A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

Attendance Allowance

A checklist before you apply

Work out what help your relative needs, write down a few real examples and get ready to fill in the claim form.



Inside your checklist

2 Check who may qualify

3 Spot the help you already give

4 Write down a typical week

5 Get ready to send the claim

For families applying in England. Print page 4 again if you need more room for examples.

Could they qualify?

Attendance Allowance can help with the extra costs of living with a disability or health condition, including dementia. It is tax-free, and income and savings do not affect the award.

Three things to check first

- [ ] They have reached State Pension age.
- [ ] They need help with personal care or someone to watch over them for safety because of a disability or health condition.
- [ ] They have needed that help for at least six months, unless the special rules for end of life apply.

Help can include reminders

If your relative can wash or get dressed once you remind them or talk them through it, write down what you do. Include help they need even when nobody is there to give it.

Other rules can affect eligibility, including where your relative lives, certain benefits such as PIP and some publicly funded care home stays.

If a medical professional says your relative may have 12 months or less to live, ask about the special rules for end of life and form SR1. The claim may be dealt with more quickly and the six-month rule does not apply.

Check State Pension age

Read the full eligibility rules

Read the special rules for end of life

What help do they need?

Use these prompts to jog your memory. Think about what someone would need to do if they were taking over from you tomorrow.

Washing and dressing

Do they need reminders, step-by-step prompts, hands-on help or someone nearby when they shower or get dressed?

Eating and drinking

Do they need encouragement to start or finish a meal, reminders to drink, or help eating safely?

Toileting and continence

Do they need help finding or using the toilet, changing pads or getting clean afterwards?

Medicines and communication

Does someone need to supervise them when they take medicines? Do they need help understanding information or telling someone what they need?

Memory, sight and safety

Do they need someone to watch over them because they miss hazards, leave the hob on or become disorientated? What would the person watching do?

Overnight help

Does someone get up to help them use the toilet or stay awake to keep them safe? Note how often, for how long and why.

Putting practical tasks in context

Shopping, housework, gardening and getting around are often part of the bigger picture. Use them to explain any related personal care or safety supervision your relative needs. For example, if low mood means they regularly need prompting to wash or eat, describe that help.

Write down a typical week

Include better and harder days and say how often each occurs. For each example, note what happens, how often, what help is needed and what might happen without it.

Example to show the level of detail

At lunchtime on about five days out of seven, Dad needs someone to remind him to start eating and prompt him again when he stops. Without those reminders he often leaves most of his meal.

During the day

What happens and how often?

What help is needed? What might happen without it?

During the night

What happens and how often? How long does the help take?

What help is needed? What might happen without it?

What changes on harder days, and how often?

Ready to apply?

Use this last check before you submit. Keep the notes from page 4 with your copy of the claim.

- [ ] I’ve checked State Pension age and the eligibility rules.
- [ ] I have the National Insurance number, GP details and condition details.
- [ ] I’ve described daytime and overnight needs separately.
- [ ] I’ve included relevant evidence if I have it, such as a care plan or diary notes.
- [ ] I’ve kept a copy of the form and anything I’m sending with it.

Choose how to apply

Apply online
The claim starts on the date you make it online.

Print and post the form
The claim starts when DWP receives it.

Request a paper form by phone
The claim starts on the day you call if you return the form within six weeks.

Apply or get the form at gov.uk/attendance-allowance

Attendance Allowance helpline **0800 731 0122**. If your relative cannot manage their own claim, ask who can act for them. DWP can arrange an appointee where appropriate.

Need practical support closer to home?

Talk to Your Care about home support in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and BANES, or a visit to our Hanham Dementia Day Club.

0117 947 7422 **your-careuk.co.uk**

Source: GOV.UK Attendance Allowance guidance, checked 9 November 2026.