can be paid to people who are also getting other benefits such as [Employment and Support Allowance](#), Jobseeker's Allowance or [Universal Credit](#)
- PIP is not means-tested (it doesn't matter how much money you have)
- To claim PIP, you need to complete a claim form

How is PIP assessed?

- Some parts of PIP are similar to DLA; for example, it has two components which are "Daily Living" and "Mobility". You can qualify for either or both components, and each can be paid at different rates
- The assessment, for most people, includes a face-to-face appointment with a health care professional
- You must have met the criteria for three months before the payments start, and you must be likely to continue to meet the criteria for a further nine months
- Awards of PIP are generally for fixed periods of time (rather than indefinite or lifetime awards)
- When your fixed term award ends, you will need to make another claim

What are the criteria for PIP?

- PIP awards are based on points-based criteria
- For each component (Mobility and Daily Living), there is a list of statements known as ***descriptors***. Each descriptor is worth a certain number of points and if that descriptor applies to you, you score that number of points
- You can score points in a number of different sections. Your overall point score determines whether you are entitled to the Mobility and/or Daily Living components
- The score also determines which rate you receive. If you score between 8 and 11 points, you are eligible for the standard rate of that component. If you score 12 points or more, you are awarded the enhanced rate

Daily living criteria

- Preparing food (including needing prompting or supervision to cook)
- Taking nutrition (which means eating, including needing prompting or supervision)
- Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition (including needing reminding to take medication)
- Washing and bathing (including needing prompting or supervision to wash)
- Managing toilet needs or incontinence (including needing prompting or supervision)

Daily living criteria contd.

- Dressing and undressing (including needing prompting)
- Communicating verbally (including needing communication support)
- Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words (including needing prompting to read or understand written information)
- Engaging with other people face-to-face (which means being able to interact in an appropriate manner, understand body language and establish relationships)
- Making budgeting decisions (which includes the need for assistance when planning a budget or paying bills)

Mobility criteria

- Planning and following a journey (including needing prompting or assistance to make a journey)
- Moving around (this looks at physical ability to move around)
- For more information, see the [Personal Independence Payment Points Based Criteria](#) sheet

‘Safely, repeatedly and in reasonable time’ rule

- **Safely:** unlikely to cause harm to you or another person, during or after the activity
- **Repeatedly:** often or every time the activity needs to be completed (not just on a good day!)
- **In reasonable time:** no more than twice the time it would take a non-disabled person

Some definitions

- ‘A simple meal’ is not a ready meal; it is a meal cooked from fresh ingredients
- ‘Unaided’ means no prompting or assistance of any kind
- ‘Assistance’ is physical and doesn’t include speech
- ‘Supervision’ means the continuous presence of another person to keep you safe
- Check the definitions handout before answering each question. Fill in as much detail as you can

Top tips

- Get help from a benefits advisor, friend or family member for an outside view
- Do not assume the assessor knows anything about autism
- Be detailed, honest and comprehensive about all difficulties
- Consider attaching a daily activities diary (see handouts)
- You can ask for a home visit rather than attending an assessment centre, but you may need a supporting letter from a GP or social care professional saying you cannot travel

The decision

- A decision about your entitlement is made by a decision maker at the DWP. A formal decision letter is posted to you. If you disagree with the decision, you have the right to [challenge](#) it. If you still disagree after the reconsideration, you have the right to appeal to an independent tribunal
- Once you have received the PIP decision letter, you have a legal right to request a [reconsideration](#) (see: <http://www.autism.org.uk/about/benefits-care/benefits/pip/challenging.aspx>)

How much is PIP?

Daily living component

- Standard rate: £55.65 per week.
- Enhanced rate: £83.10 per week.

Mobility component

- Standard rate: £22.00 per week.
- Enhanced rate: £58.00 per week.

Entitlement to either rate of the Daily Living component of PIP means that a full time carer may be able to claim [carer's allowance](#)