

Factsheet: How Disability Related Expenses Work

If you have any queries about the information in this factsheet, please see our [Contacts Page](#) which explains who to contact.

Contents

What are Disability Related Expenses (DREs)?

Who can claim DREs?

How do I claim?

What kinds of expenses can I claim for?

How much money can I claim?

How do you decide what is a reasonable disability related expense?

How long does it take to consider my DRE claim?

What if I am unhappy with the outcome of my DRE claim?

1. What are Disability Related Expenses?

Disability Related Expenses (known as DREs) are the reasonable additional costs which a person receiving non-residential care cannot help incurring, due to their disability, in order to live independently. The costs may vary from person to person.

DREs are calculated as a weekly amount, and may be:

- ongoing costs, for example, the cost of carrying out a higher-than-normal amount of laundry
- one-off costs, for example the cost of purchasing and installing a piece of equipment. In these cases, the cost is spread over a period of time

When we carry out a financial assessment, we consider your weekly expenses, and must make sure you are left with enough of your income to cover these. By claiming disability related expenses, your total expenses are increased and the amount you are charged for your care will be less.

2. Who can claim DREs?

You can claim DREs if:

- you are receiving non-residential care, and
- you pay a contribution towards the cost of your care (DREs do not apply to people already receiving care free of charge, or people paying the full cost of their care), and
- you are in receipt of either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance.

If these all apply to you, we strongly encourage you to consider what additional living expenses you may be incurring as a result of your disability, and to claim for these.

3. How do I claim?

During your financial assessment, you will be asked to provide information about your assets, income and expenses. DRE information is now included in the expense data we ask you for. We will need some supporting evidence as well.

There are two ways to supply the information:

- Online, using our Bettercare online financial assessment portal.
- On paper, using our “Statement of Financial Circumstances” form.

If you had a financial assessment some time ago and did not claim DREs, but would like to now, please use the Bettercare online financial assessment to submit your up to date financial information and evidence, or use our online financial enquiry form to send us the details.

4. What kinds of expenses can I claim for?

Types of DREs which are claimed regularly, include:

- Telecare costs
- Footcare
- Paying someone for Cleaning / Shopping / Gardening
- Extra laundry costs
- Extra heating costs
- Purchase / maintenance of equipment e.g. a wheelchair

However, we will consider different types of expense, using the reasonable checks listed below.

5. How much money can I claim?

We have guideline costs which we consider reasonable for the more common expenses, and these are listed in section 2.4 of our [Rates Document](#). Evidence requirements are also listed.

The guideline costs are reviewed annually, and are based on the guidance produced by NFAFO, the National Association of Financial Assessment Officers. This guidance is used by many local authorities when considering disability related expenses.

However, we will consider exceptional cases in terms of extra costs, using the reasonableness checks below.

6. How do you decide what is a reasonable disability related expense?

All DRE claims are considered by reviewing:

- a) the supporting documents which you supply
- b) the evidence of your care needs, as listed in your Care Act Assessment, and the evidence of the support required to meet those needs, as listed in your Support Plan.
- c) these reasonable checks:
 - The expenses must be higher than the typical living costs which most people have to pay.
 - The expenses must be unavoidable. For example we would not accept a claim for costs if you could use a freely available community service instead.
 - we would not accept a claim if cheaper or more cost-effective equivalent services could reasonably be used. (We would consider a claim for the cost of the cheaper service).
 - The expenses must not relate to care or services provided by the NHS or provided by the council as part of the personal budget.
 - We would not accept a claim if other funds or grants exist to cover the cost.
 - We would not accept a claim for house or grounds maintenance for SCC Housing Complexes where garden maintenance is carried out by SCC without additional charge.

7. How long does it take to consider my DRE claim?

Most DREs will be assessed during the financial assessment process and so additional time is not required.

There may be a short delay if we need to ask you for clarification or supporting evidence, or if we need to consult your social worker to clarify any points regarding your assessment or support plan.

8. What if I am unhappy with the outcome of my DRE claim?

First, contact the Financial Assessment and benefits team (see our [Contacts Page](#)) and ask them to go through your financial assessment with you. This usually resolves most queries.

If you are still not satisfied, please use the financial assessment appeal process.

For details of the appeal process please see:

- Factsheet: How financial assessments work (see the [Paying for your social care services](#) page)
- [Adult Social Care Charging Policy](#)