



ME and Adult Disability Payment

Updated: April 2026

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An overview of ADP

Adult Disability Payment (ADP) is a benefit for working-age people living in Scotland who have care and mobility needs. There is a different but broadly equivalent benefit for disabled people in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. This is called Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

ADP has two components: the **daily living component** and the **mobility component**. Each component has two rates: the **standard rate** and the **enhanced rate**. It is possible to be eligible for one or the other component, or both at the same time. For people who are eligible for both components, it is possible to be eligible for the standard rate of both, the enhanced rate of both, or a combination.

ADP is designed to help with the additional costs of living with a disability. Unlike many other benefits, eligibility does not depend on your income and savings – it is possible to be a millionaire and get ADP!

This factsheet aims to supplement existing information provided by organisations with expertise in welfare benefits, by looking at the benefit from an ME-specific perspective.

Support to apply for ADP

You can apply for ADP online. Alternatively you can start your claim over the phone, and then Social Security Scotland will send you a paper form to complete. You can find details of how to apply on the [Social Security Scotland Website](#).

There are different kinds of support available for people applying for ADP or renewing their claim.

Independent Advice

Some charities such as [Advice Direct Scotland](#) and [Citizens' Advice](#) provide free and independent advice about benefits and your rights. There is a list at the end of this factsheet of places you can find more information and advice about ADP.

Independent Advocacy

If you identify as disabled you can get independent advocacy support with benefits that are *administered by the Scottish Government*. These include ADP (as well as Child Disability Payment, Carer Support Payment, and benefits for families on a low income.)

An Advocate can help you express your views and wishes. They cannot give you advice about whether or not you are eligible for the benefit, or how much you will get.

Advocacy support is only available for help relating to benefits that the Scottish Government is responsible for. (For example you can't get advocacy support to help you apply for Universal Credit or ESA.)

You can get more information about advocacy support with benefits on the [advocacy.scot](https://www.advocacy.scot) website.

Practical help filling in and submitting forms

You can get help with completing and submitting forms from the Government's [Local Delivery service](#). They can also answer questions about ADP. However, they cannot give you independent advice, or act on your behalf. It may be possible to get an appointment for someone to come to your home to help you physically complete a form if you would struggle to do this by yourself or get to an appointment. To access this service you need to contact Social Security Scotland. You can call them on 0800 182 2222, or use the [chat function](#) on their website.

Pacing while applying for ADP or renewing a claim

Applying for ADP can take a lot of energy. We suggest that you try to pace this process as much as you can. The same is also true for completing a renewal form.

There are two parts to the application process. During the first part (either online or over the phone) you will be asked for some basic information, such as your contact details, date of birth, and bank details. The second part (completed online or by submitting a paper copy of the form) is longer and more detailed. This is where you will need to give substantive information about your health conditions and their impact on your day-to-day activities.

Filling in this second part of the form is likely to take a significant amount of cognitive energy. It may also take emotional energy: it requires you to be honest with yourself about how much you might be struggling. Sometimes we are so used to just “making the best of things” that to be confronted with a reminder of how hard things are can be challenging.

However, when applying for ADP it’s important to give the full truth so that you can get the support you are entitled to.

There is an 8 week deadline for completing the form that comprises this second stage (whether you’re completing it online or on paper), so it’s good to plan ahead. You can ask Social Security Scotland for more time in advance of the deadline if you need longer. Remember that the paper form has to be received by Social Security Scotland by the deadline (not just posted off).

Ways to pace the ADP application and renewal processes

Draft your answers in advance

You can have a look in advance at [a reference copy of the questions](#) on the form, and start to make notes and draft answers before you start your claim. However, since you will have almost eight weeks to complete the main part of the form (and can ask for long if you need it), writing out answers in advance may not be necessary and may just use up extra energy.

The reference copy of the form must only be used for planning. The form that you must complete and submit must be either the form you started online, or the paper copy you were sent through the post. This way, Social Security Scotland can see that your completed form is linked to your earlier contact with them. This means that if you’re eligible for ADP they will backdate the benefit to when you first claimed, rather than the date they receive your big form.

Plan your time

Map out a plan for completing the form in good time to post it so that it is received by the deadline. Consider how many questions you will need to complete on which days, and what other things in your normal routine you may have to delay (or get help with) so that you can achieve this. You should also try to leave some spare energy in your plan for managing anything unexpected that comes up, or any emergencies.

Complete the form a bit at a time

The online form will let you save your answers and come back to the form another time – don't try to complete it all in one go.

Ask for more time

You can ask for more time to complete the big form. You won't need to give a reason.

General tips for completing the ADP form

- Don't feel constrained by the amount of space they give you to write an answer. If you are filling in a paper form you can always use an additional sheet of paper. (If you do this, remember to write your name and national insurance number on each additional sheet, so that they don't get lost).
- Many people with ME also have other conditions. Throughout the process of applying for ADP (or renewing your claim) it's important to explain the cumulative impact of all your health conditions put together.

Supporting information

We know that supporting evidence can be really helpful for people with ME applying for disability benefits such as ADP. The most effective supporting information is a letter from a medical professional that details your symptoms and the impact that they have on your day-to-day life and mobility. Other evidence will carry variable weight but may include

- A letter confirming diagnoses
- A "patient print out" of your medical records (you can ask your GP practice for one of these)
- A copy of a report from a different assessment (for example, if you have had an occupational health assessment to see if you need adaptations to your home)
- Evidence from support workers
- A letter from a carer (for example a parent or your partner) outlining how they support you because you struggle to do things by yourself.
- A copy of your care plan from a social worker

If you don't have medical evidence immediately available, you can submit it within 4 weeks of making your ADP claim.

Action for ME has a separate factsheet on **supporting evidence for benefits assessments**.

Diary of needs

A diary can be an effective way of communicating about the reality of your day-to-day life. This is different from an activity diary. The goal is not just to note what you have done, but also – more importantly – what you can't do. Specifically, a diary should look at your ability to do the ADP "activities" (see below) on each day and highlight when and how often you can't do them.

If you have a carer they can keep a diary of your needs and you can submit that as evidence.

Understanding the 'activity' questions

It is important that you understand how your eligibility will be assessed, so that you can ensure you include all the relevant information – both on your form and during any subsequent assessment appointment you may have.

Whether or not you meet the disability criteria for ADP will be decided according to a very formulaic set of rules. The big form and any subsequent assessment appointment will both form part of this "assessment" in the wider sense.

The case-manager will look at your ability to do a specific list of activities, and awards you points based on how much you struggle with each activity. They do this by comparing your difficulties with the activity in question to a number of "descriptor" phrases, and deciding which one most closely describes your situation.

Therefore, in making the case that you should qualify for ADP it's really important to understand what these activities and descriptors are. You can find a list of the activities in the appendix to this factsheet. We strongly recommend that you have a copy of the activities, descriptors and points next to you as you complete the ADP application or renewal form.

For each component of ADP (the Daily Living Component and the Mobility Component), if you score 8 points under the relevant activities you will be awarded the **standard rate** of that component. If you get 12 points under the relevant activities, you will be awarded the **enhanced rate** of that component. Points scored under the activities for one component only count towards eligibility for that component. For example, if you score 4 points under the “daily living” activities and 4 points under the “mobility” activities, you can’t combine these to make 8 points overall.

It’s worth noting that when the descriptors are looking at an ability to prepare a simple meal using a microwave, this doesn’t mean a ready meal. It still means preparing a meal from fresh ingredients, just using the microwave rather than the hob to heat/cook those ingredients.

ADP and fluctuating conditions

Two key ADP rules are particularly important for people with fluctuating conditions such as ME:

- You shouldn’t be considered able to do something if you can’t do it “reliably”, that is: **safely, repeatedly (i.e. as often as you need to), in a reasonable amount of time (no more than twice as long as it would take you if you were well), and to an acceptable standard.**
- You shouldn’t be considered able to do something if you can’t do it more than **50% of days in a year.**

You should bear these rules in mind when you are completing the activity questions on the application form/renewal form.

Filling in the activity questions

For each of the activity questions, we encourage you to consider the following:

- Look at the descriptors sheet. What is the descriptor for this activity that best applies to you?
- Can you do this activity at all? Can you do the activity less than 50% of days? How many days in a week/in a month can you do it? Is there a time of day when you cannot do it? (An activity diary is a useful way to demonstrate these factors).

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- Can you do it safely? This means: if you do it, will it cause symptoms such as pain and fatigue to flare up? If so, what with the impact on your health be of doing it? Or in some cases, if you do it, will you accidentally hurt yourself?
 - Can you do this activity repeatedly? Meaning: can you do it as many times as you need to in the day? If you do it in the morning, will you be so exhausted you can't do it in the afternoon if you need to?
 - Can you do it in a reasonable amount of time? Will it take you more than twice the amount of time it would take someone without your health issues to do it?
 - Can you do it to an acceptable standard?
 - Do you have to use anything or anyone to help do this activity? An example might be: do you use a grabber to reach things? Do you hold on to the furniture to lean on or help stand up/sit down? Do you have a perching stool that you need to sit on to e.g. chop food? Do you need someone to support you to do it? (It doesn't matter whether you do or don't have someone to help you currently. The form is trying to capture what you need, not what your arrangements are for having those needs met)
 - Can you link the above to your ME, any other health conditions you have, or the cumulative impact of health conditions? What symptoms in particular get in the way? For example pain, fatigue, difficulties with concentration, anxiety.

For each question you should also try to:

- Give a real-world example. For example: "I can't prepare a meal reliably without assistance, because it takes me twice as long as it would take a healthy person because I need to take rest breaks. E.g. last Tuesday it took me two and a half hours overall start to cook a meal of a chicken breast, potatoes and carrots, since I had to stop to rest between preparing the vegetables and cooking them, otherwise I would have been so clumsy from fatigue that I would have risked dropping a pan of boiling water."
- Consider whether you can reference the medical evidence you are submitting and explain why it is relevant to this activity

Having a consultation

If Social Security Scotland are not able to make a decision about your eligibility on the basis of your form and supporting information alone, they will "invite you to a consultation" with a health and social care professional. This may be by phone or video call, or possibly face-to-face.

Key things to know about the consultation

If you need to take a break during the consultation you should let the person conducting the consultation know, and explain why.

It's important to remember that the key information you need to communicate during a consultation is the same as you have detailed in your big form i.e. to what extent you can do the specified activities and, in particular, which descriptors best apply to you. Social Security Scotland will be looking at whether your answers are consistent.

It's still important to remember the rules that mean you shouldn't be considered able to do something if you can't do it reliably (see above), and over 50% of the time. In the consultation you're trying to give a sense of what your life is really like in practice day-to-day.

Where to get more information about ADP

Scottish Government website

You can find out information about ADP and how to apply for it on the [Gov.scot](#)

Citizens' Advice

Citizens' Advice also have a lot of [good information about the benefit](#) on their website.

Disability Rights UK

Disability Rights UK have a factsheet on ADP you can [download from their website](#).

Advice Local

The [Advice Local website](#) is a directory you can use to find out if there are in-person advice services near you.

Appendix I: The activities, descriptors and points.

Daily Living Activities

Activity	Descriptors	Points
1. Preparing food.	a. Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided.	0
	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
	c. Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave.	2
	d. Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2
	e. Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	4
	f. Cannot prepare and cook food.	8
2. Taking nutrition.	a. Can take nutrition unaided.	0
	b. Needs – (i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to take nutrition; or (ii) supervision to be able to take nutrition; or (iii) assistance to be able to cut up food.	2
	c. Needs a therapeutic source to be able to take nutrition.	2

	d. Needs prompting to be able to take nutrition.	4
	e. Needs assistance to be able to manage a therapeutic source to take nutrition.	6
	f. Cannot convey food and drink to their mouth and needs another person to do so.	10
3. Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition.	a. Either - (i) does not receive medication or therapy or need to monitor a health condition; or (ii) can manage medication or therapy or monitor a health condition unaided.	0
	b. Needs [F1 any one or more of the following] - (i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage medication; F2 ... (ii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage medication F3 ... [F4 (iii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to monitor a health condition.]	1
	c. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes no more than 3.5 hours a week.	2
	d. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 3.5 but no more than 7 hours a week.	4
	e. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 7 but no more than 14 hours a week.	6
	f. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 14 hours a week.	8

4. Washing and bathing.	a. Can wash and bathe unaided.	0
	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe.	2
	c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe.	2
	d. Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair or body below the waist.	2
	e. Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower.	3
	f. Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist.	4
	g. Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body.	8
5. Managing toilet needs or incontinence.	a. Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided.	0
	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence.	2
	c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs.	2
	d. Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs.	4
	e. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel.	6
	f. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel.	8
	a. Can dress and undress unaided.	0

6. Dressing and undressing.	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to dress or undress.	2
	c. Needs either - (i) prompting to be able to dress, undress or determine appropriate circumstances for remaining clothed; or (ii) prompting or assistance to be able to select appropriate clothing.	2
	d. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their lower body.	2
	e. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their upper body.	4
	f. Cannot dress or undress at all.	8
7. Communicating verbally.	a. Can express and understand verbal information unaided.	0
	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear.	2
	c. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information.	4
	d. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information.	8
	e. Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support.	12
8. Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words.	a. Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses.	0

	b. Needs to use an aid or appliance, other than spectacles or contact lenses, to be able to read or understand either basic or complex written information.	2
	c. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information.	2
	d. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information.	4
	e. Cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all.	8
9. Engaging with other people face to face.	a. Can engage with other people unaided.	0
	b. Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people.	2
	c. Needs social support to be able to engage with other people.	4
	d. Cannot engage with other people due to such engagement causing either - (i) overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant; or (ii) the claimant to exhibit behaviour which would result in a substantial risk of harm to the claimant or another person.	8
10. Making budgeting decisions.	a. Can manage complex budgeting decisions unaided.	0
	b. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make complex budgeting decisions.	2
	c. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make simple budgeting decisions.	4

	d. Cannot make any budgeting decisions at all.	6
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Useful contacts:

C-App

Guides to applying for PIP and ESA

<https://c-app.org.uk>

Citizens Advice Bureau

Offers advice on a range of issues and may be complete a benefits check for you.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Disability Rights UK

Factsheets on benefits, tax credits and independent living.

www.disabilityrightsuk.org

PIP info

A guide to regulations and case law regarding PIP.

<http://pipinfo.net>

Registered office:

Action for ME

Unit 2.2 Streamline

436-441 Paintworks

Bristol, BS4 3AS



Telephone: 0117 927 9551

Info & Support: infosupport@actionforme.org.uk

Fundraising: fundraising@actionforme.org.uk

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