

Carer Support Payment

Carer Support Payment is the new name for the benefit that will replace Carer's Allowance in Scotland. It will launch for new claims in some pilot areas of Scotland in late 2023 before being available nationally in Spring 2024

The new benefit will be delivered by [Social Security Scotland](#) rather than the Department of Work and Pensions

The Scottish Government recently published [draft regulations](#) for the new Carer Support Payment. These regulations will be considered by the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS). You can read about their work on the regulations [here](#).

The Scottish Government also published its [response](#) to its consultation on Scottish Carer's Assistance. This sets out their plans for the future including renaming the new benefit Carer Support Payment.

SCoSS will provide independent scrutiny of the Carer Support Payment regulations and will then publish a report including recommendations to the Scottish Government. They will be working with Carers Scotland and the national carer organisations to engage with carers on their views to inform this. This work will take approximately 3 months.

Following this, and taking account of the response from ScOSS, the Scottish Government will publish final regulations that will be laid in the Scottish Parliament where they will be discussed and debated and can be amended by MSPs.

Carers Support Payment proposals – from launch

When it first launches it will only be available for new claims but, over time, everyone who currently receives Carer's Allowance and lives in Scotland will be moved onto Carer Support Payment. This means carers benefits will be administered by Social Security Scotland instead of the DWP.

Initially, entitlement to Carer Support Payment will be very similar to [Carer's Allowance](#). This is to make sure that people in Scotland currently receiving Carer's Allowance from the DWP are treated the same as people receiving Carer Support Payment from Social Security Scotland.

The process will then start to move people in Scotland receiving Carer's Allowance safely and securely transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions to [Social Security Scotland](#). This process is called **case transfer** and it is planned to start during 2023.

On launch, there will be some differences between Carer Support Payment and Carers Allowance. The Scottish Government has set out the changes they plan to make in the regulations.

The biggest change is for unpaid carers in **full-time education**. Currently, if you are in full-time education, you cannot receive Carer's Allowance. However, from launch in Spring 2024, the Scottish Government have said that they will change this for Carer Support Payment. The plan is to extend entitlement to unpaid carers over 20 years old in full-time education at any level and to those aged 16 to 19 in full-time advanced further and higher education (studying at HNC level and above).

The Scottish Government have also said they will update the "**past presence test**" to make it easier for those moving to Scotland from outwith the Common Travel Area to access the benefit more quickly.

They will also change how Carer Support Payment is paid. Currently you can receive Carer's Allowance weekly or 4 weekly. However, new claims of Carer Support Payment will be paid every four weeks, with weekly advance payments only being available in case of caring for someone with a terminal illness.

Carers Support Payment – following case transfer

The Scottish Government also plan to make a range of early improvements after Carer Support Payment is available nationally and once case transfer is completed. They have said they are committed to:

- introduce a new supplement payment for those caring for more than one person, which will provide eligible unpaid carers an additional £10 per week. This payment will be known as 'Carer's Additional Person Payment' and will be introduced as soon as practical. This payment will be made alongside regular payments of Carer Support Payment.
- increase the 'run on' of support after a cared for person dies from 8 weeks currently under Carer's Allowance to 12 weeks, as soon as practical.

Carer Support Payment – future improvements

The Scottish Government have said that they are also considering the following future improvements to Carer Support Payment.

- allowing unpaid carers who are caring for two people (but for less than 35 hours each) to add these hours together to meet the required 35 hours eligibility for Carer Support Payment.
- making amendments to increase the earnings threshold (currently £132 a week or less a week after tax)
- extending the 'run on' period of support after the cared for person goes into hospital from 4 weeks to 12 weeks when the cared for person's disability benefits stops.
- making it more straightforward for Carer Support Payment to restart when the cared for person goes into hospital and their disability benefit is stopped. They plan to do this by setting Carer Support Payment to £0 during this period which will allow Carer Support Payment to begin again soon after the cared for person leaves hospital, with no need for the unpaid carer to reapply (which is currently the process under Carer's Allowance).

- providing support for student carers aged 16-19 in non-advanced education (mostly those at school and those studying below HNC level).

Carer Support Payment – longer term changes

The Scottish Government intend to explore further the proposal to introduce an additional payment for long term carers. They have noted that they will need to carry out further work, with carers, support organisations and others in government and public services to understand the impacts of this proposal.

Carers Support Payment and Carer's Allowance Supplement

Currently anyone in receipt of Carer's Allowance receives a twice-yearly lump sum called Carer's Allowance Supplement. This is currently worth £270.50 every six months. Anyone who receives Carer Support Payment will also be eligible for this payment.

This will continue to be paid until all of the people currently in receipt of Carer's Allowance are transferred to Social Security Scotland.

Once everyone is transferred, the Scottish Government aims to move from paying Carer's Allowance Supplement as a lump sum twice per year to instead pay it alongside regular payments of Carer Support Payment. However, this will not be for some time.

Next Steps

Once SCoSS have analysed the regulations and published their response to the Scottish Government, the Government will then consider the response and publish their final regulations. The regulations will be laid in the Scottish Parliament where they will be discussed and debated and can be amended by MSPs.

Once the regulations are passed, work will begin on delivering the new Carer Support Payment by Social Security Scotland. They will start a pilot phase for new claims by the end of this year which will be followed by national launch in spring 2024.

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