

Application form guidance notes

Please read these notes first. They tell you about the Independent Living Fund, and how to fill in the application form.

At the back of this booklet is a word list that explains some of the words you may not understand.

What is the Independent Living Fund (ILF)?

The Independent Living Fund is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (ENDPB) of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

What do we do?

We give financial support to people who meet our criteria, so that they can employ personal assistants (PAs), or a care agency to provide them with personal care or domestic help to enable them to live a more independent life.

Who we work with

We work in partnership with local authority social services or social work departments.

We can only make payments to people who get social services support to the value of at least £16,640 per year (£320 per week). This support can be things like, a day centre placement, or money from a direct payment scheme.

Who can apply?

To apply, you must:

- be at least 16 and under 65 years of age;
- be getting, or have been awarded, the highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA); and
- have less than £23,000 of capital and savings (this also includes any capital and savings your partner has).

Priority applications

We give priority to disabled people who already get money from us.

We then prioritise any new applications.

Our first priority is -

- if you work or are self employed for at least 16 hours per week.

Our second priority is -

- if you are in receipt of Income Support (IS), Pension Guarantee Credit, income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), or have an income at a similar level;

and

- your care package adds up to at least £500 per week.

It is unlikely your application will be successful, if you are not in one of the above groups.

Making an application to us

If you would like to make an application to us, please fill in an application form. The form has four sections and each section needs to be filled in.

Section one This section asks questions about you and explains our criteria.

Section two This section is about your financial details. It asks you questions about your income and your benefits.

If someone (normally a parent or guardian) gets child benefit for you, that person will have to complete this section, giving us their income details.

Section three This section asks for your declaration that the information you have given us is correct. It also asks for your consent to allow us to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to check the benefits you get.

This section must be completed for all applications. If you have a

power of attorney or benefits appointee, they must sign this section on your behalf.

Section four

A representative from your local authority social services department, such as a care manager or social worker must complete this section.

Your social services department need to agree to you getting the necessary level of social services support before we can accept an application from you.

If you would like to apply to us, but you do not get social services support, you need to ring your local social services department and talk to them about getting a worker allocated to you.

Their telephone number will be in your local telephone directory.

Filling in the application form

Please answer all the questions that apply to you. Don't worry if you're not sure how to spell a word or you have to cross something out. But please don't use correction fluid.

If you find it difficult to fill in the application form, don't worry, you can ring our LA Liaison team on 0845 601 8815 who will help you complete it over the phone.

Or, if you have a representative such as a power of attorney or benefits appointee they can fill in the form, and also sign it on your behalf.

If you don't have a representative, you can ask someone else to fill it in for you. A relative, friend or carer can help you, but you must sign the form. (We do accept a stamp if you are unable to sign your name.)

We can only accept the form if you, or your representative as signed it. This is because we need your permission to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to check how much Disability Living Allowance (DLA) you get before the application can go ahead.

Section one

The first section of the application form is all about you.

If you don't know what your national insurance number is, you will be able to find it on any letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Your ethnic group

It is not essential that you fill this page in, but we would like you to. It helps us to establish which cultural backgrounds we get applications from and gives us the opportunity to target areas that are under-represented.

Part two

If your representative is filling in the application form on your behalf, we need to know which kind of responsibility they have.

Your representative needs to give us their details on this page. If your application is successful, we will send all our information to your representative - the person who has signed the application form on your behalf.

This also means that your representative is responsible for letting us know about changes to your care package and is also responsible for reading all our literature.

Section two

Please be exact with the figures you give, as this will affect how much money we may be able to offer you.

If somebody (usually a parent or guardian) claims child benefit for you, it is their financial details we need in this section.

If you are a beneficiary under a trust fund and the assets/capital held by the trust, is more than £23,000, we cannot normally accept an application from you.

There are however, a few exceptions. You can still apply to us, if you have money from one of the following trusts -

- Thalidomide trust
- Vaccine damage payments
- The Macfarlane trust
- The Macfarlane (special payments) trust
- The Macfarlane (special payments) (No 2) trust
- The Fund
- The Eileen trust
- The Skipton fund
- The London bombings relief charitable fund
- Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

If your trust fund is a personal injury compensation; money from a family trust; a will or from another source, that is not on the list, it is very unlikely that we can accept your application.

This rule applies even if no payments have actually been made from the trust fund and regardless of any future intentions to make payments from the trust fund.

Monies administered by the High Court, County Court, Court of Protection or any compensation paid under a structured settlement or by periodical payments will be treated in the same way as a trust fund.

Payments from us can still be made, where the value of the trust is £23,000 or less. There are no restrictions on how you or your trustees can spend any money from the trust.

Section three

In all cases, you need to sign the declaration and consent. If you have a power of attorney or a benefits appointee, they need to sign this section on your behalf.

By signing the consent, you, or your representative, give us the authority to ask for information about your benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

If you have a partner who receives Income Support (IS) or pension credit for both of you, then your partner must sign the second consent as well.

An application will not be accepted if this section has not been completed.

Section four

This section must be completed by a representative from your local authority social services department, such as a social worker or care manager.

What happens after you fill in the application form?

Once the form has been completed, you need to send it back to us. Our address is:

**The Independent Living Fund
Equinox House
Island Business Quarter
City Link
Nottingham
NG2 4LA**

We will have a look at the form to make sure it has been fully completed. If information is missing we will have to send it back to you for you to complete.

When we have all the information, we will contact the Disability Living Allowance Unit (DLA) to make sure that you are getting the highest rate care component of DLA (the part that is for help with care through the day and night). We need to check this because we cannot accept your application if you are not getting this part of DLA.

If we cannot accept your application, we will write to you and tell you the reason why.

If we accept your application, we will arrange a meeting with our assessor and your local authority representative. We call this the joint assessment visit. The joint assessment visit can take place at your home, in hospital or residential care, or somewhere else if this is more convenient. Most people have the joint assessment visit at home.

The joint assessment visit is for you, our assessor and your local authority representative to talk about the help you need and, who you will employ to help you. If you like, you can ask a friend, relative or someone else to be with you during the visit.

At the visit, our assessor will ask you some questions about your care needs and will complete a form that will be sent to the office in Nottingham. We will use the information in the form to work out how much help we may be able to offer you. We will then write to you to explain what will happen next.

What the words mean

Boarder

A boarder is someone who makes regular payments to live in your household on a commercial basis.

It does not refer to a relative who lives with you and makes voluntary contributions towards household expenditure.

Net earnings

Net earnings means the amount of money you have left after all the deductions have been taken off, such as tax.

Change of

This means if something in your life or your benefits changes such as, you are awarded SDP or you move house.

Partner

By partner, we mean your husband or wife or a person that you live with as husband or wife, although you are not married. It also includes a same sex partner whether or not you have entered into a formal civil partnership.

Representative

When we talk about your representative, we are talking about the person who looks after your benefits and your money. This could be your benefits appointee or your power of attorney.

Savings and capital

Savings and capital means the total value of any money you or your partner have, as well as any investments and any property that you own, but do not live in.

Trust fund

A trust fund is money held in trust and is managed by somebody other than the person the trust is for.