

PENSION CREDIT INFORMATION SHEET

What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit made up of 2 parts – Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit.

Guarantee Credit tops up your weekly income if it's below £177.10 (for single people) or £270.30 (for couples). You may still be eligible if you have savings, a pension or your own home.

Savings Credit is an extra payment for people who saved some money towards their retirement, for example a pension. You may not be eligible for Savings Credit if you reached State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016.

You do not pay tax on Pension Credit.

How much will you get?

	Guarantee Credit per week	Savings Credit per week
Single People	Top up to £177.10	Up to £14.04
Couples	Top up to £270.30	Up to £15.71

You might get more if you are a carer, severely disabled, responsible for a child or young person, or have certain housing costs.

If you get Guarantee Credit you will also qualify for other benefits such as Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Cold Weather Payments and help with the costs of NHS services.

If you are responsible for a child or young person

You might get more Pension Credit if you are responsible for a child or young person. This is called the 'child addition'.

The child or young person must normally live with you and be under the age of 20.

If they are 16 or over and under 20, they must be in (or accepted for):

- Approved training, such as Foundation Apprenticeships
- A course of non-advanced education (for example, they are studying for GCSEs or A levels)

If they are in education, it must be for more than 12 hours a week on average.

You cannot get the child addition if you get Tax Credit.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible for child addition, you should contact the Pension Service helpline on 0800 731 0469.

Usually you get either £54.60 or £65.10 per week for each child or young person you are responsible for. If they are disabled, you may get more.

How will I be paid?

This benefit will be paid into an account, for example, a bank account.

What are the eligibility criteria?

You must live in England, Scotland or Wales and have reached State Pension age to qualify for Pension Credit.

If you are in a couple you can start getting Pension Credit if either:

- You and your partner have both reached State Pension age
- One of you is getting Housing benefit for people over State Pension age

Your partner is your husband, wife or civil partner (if you live with them) or someone else you live with as if you were married.

You already get Pension Credit and you are in a couple

You will continue to get Pension Credit if you were getting it before 15 May 2019 even if your partner is under State Pension age. If your entitlement stops for any reason, for example your circumstances change, you cannot start getting Pension Credit again unless you (or your partner) are eligible under the new rules.

You already get Pension Credit and you are single

You will stop getting pension credit if you start living with a partner who is under State Pension age. You can start getting it again when your partner reaches State Pension age.

Savings Credit

You can only start getting Savings Credit if you (and your partner, if you have one) reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016.

If your partner did not reach State Pension age before 6 April 2016 and you have been getting Savings Credit since before 6 April 2016, you will continue to get it as long as there are no breaks in your entitlement.

If you stop being eligible for Savings Credit for any reason, you will not be able to get it again.

Working out your income

When you apply for Pension Credit your income is worked out. This includes:

- State Pension
- Other pensions
- Most social security benefits, for example Carer's Allowance
- Savings, investments over £10,000 – for these £1 is counted for every £500 or part £500
- Earnings

If you are entitled to a private or workplace pension, the amount you would expect to get is calculated as income from the date you were able to get it, if you had claimed it.

You will not get the benefit of deferring your State Pension if you or your partner are on Pension Credit, for example you will not build up extra State Pension or a lump sum for deferring your State Pension. When working out if you can get Pension Credit, the income you would get from your State Pension is included whether you are claiming or not.

The calculation does not include:

- Attendance Allowance
- Christmas Bonus
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Housing benefit
- Council Tax Reduction

If you are registered for Self Assessment, you must tell the Pension Service how much Income Tax you expect to pay for the current tax year – this affects how much Pension Credit you will get.

What happens to my Pension Credit if I leave Great Britain?

Your entitlement to Pension Credit may be affected if you leave Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) for any period of time. Call the helpline before you go (0800 731 0469).

You cannot get Pension Credit if you leave Great Britain permanently.

Pension Credit for Couples and Care Homes

If you receive Pension Credit as a couple and one of you enters a care home on a temporary basis, e.g. for respite care, you will continue to be paid as a couple.

If you receive Pension Credit as a couple and one of you enters a care home on a permanent basis, you must inform the Pension Service of a change in circumstances. For the purposes of benefit claims, you and your partner will no longer be treated as a couple and the Pension Service will pay you on an individual basis.

It is very important that the individual not entering the care home claims Pension Credit in their own right, once the Pension Service have been informed of a change in circumstances.

How to claim Pension Credit

You can start your application for Pension Credit up to 4 months before you reach State Pension age.

You can claim any time after you reach State Pension age but your claim can only be backdated for 3 months. This means you can get up to 3 months of Pension Credit in your first payment if you were eligible during that time.

You will need:

- Your National Insurance number
- Information about your income, savings and investments
- Your bank account details, if you are applying by phone or by post

If you are backdating your claim, you will need details of your income, savings and investments on the date you want your claim to start.

Apply online

You can use the online service if:

- You have already claimed your State Pension
- There are no children or young people included in your claim

The online service can be accessed at <https://apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/start>