

Benefits for Carers - Income Support

Income Support is paid to people who are under 60 and who are usually 18 or over. Most 16 and 17 year olds cannot claim but there are exceptions (for example: if you are 16 or 17 and at school or in non-advanced full-time education, and have a severe disability which means that you wouldn't be able to find work within a year of leaving school, you are entitled to Income Support).

To be entitled to Income Support you must be either not working or working less than 16 hours a week. If you have a partner who lives with you he/she must work under 24 hours a week.

Both income and capital are taken into account when claiming Income Support.

Capital limits:

Lower limit: £3000 Upper limit: £8000

If your capital is between the lower and upper limits a 'tariff income' applies to the amount. It is assumed that you receive £1 a week for every £250 (or part of) above the lower limit.

Income from earnings, most benefits (but some including Housing and Council Tax Benefit, Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, are disregarded), pensions, tax credits, and other regular income is taken into account in calculating entitlement to Income Support.

Your weekly income (if you have any) is compared to the 'applicable amount' which is a fixed weekly level set by the government. If your income is less than the applicable amount you can claim Income Support. The applicable amount varies for each person because it is made up from different allowances and premiums depending upon circumstances.

Only people who do not have to look for work can claim Income Support – these include lone parents, carers and people who are sick and disabled.

The rules of entitlement and rates of benefit payable are complex. For advice on entitlement contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or other local advice agency. Application forms are available from your local Jobcentre plus or by downloading from www.dwp.gov.uk