HOW TO CLAIM PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT (PIP)

This guide is for people with Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis, or Microscopic Colitis who are thinking about applying for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). PIP is a benefit for people who need help with daily living because of a disability or health condition.

WHO THIS INFORMATION IS FOR

This information is for people living in England or Wales.

If you live in Northern Ireland

You can apply for PIP in Northern Ireland. This is a separate benefit to PIP in England and Wales. The benefits are similar, so you may still find this guide useful if you are applying in Northern Ireland. To find out more about PIP in Northern Ireland, visit the **Nidirect website**.

If you live in Scotland

You will need to apply for Adult Disability Payment (ADP) instead. ADP is similar to PIP, so you may still find this guide helpful. Find out more about ADP in our information on **disability and sickness benefits.**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS GUIDE

- This guide only includes information about PIP. See our **disability and sickness benefits** resource for information on other benefits.
- The government is reviewing PIP to ensure it's fair and helpful. It's expected that this review will finish by Autumn 2026.You can read more about the review on **the government website**.

- This guide is for general information only. It's not a full explanation of the law or a substitute for professional advice.

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Personal Independence Payment (PIP) key facts

- PIP is a payment to help with extra living costs. It's for people who have a disability or long-term condition and difficulty in doing everyday tasks or getting around because of this.
- You can get PIP whether you are working or not. It does not depend on income, savings or who you live with. These are the main steps in applying for PIP:
    - **Check you are eligible**
    - **Contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to start your claim**
    - **Complete the form**
    - **Attend the assessment**
    - **Receive a decision**
- The DWP uses a points system to assess your claim. You score points if you need an aid or support to carry out certain activities. You cannot score points just for having a condition or disability.
- The total number of points you score decides whether you qualify for PIP and how much you get.
- You can challenge the decision if you do not agree with it.

CAN I GET PIP?

PIP is a payment to help with extra living costs if you have:

- a disability or long-term condition, or more than one disability or condition, and
- difficulty doing everyday tasks or getting around because of your condition.

People are awarded PIP based on how much help they need with everyday tasks and getting around. Having a health condition or disability does not automatically mean you can get PIP.

You are more likely to get PIP if:

- You need help, prompting, or aids
- You struggle to do activities safely, to a good standard or as often as you need

You are less likely to get PIP if:

- You can do activities on your own, without help, prompting or aids
- You can do them safely, properly, and as often as needed

We know that many people with Crohn's or Colitis struggle to access benefits, like PIP. People tell us the current criteria do not reflect how their condition affects their daily life. And that there is a lack of awareness of Crohn's and Colitis across the benefits system.

We're working with the Disability Benefits Consortium and other organisations to improve access to benefits.

Help us fight for a benefits system that works for people with Crohn's or Colitis by sharing your experience.

What difficulties count towards PIP

Difficulties that count towards PIP are split into two categories:

- Daily living. This means everyday activities.
- Mobility. This means how you get around.

These categories are looked at separately. You might be able to get one or both.

To help you find out if you might get PIP, you could read the **example answers we give for each activity**. If you have similar difficulties, you may want to try applying for PIP.

Full eligibility criteria

Your age

You must be aged between 16 and **State Pension age** at the start of your claim.

If you have reached state pension age

Citizens Advice have more information on **getting PIP after you have reached State Pension age.** If you have reached State Pension age and you cannot get PIP, you might be able to get **Attendance Allowance**.

Children under the age of 16

Children under the age of 16 cannot claim PIP. They may be able to claim **Disability Living Allowance**.

Work and finances

PIP is not means-tested. This means your income or savings do not affect whether you can get PIP.

You can get PIP whether you work or not.

Where you live

To get PIP, you must:

- be living in England or Wales when you apply, and
- have lived in either of these countries for at least two of the last three years.

There are some exceptions and specific rules. Read more on the **government website**.

CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

How long your difficulties need to last

To get PIP, your difficulties must:

- have been happening for at least three months, and
- be likely to last for at least another nine months.

You can apply for PIP before you have had difficulties for three months. If you do this, you will not receive any payment until you have had your difficulties for the full three months.

There are different rules if you are **terminally ill**.

HOW YOUR APPLICATION IS ASSESSED

Activities and descriptors

Each activity in section three of the application has a list of statements. The statements describe how much help someone might need with the activity or how much difficulty they have. These statements are called descriptors.

Example activity and descriptors

Activity:
Using the toilet and managing incontinence

Descriptors:

- Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided (0 points)
- Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence (2 points)

- Needs supervision or prompting to manage toilet needs (2 points)
- Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs (4 points)
- Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel (6 points)
- Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel (8 points)

The assessor will choose the one descriptor that best matches what you have said:

- on your form, and
- in your assessment.

You may find your conditions vary over time. For example, you might experience an urgency to poo several times on some days, but not at all on other days.

The assessor will pick the descriptor that applies to you on most days over 12 months.

- Most means more than half of the days
- The 12 months include the last three months and next nine months

If more than one descriptor applies to you, the assessor will choose the one with the most points.

Doing an activity reliably

Being able to do an activity means you can do it reliably.

Doing an activity reliably means doing it:

- Safely

Is there a risk that you could injure yourself or make your condition or disability worse?

- To an acceptable standard

Can you do it properly, or the way you need to?

- Repeatedly

Can you do the activity as many times as you need to?

- In good time

Does it take you at least twice as long as someone who does not have a condition or disability?

If you cannot do the activity reliably, it should be treated as though you cannot do it at all. The correct descriptor is then one that says you cannot do it.

STARTING YOUR CLAIM

Contact the DWP

You can call the 'PIP new claims' phone line on 0800 917 2222.

There are other ways to start your claim, such as:

- By textphone
- In the post
- Using Relay UK
- **Online**

Read more about the other ways to start a PIP claim:

- Citizens Advice England
- Citizens Advice Wales
- The government website

What happens when you contact the DWP

- The DWP will ask you some basic questions. They will use your answers to decide whether you meet the main conditions for PIP.
- If you do meet the conditions, they will send you a form to fill in. This is called 'PIP2' or 'How your disability affects you'.
- If they decide you do not meet the conditions, they will write to you to explain why. You can challenge this decision by writing to the DWP.

GET READY TO FILL IN THE PIP FORM

It can be helpful to prepare before you fill in the PIP form. This can help you understand what to write so you do not miss anything important.

- Make sure to read the information booklet that comes with the form.
- Some of the questions use medical or technical terms. We explain these in the glossary at the end of this guide.
- You might find it helpful to write answers in pencil first, then go over them in pen. Or you could write on another sheet of paper first.
- Give yourself enough time. The form is long and can take time and energy to complete. You might find it easier to complete the form in stages, taking breaks when you need to.
- You might find it helpful to start a diary to record your difficulties with daily living and mobility. See a sample diary.
- Applying for PIP can be challenging. It asks you to describe how your Crohn's, Colitis or other conditions affect you day-to-day. This can be difficult to talk about. The application process can also be complex or confusing.

You may want to get support during the application. This could be:

- General support from a friend or family member.
- A friendly voice from **our Helpline team**.
- Advice from a professional. See the end of this guide for **how to find professional advice**.
- General guidance from the **Turn2us PIP Helper Tool**.

SECTION 1: YOUR HEALTH CONDITION OR DISABILITY

Question 1a: Your health conditions or disability

List all your ongoing health conditions, not just Crohn's or Colitis. This might include:

- Crohn's or Colitis related conditions, such as mouth ulcers
- Mental health conditions or symptoms
- Any other symptoms, conditions or diseases

You do not need to have diagnosed conditions to apply for PIP. For example, you might experience back pain that is not linked to a diagnosis. Make it clear on your form if you are listing a diagnosis or a symptom.

Give the date that you started having symptoms, even if you did not get a formal diagnosis until later. You can give an approximate date if you're not sure.

Question 1b: Tablets or other medicines

List any medicines you take for all conditions you have. Remember not all medicines come in tablets. You may need to include:

- Dissolvable granules

- Creams
- Suppositories
- Injections
- Infusions
- Inhalers

You might find it easier to attach your prescription list to the form. If you do this, remember to include details of any side effects you have.

Attaching your prescription list may also count as evidence of your medicines. Read more in the **evidence section**.

Question 1c: Treatments

Include details of any treatments or therapies you receive. These are treatments that a healthcare professional does for you, and might include:

- Stoma checks
- Colonoscopies
- Regular appointments with a healthcare professional, such as a physiotherapist, nutritionist or psychologist

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SECTION 2: ABOUT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Include contact details for up to three healthcare professionals.

In this resource, we use the term 'healthcare professional'. The PIP application uses the term 'health professional'. Both terms mean the same thing.

The healthcare professionals you include should be people who can give information about your Crohn's or Colitis and how it affects you. Choose people who care for you most regularly and are most familiar with your health. This could be your:

- GP
- Nurse
- Doctor
- Dietitian
- Psychologist
- Physiotherapist
- Support worker

If the DWP need more information about you, they may contact your healthcare professionals.

Updating your healthcare professionals

You may want to make an appointment with your healthcare professionals to make sure they understand your current difficulties. This could be with one or more of the healthcare professionals that you include on the form.

- To help you explain your difficulties, you could fill in **this checklist** at home and take it with you. You may want to take photocopies to share with the healthcare professional.
- It may also help to give them more information about PIP. Our **Healthcare professional PIP info sheet** explains some of the key information they may find useful.

SECTION 3: HOW YOUR CONDITION OR DISABILITY AFFECTS DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

The questions in section three of the form are for you to describe the difficulties you have in daily life.

Each activity will have at least one tick box question. There will also be space for you to tell the DWP more about your difficulties. The extra information you provide is

very important. It helps the assessor understand your situation beyond the tick boxes.

When answering, focus on your difficulties, how often they happen, and whether you need help or support.

Tips for writing your answers

Write about your honest experiences

- You may need to describe the problems you have using the toilet or symptoms, such as diarrhoea. Although it may feel difficult or uncomfortable, including this detail can help the assessor to understand your situation.
- Some people cope with their Crohn's or Colitis by staying positive. When filling in the PIP form, you will need to focus on your difficulties. It's important to describe how hard things are for you.
- Remember the person assessing your claim may not know about Crohn's or Colitis. They also will not know your personal situation or history.

Applying for PIP is not always easy, but we're here for you. Speak to our friendly Helpline team if you're unsure about anything or just need to talk.

If your symptoms vary

Your Crohn's or Colitis may change from day-to-day. When describing your difficulties or the help you need, explain:

- What bad, better and good days are like
- How often each of these days are

For example:

> "For about two weeks a month, I'm able to cook by myself with no help. For about one week a month, I need my partner to help me cook. I have to go to the toilet quickly, at least twice whilst cooking. I'm often in the toilet for 10-20 minutes so my food can burn. I'm sometimes then too tired to finish cooking and my partner has to finish it for me. And for about one week a month, I feel too unwell to cook at all so my partner has to do it all for me. I'm very tired and spend all evening after work in bed, getting up every 30-60 minutes to go to the toilet."
>
> **THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.**

You may want to use a **diary** to help see how your condition changes over time.

If you have been told your condition will get better or worse, say this in your application. This includes if you are waiting for treatment that could improve your Crohn's or Colitis. Include **evidence**, such as a letter from a healthcare professional, if you can.

Aids and appliances

- Aids are devices that help you perform a function. For example, a walking stick to help you walk or a bath seat to help you wash.
- Appliances are devices that provide or replace a missing function. For example, a stoma bag.

For each activity, include information about aids or appliances that:

- You already use.
- You need but do not have.

- People with Crohn's or Colitis commonly use, but you cannot. Explain why you cannot use them and whether this makes your daily life more difficult.

You need help from another person to use. You might need someone to help you use it, remind you to use it or help you clean it.

Explain the effect of all your conditions:

- Include all your conditions or disabilities together and how they affect you.
- It's okay to repeat information if it affects more than one activity. For example, if bending causes you pain, this may affect more than one activity, such as bathing, using the toilet and getting dressed.

Think about the help you need from another person:

- If you get help from someone, include details about this. Explain what kind of help you need, for example, verbal prompting, physical help or supervision.
- The person who helps you does not have to be a carer. They could be a friend or family member.
- Is there help that you would benefit from but do not get? Explaining this can help to show the difficulties you have.

Think about each step of an activity:

- Are there steps that you have difficulty with or cannot do? For example, you might be able to put on most of your clothes, but struggle with socks and shoes because bending is painful.
- Do you have to take breaks during activities to rest? Do you avoid any activities or parts of activities? Why?

Can you do the activity reliably?

For each activity, think about whether you can do it reliably. This includes doing it:

- Safely
- To a good standard

- As often as you need to
- Within a reasonable time

If you cannot do an activity reliably, explain why. Also, explain what would help you do it reliably.

Read more in the section about **doing an activity reliably**.

Some of the questions in the PIP form use medical or technical terms. We explain these in **the glossary at the end of this guide**.

SECTION 3: EXAMPLE ANSWERS

For each activity, we have listed common problems experienced by people with Crohn's or Colitis. They are to help you think of what to write about. They are not guaranteed to score points or get PIP.

Question 3: Preparing food

This question asks about your ability to prepare and cook a simple meal. This means a one-course meal for one person. It includes:

- Peeling and chopping
- Opening tins
- Using a hob or microwave, at or above waist height

This activity does not include any difficulty you may have with bending to put food into the oven or to get things out of low cupboards.

Preparing food descriptors and points

a) Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided (0 points)

b) Needs to use an aid or appliance to either prepare or cook a simple meal (2 points)
c) Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave (2 points)
d) Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal (2 points)
e) Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal (4 points)
f) Cannot prepare and cook food (8 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- If another person helps you to cook, explain exactly what they do to help. For example, chopping, draining food, or finishing cooking if you need to go to the toilet.
- Do you skip meals, or eat ready meals or snacks because you feel too tired or unwell to cook?
- Describe any aids or appliances you use during cooking. They do not have to be medical appliances. They could be kitchen appliances that make it easier for you to prepare meals. For example, lightweight saucepans, electric tin openers or needing a stool or chair while cooking.
- Do you find it hard to watch over a meal while it is cooking? For example, this may happen if you urgently need to use the toilet several times and for long periods of time. This might make it difficult for you to cook your food properly and avoid burning it. It might be dangerous to leave food cooking unattended.
- Do you have to follow a special diet or avoid certain foods? You will not score points just for this, but you may get points if it means you find it harder to prepare a meal. It may mean that preparing meals takes longer or involves extra tasks, such as mashing food or chopping it more finely. Or you may need prompting, help or supervision from another person to help you follow the right diet.

"When my Crohn's or Colitis flares up (two out of the last three months), I urgently need to go to the toilet two or three times while I am cooking. This makes it hard to cook safely. I have burnt my dinner twice because I have been in the toilet and have not been able to turn the oven or hob off in time. I need someone there whilst I cook to avoid this happening."

THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.

Question 4: Eating and drinking

This question looks at whether your condition makes it difficult for you to eat or drink. This includes:

- Cutting food
- Moving food and drink to your mouth
- Chewing and swallowing
- Knowing when to eat and how much to eat

Eating and drinking descriptors and points

a) Can take nutrition unaided (0 points)
b) Needs either (i) to use an aid or appliance to take nutrition; (ii) supervision to be able to take nutrition; or (iii) assistance to cut up food (2 points)
c) Needs a therapeutic source to take nutrition (2 points)
d) Needs prompting to take nutrition (4 points)

e) Needs assistance to be able to manage a therapeutic source to take nutrition (6 points)

f) Cannot convey food and drink to their mouth and needs another person to do so (10 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you find it difficult to make yourself eat because you know it is likely to make you feel sick or cause diarrhoea? Do you need someone to prompt you to eat?
- Do you find it hard to keep to a healthy weight? If your Crohn's or Colitis has caused you to lose weight, it can be helpful to explain why. For example, are you too tired to finish most of your meals?
- Do you need liquid food, taken through a tube into the stomach or small bowel or into a vein? The above descriptors c and e describe these as therapeutic sources.
- Do you have mouth ulcers? Do they make eating painful or uncomfortable? Do you need encouragement to eat enough?
- Do you find it difficult to use cutlery and need adapted cutlery or someone to help you? For example, you may have joint pain that makes this difficult.

"When I eat, I need to go to the toilet straight afterwards to poo. Because of this, I usually don't want to eat, especially if I need to leave the house in the next hour. My partner has to encourage me to eat. If she is not there, I skip meals because eating makes me feel sick and gives me diarrhoea."

THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.

Question 5: Managing your treatments

Managing treatments descriptors and points

a) Either

(i) does not receive medication, therapy or need to monitor a health condition; or

(ii) can manage medication, therapy or monitor a health condition unaided

(0 points)

b) Needs any one or more of the following:

(i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage medication;

(ii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage medication;

(iii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to monitor a health condition

(1 point)

c) Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to manage therapy that takes no more than 3.5 hours a week (2 points)

d) Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to manage therapy that takes between 3.5 and 7 hours a week (4 points)

e) Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to manage therapy that takes between 7 and 14 hours a week (6 points)

f) Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to manage therapy that takes more than 14 hours a week (8 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you need help from another person with things like taking medicine to empty your bowels, such as an enema? Or help from another person with applying creams, taking medicine injections, or changing dressings?
- Do you need help monitoring your symptoms and treatment effects? For example, do you need someone to check the skin around your bottom?

- Do you need someone to remind you to take your medicines? For example, if you are tired or have depression, you may forget to take medicines on time.
- Do you need to use an aid or appliance? Examples include an alert on your phone or an alarm to remind you when to take your medicines. If you have a lot of different medicines, do you need a dosette box to help you organise your tablets?

> "I take several medicines at different times of the day. My prescription list is attached to this application. I find it hard to remember what medicine to take at what time. I use a dosette box to organise my medicines and an alarm on my mobile phone to tell me when to take them."
>
> **THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.**

Question 6: Washing and bathing

Washing and bathing descriptors and points

a) Can wash and bathe unaided (0 points)
b) Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe (2 points)
c) Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe (2 points)
d) Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair or body below the waist (2 points)
e) Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower (3 points)
f) Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist (4 points)

g) Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body (8 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you need help from another person? Explain what they do to help you, for example, helping you in and out of the bath.
- Do you need any equipment, such as handrails, a long-handled brush or a shower seat?
- Do you need to use a bidet to clean yourself after using the toilet?
- Do you need to wash or shower more often because of leakage, incontinence, infections or fistulas?
- Do you find it difficult or painful to reach any areas of your body when you are washing?
- Do you sometimes feel too tired or depressed to wash, bathe or shower?
- Do you feel tired or drained after washing or bathing, and this stops you doing other activities such as cooking?
- Can you wash or bathe reliably and safely without pain? Have you had any falls, or nearly fallen, while having a bath or shower?
- Do you only take a bath or shower if there is someone close by in case you fall?

"I find it hard to wash by myself because it's so tiring. If my husband is not there to help me, I feel too tired and do not bother to have a shower or bath. If I do, I have to rest for a few hours afterwards. I then need help with other activities that I'm too tired to do. Last week, I had a shower and I slipped when I was getting out because I felt dizzy. Luckily my husband was there and he stopped me from falling."

THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.

Question 7: Using the toilet and managing incontinence

Using a toilet means:

- getting on and off a standard toilet that has no adaptations, and
- cleaning yourself afterwards.

Managing incontinence means:

- coping with not being able to control your bladder or bowel, and
- cleaning yourself afterwards.

This may include using an aid, such as incontinence pads, a wiper, a stoma bag or a catheter.

The assessment does not look at needing to get from another room to the toilet, finding a toilet in a public place or cleaning the toilet or area around it.

Using the toilet and managing incontinence descriptors and points

a) Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided (0 points)
b) Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence (2 points)
c) Needs supervision or prompting to manage toilet needs (2 points)
d) Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs (4 points)
e) Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel (6 points)
f) Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel (8 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you have difficulty getting on or off the toilet? Do you feel weak or unsteady when you get up from the toilet? Do you lean or pull on furniture to help?
- Do you feel stiff when standing up if you have to sit on the toilet for a long time?
- Do you use any aids or appliances, such as a commode, raised toilet seat, bottom wiper, bed or seat pad or waterproof sheet? If you use incontinence pads, how often do you need to change them? Do you need any help from another person, for example with emptying a commode?
- If you use a stoma bag, explain how you use it, how often you need to empty it and how you clean the skin around your stoma. Describe any problems with bags leaking or bursting. If you need help from another person, explain what they do to help you.
- Do you find it difficult to clean yourself after using the toilet or following an episode of incontinence? Does it take you a long time to clean

yourself properly? Do you need to shower or bathe after going to the toilet? Do you need help with changing bed sheets or washing clothes?

- Do you face extra costs for any aids or appliances that help you use the toilet or manage any episodes of incontinence?
- Is there a risk of slipping or falling when getting on or off the toilet?
- Do you need help because it happens so often that you are too tired to manage on your own?

> "I cannot control when I poo. When I need to go, it's both urgent and unpredictable. This happens 8-10 times each day, at least 4 days a week. I use a commode, but someone has to empty and clean it for me as I'm usually too tired. I also wear incontinence pads and use waterproof sheets on my bed. My Colitis makes me feel very tired, so I need help to change the bed sheets during the night if I have an accident."
>
> **THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.**

Question 8: Dressing and undressing

Dressing and undressing descriptors and points
a) Can dress and undress unaided (0 points)
b) Needs to use an aid or appliance to dress or undress (2 points)
c) Needs either
(i) prompting to dress, undress or determine appropriate circumstances for remaining clothed or

(ii) prompting or assistance to select appropriate clothing

(2 points)

d) Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their lower body (2 points)

e) Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their upper body (4 points)

f) Cannot dress or undress at all (8 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you find it difficult or painful to bend down? Does this make it hard for you to put on or take off socks, shoes or clothes on your lower body?
- Do you need to wear clothes that are easy to undo if you need the toilet urgently, for example, clothes with elasticated waists or Velcro fastenings?
- Do you have joint pain that makes it hard to use zips or buttons on clothes?
- Do you need to use any aids, such as elasticated shoelaces or a shoe horn? Do you need to wear clothes or support garments that give extra support to a stoma or hernia?
- If you sometimes need to change your underwear or clothes because of incontinence or leakage, say how often this happens.
- Does low motivation or fatigue make it difficult for you to get dressed or change your clothes? This may be because you are depressed or tired, or because dressing is painful or difficult. Do you sometimes stay in your night clothes during the day or go to bed in the clothes you have worn all day?
- If another person helps you to get dressed, explain how they help you.

"I find it painful to bend down, so I cannot put my socks or shoes on myself. My friend helps me get dressed every day. If he is not there, I cannot get dressed to go outside by myself, so I have to stay at home."

THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.

Question 9: Talking, listening and understanding

This question asks about how well you can speak, hear and understand your native language.

If anxiety or depression makes it hard for you to speak to people, you can explain this later in question 11.

Talking, listening and understanding descriptors and points

a) Can express and understand verbal information unaided (0 points)

b) Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear (2 points)

c) Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information (4 points)

d) Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information (8 points)

e) Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support (12 points)

Question 10: Reading

This question asks about how well you can read and understand signs, symbols and words.

Reading descriptors and points

a) Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses (0 points)
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 points)
c) Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information (2 points)
d) Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information (4 points)
e) Cannot read, or understand signs, symbols or words at all (8 points)

Question 11: Mixing with other people

This question asks about how well you meet and engage with people. This includes people you know well and people you do not know. This question only looks at face-to-face situations.

Mixing with other people descriptors and points

a) Can engage with other people unaided (0 points)
b) Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people (2 points)
c) Needs social support to be able to engage with other people (4 points)
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 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you experience panic, anxiety or feelings of depression that make it hard for you to mix with other people?
- Have you avoided mixing with other people because of your Crohn's or Colitis? Explain the reasons for this. For example, you may be worried about needing the toilet, incontinence or passing wind.
- When you mix with other people, do you need to have someone with you? How does this person reassure or support you?
- Do you avoid social activities or meeting new people? Have you given up any activities that you enjoyed in the past?
- Do you find it very tiring to mix with other people? Do you need to rest afterwards?

> "I used to go to a weekly exercise class, but I have stopped going because I am worried that my stoma will leak or make loud noises. I worry a lot about it and so I avoid being around other people and now spend a lot of time by myself at home. My GP has diagnosed me with anxiety."
>
> **THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.**

Question 12: Managing money

This question asks about how well you understand:

- How much things cost
- How to budget your money so you make it last and can pay for what you need

It does not cover your ability to walk around shops, get cash out of a purse or carry shopping.

Managing money descriptors and points

a) Can manage complex budgeting decisions unaided (0 points)
b) Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make complex budgeting decisions (2 points)
c) Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make simple budgeting decisions (4 points)
d) Cannot make any budgeting decisions at all (6 points)

Question 13: Planning and following a journey

This question is about planning and following journeys.

This question does not look at:

- Any physical difficulties involved in using public transport, such as a lack of toilets or difficulty getting on and off a bus.
- Your physical ability to walk or move around. Question 14 covers this.

Planning and following a journey descriptors and points

a) Can plan and follow the route of a journey unaided (0 points)
b) Needs prompting to be able to undertake any journey to avoid overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant (4 points)
c) Cannot plan the route of a journey (8 points)
d) Cannot follow the route of an unfamiliar journey without another person, assistance dog or orientation aid (10 points)

e) Cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant (10 points)
f) Cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, assistance dog or orientation aid (12 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Does going out make you feel anxious, panicky or distressed? Describe what happens when you feel like this.
- Do you need someone to encourage you to go out?
- Is it helpful to have someone with you when you go out, to help you find your way around or to calm and reassure you?
- Have you ever had to stop your journey and go home because you were too upset to continue?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate on following an unfamiliar route? For example, due to feeling very tired or anxious. You may get distracted because you are worrying about needing a toilet.

"I cannot go on any journeys by myself because I am worried about the severe consequences of not being able to get to a toilet quickly. I have to take someone I trust with me, otherwise I get very worried and upset. My friend helps me work out where the nearest toilets are along the route and helps to calm me down when I panic."

THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.

Question 14: Moving around

This question asks about your how well you can stand and walk.

You need to tick a box to say how far you can walk. Your choices are:

- Less than 20 metres
- Between 20 and 50 metres
- Between 50 and 200 metres
- 200 metres or more
- It varies

To give you an idea of how far these distances are:

- A bus is about 10 metres long
- A full-size football pitch is about 100 metres long.

Do not say you can walk a certain distance unless you are sure that you can walk it:

- Safely
- In an acceptable manner
- As often as you need to, and
- In a reasonable time.

Moving around descriptors and points

a) Can stand and then move more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided (0 points)
b) Can stand and then move more than 50 metres but no more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided (4 points)
c) Can stand and then move unaided more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres (8 points)

d) Can stand and then move using an aid or appliance more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres (10 points)
e) Can stand and then move more than 1 metre but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided (12 points)
f) Cannot, either aided or unaided, (i) stand or (ii) move more than 1 metre (12 points)

Examples to help you with your answer

- Do you need to rest or sit down when moving around? How often? Are you unable to go out unless you know there are plenty of places to sit?
- Do you have any pain when you walk? Do you have this pain as soon as you start walking? If not, how far can you walk before the pain starts?
- Do you have to lean on furniture when moving around the house?
- Does walking make you feel unwell? This could be feeling tired, sick, dizzy or in pain. How far can you walk before this starts? Does it get worse if you continue?
- Give details of any aids or appliances you use to help you move around, such as a walking stick or wheelchair. Say how often you use it. If you use a wheelchair, do you need someone to push it for you?
- Have you tried using a walking aid but found it unhelpful?
- Are you able to walk but would be so tired afterwards that you cannot do other activities you need to?
- Do you need to take someone's arm or lean on them when you walk?
- Does walking increase your risk of leaking or incontinence?
- Are there times of the day when you cannot go out because you need to stay close to a toilet?
- If you walk slowly, you could give an example. Such as, 'I take twice as long as my family to walk to the corner shop, which is 150 metres away'.

- Give examples of how this affects your daily life. Does your GP visit you at home because it is a struggle to get to the surgery? Do you have your food shopping delivered because you find it too difficult to walk to, or around, the shop? If you do shop, do you have to hold on to a trolley? Do you only use shops that have accessible customer toilets?

> "I can walk to the corner shop, which is 150 metres away, but it makes me feel very tired. I need to sit down for at least five minutes when I get there, and again before walking home. I can only spend 10 minutes walking around the shop. I also need to rest for an hour when I get home. This means I struggle to do all my shopping and my neighbour does it for me. They also give me a lift to the doctors or other appointments."
>
> **THIS IS A MADE-UP QUOTE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH CROHN'S AND COLITIS.**

Question 15: Additional information

Here you can give any relevant information that you have not already mentioned.

You might want to include:

- How Crohn's or Colitis affects your whole day. This might mean you have to spend a lot more time planning whether you can do something due to tiredness or access to a toilet. You might have to cancel plans, say no to seeing friends or family, or avoid going to events.
- If you have any difficulties with your medicine you may want to include this on your form. This might be difficulty managing side effects, or needing to go to regular medical appointments.

- If you have a paid or unpaid carer, you could say how much time they spend helping you.
- You could give more information about how your Crohn's or Colitis varies day-to-day.
- If your Crohn's or Colitis is getting worse, you could describe how it is causing you more difficulty.
- If you do not take medicines that are commonly used to treat your condition, explain why. For example:
    - The side effects are unsafe or affect your daily life.
    - You cannot take a medicine alongside your other medicines.
    - You tried a medicine but it does not help your condition.

WHAT EVIDENCE TO INCLUDE

Evidence can help back up what you say in your form. Only send evidence if it shows something helpful for your application. You do not need to send lots of evidence if it's not relevant.

Below are examples of evidence that might be helpful to send.

- As evidence of your diagnosis, you may want to send your GP summary record.
- As evidence of your symptoms and the difficulties they cause, you may want to send reports or letters from an IBD doctor, IBD nurse, dietitian or other healthcare professional.
- As evidence of how your condition is likely to change over time, you may want to send letters or reports from your IBD doctor.
- As evidence of your treatments, you may want to send reports about medicines, procedures or care plans. This may include treatments you have had but did not work.

- As evidence of the help you need in daily life, you may want to send a statement from someone who supports you.
- As evidence of support at college or work, you may want to send documentation of support plans or adjustments.
- As evidence of how your symptoms affect you day-to-day, you may want to send a short diary.

Evidence from the last year may be more relevant than older evidence. Older evidence can still be useful, for example to show a diagnosis you had a long time ago.

If there is evidence that you need but do not have, you may need to ask a healthcare professional for it. Not all healthcare professionals will do this, and some may charge a fee.

It might be helpful to give a healthcare professional more information about your PIP application. This may help to explain what evidence you need. See the section on **healthcare professionals involved in your PIP application** for more information on talking to your healthcare professional about your application.

Remember to keep a copy of the evidence you send.

Sending evidence after you have completed your claim form

You might not have all your evidence ready when you send your form.

Sending your form late might affect your claim. It's usually best to send the form on time without all the evidence. You can send more evidence later. If you want to do this, you can explain it in question 15 on your form.

Citizens Advice has information about sending supporting evidence after you have completed your PIP claim form. It also includes a letter template you can use:

- **Citizens Advice England**
- **Citizens Advice Wales**

RETURNING THE FORM

You must return your completed form within one month of getting it. Otherwise, your claim may be turned down.

Getting an extension

If you need more time to complete your form, contact the **PIP enquiry line.** They may extend the deadline to return your form by if you have a good reason. A good reason could be going into hospital or a bereavement.

The Citizens Advice website has more information on getting an extension for your PIP application:

- **Citizens Advice England**
- **Citizens Advice Wales**

Keep a copy of the form

It's important to keep a copy of your completed PIP form and any supporting evidence that you send. This can help if:

- Your form gets lost after you send it. Make sure your copy shows the barcode.
- It takes a while to get a response from the DWP. Keeping a copy of the form means you can remind yourself of what you wrote.
- You are not happy with the outcome of your claim. You may want a copy of the form to help challenge the decision.
- You get PIP, since this is likely to be for a fixed amount of time. When you come to renew your award, you may find it helpful to look at your original form.

What happens after I return the form?

The DWP will look at your PIP form and any other evidence you have sent. They will either:

- Make a decision based on this, or
- Invite you to an assessment with a healthcare professional.

It may take a long time to hear from the DWP. You may want to call the **PIP enquiry line** to check they have got your form.

PIP ASSESSMENTS

If more information is needed, you will be invited to an assessment with a healthcare professional.

Your claim is likely to be refused if you do not go to your assessment, unless you can show that you have a good reason for not going. A good reason may be that you are in hospital.

Assessment location

The assessment will usually be by phone or video call. You might be invited to a face-to-face assessment if the DWP cannot assess you over the phone or by video call.

Assessment provider

PIP assessments are done by healthcare professionals who work for private organisations. You can **find your assessment provider on the government website**.

In this information, we call the healthcare professional who does the PIP assessment "the assessor".

Getting ready for your assessment

In the assessment, you'll need to talk about how your condition affects you and the difficulties you have. This can be hard to do, but it's important that the assessor knows about the problems you have.

To help prepare for your assessment, you may want to:

- Read a copy of your completed PIP form to remind yourself what you wrote about.
- Make notes on anything you want to remember to say.
- Think about whether you need someone to attend your appointment with you. You can have someone aged 16 or over join your phone or video call or go to a face-to-face appointment with you. You could ask a family member, friend or support worker.
- Think about any accessibility needs you have, such as a nearby toilet for face-to-face assessments.
- If your assessment is via phone or video call, you may want to plan where to take the call. This could be a quiet place where you will not be interrupted. Make sure your phone or device is charged.
- If you have any new evidence, such as more up-to-date medical reports, tell the assessor. They will tell you where to send the evidence.

What happens during the assessment

The assessment is a conversation between you and the assessor about the difficulties you have. Assessments usually take about an hour.

The assessor will ask questions about the difficulties you have in your daily life. They may ask questions like the ones on the form. This can give them the details they need to make a decision.

They may ask about other parts of your life, such as:

- Work or education
- Housework
- Shopping
- Hobbies
- Looking after children or pets

This helps them understand your overall ability. If you have had to stop or limit activities because of your difficulties, you can explain this.

They may ask how you got ready for the assessment or travelled to the assessment centre. You may want to explain any difficulties you had attending the assessment. For example, having to get up earlier so you can eat and go to the toilet before travelling. Explain what may have happened otherwise, such as needing to go to the toilet several times during the assessment and being too tired for the rest of the day.

It's okay to take your time when answering questions. You can also ask the assessor to repeat or explain a question if you do not understand. This can help make sure your answers reflect your own experience. If you feel you have not fully explained something, you can ask to go back and explain it again.

Taking notes in your assessment

You, or someone with you, can take notes of what was said during the assessment. This could help you challenge the result of your claim if you are not happy with it.

Recording your assessment

You can ask to make an audio recording of the assessment. You must ask the assessment provider in advance that you want to record the assessment. They may want you to sign or verbally consent to an agreement. The agreement will say what you can and cannot do with the recording.

Video recordings of assessments are not allowed, to ensure privacy and safety of you and the assessor.

Face-to-face assessments

You might have a face-to-face assessment if the assessor feels they need to see you in person.

Assessments at home

When you fill in the PIP form, you can ask for the assessment to be in your home. Home assessments are only offered in a few situations, such as:

- If you are unable to travel to an assessment centre
- If you would need a lot of support to go to a centre
- If going to a centre would cause a lot of distress

Physical examinations at PIP assessments

- The healthcare professional may do simple checks or tests. For example, checking your blood pressure.
- They may ask you to do small tasks or movements, such as raising a leg or bending down. They will not expect you to do anything that would cause you pain, embarrassment or discomfort. Tell them if you do not feel able to do something.
- They will not ask you to remove your underwear, or look at areas such as your breast, bottom or genitals.
- The assessor will also observe what you do during the assessment. For example, they may notice how you walk, move or communicate. These observations can help them to understand your difficulties and make a decision about your claim.

Travel expenses for PIP assessments

You can claim travel expenses for getting to the assessment if it's not at your home. Expenses could include:

- Public transport tickets.
- Parking fees, if there is no free parking at the test centre.
- Fuel.

- Taxi fares. The assessment provider must agree to this before the assessment. If you plan to travel by taxi, tell your assessment provider as soon as possible. You may need to explain why you cannot use public transport.

How to claim travel expenses

Ask for a travel expenses claim form at reception of the assessment centre.

Keep any tickets or receipts from your journey. It may also be helpful to have your bank account details in case you submit the form at the centre.

HOW A DECISION IS MADE

After the assessment, the assessor will complete a report. They will recommend which descriptors they think should apply to you, and why.

The assessor will send their report to the DWP.

A case manager at the DWP will look at the report, along with your claim form and any other evidence. They will make the final decision about which descriptors apply to you and whether you qualify for PIP. They will work out how many points you score. They decide whether to award you PIP, at what rate and for how long.

How PIP scoring works

- Your points from the 10 daily living activities are added together.
- Your points from the two mobility activities are added together.

How many points you need:

- **Lower weekly rate, also called the standard rate**
  Daily living – 8 to 11 points
  Mobility - 8 to 11 points

- **Higher weekly rate, also called the enhanced rate**
  Daily living – 12 or more points
  Mobility - 12 or more points

You could get either daily living, mobility or both. You get a higher or lower rate for each.

Waiting for a decision

You may have to wait weeks or months to get a decision. If you are claiming under special rules due to terminal illness, you may get a decision more quickly.

If you need financial support while waiting for a decision, you may be able to apply for grants. Read more in our information about money and financial support.

Getting a final decision

You will get a letter telling you whether you have been awarded PIP and at what rate.

IF YOU DISAGREE WITH THE DECISION

If you did not get the PIP decision you were hoping for, you may be feeling disappointed, frustrated or exhausted. You can usually challenge a decision. But we recognise this can feel stressful, especially when you are already managing the impact of your Crohn's or Colitis on daily life.

Support is available and you do not have to go through it alone. You may want to get support by:

- Asking a friend or family member to help you challenge the decision.
- Speaking to our friendly **Helpline team**.

- Getting advice from a professional. See the end of this guide for **how to find professional advice**.

Challenging a decision can help make sure your situation and needs are fully understood. If your PIP claim is turned down, or if you are unhappy with the amount or the length of your award, you can:

- Ask for the DWP to look at the decision again. This is called a mandatory reconsideration.
- Appeal the decision to an independent panel, known as an independent tribunal.
- Make a new claim.

A mandatory reconsideration is usually the first step. In some cases, you can go straight to appeal without a mandatory reconsideration. Your PIP outcome letter will say if this is the case.

If the DWP has awarded you PIP but you challenge the decision, they may look at your whole claim again. This means your award could increase, or it could stay the same, be stopped or lowered.

MANDATORY RECONSIDERATION

Apply for a mandatory reconsideration

- Contact the DWP using **this form**. Or you can call the number on the top of your decision letter.
- Make sure to apply for a mandatory reconsideration within one month of the date on your decision letter. If more than one month has passed, you may still be able to ask for a mandatory reconsideration. But you will need a good

reason for applying late. The latest you can apply is 13 months from the date on your decision letter.

- A mandatory reconsideration is only for if you disagree with the decision. If you want the DWP to look at your case again because your condition has changed, you must tell the DWP. Reporting a change to the DWP means they will look at your whole application again. This means your award could also be lowered or stopped. You may want to speak to a **benefits adviser** first.

Explain why you disagree with the decision

- It can be helpful to review all the decision documentation you have been given so far. This may include the assessor's report, the decision letter and any other explanations of why the DWP made their decision. You can ask the DWP for a copy of the assessor's report.
- You must explain what part of the decision you think is wrong and why. Be as specific as you can.
- It may be helpful to list the descriptor choices that you disagree with. Explain which part of your experience does not match the chosen descriptor, and what you think the correct descriptor is.
- Give facts and **evidence** to support what you say. It's important that you include evidence that is relevant and supports your case.

Example

This is an example based on common experiences of living with Crohn's or Colitis. It is not guaranteed to get PIP.

"The report says I can manage going to the toilet unaided. I disagree. Because of my Crohn's disease, I need to poo around 6-8 times a day, every day. If I'm having a worse day, I need to poo 10-15 times a day. I have worse days around ten days a month.

On worse days, I cannot get to the toilet as often as I need to. I'm often too tired or have too much tummy pain that I cannot move from my bed or the sofa for at least an hour. I have to wear incontinence pads because of this. My partner has to help me change these pads and clean me."

Getting a mandatory reconsideration decision

- The DWP will look at your claim again. They will send you a new decision letter. This is called a mandatory reconsideration notice. It can take several months to get this.
- The letter will explain how to appeal to a tribunal if you are still unhappy with the decision.

Further information and support

- Citizens Advice has more information about applying for a mandatory reconsideration:
  - **Citizens Advice England**
  - **Citizens Advice Wales**
- Advicenow has a **PIP mandatory reconsideration letter tool**. It can help you explain why you disagree with the decision.
- A friendly voice from **our Helpline team.**

APPEAL TO AN INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL

If you are still not happy with the result of your claim, you can appeal to a panel, called a tribunal. This panel is independent, which means it's not part of the DWP.

You will be invited to discuss your case with the panel. This is called a hearing. The panel will look at evidence from both you and the DWP to make a final decision.

It takes at least six months to get a tribunal hearing. Waiting can be difficult, especially if you are having difficulty managing day-to-day life.
You do not have to manage this alone. Speak to a friend or family member about how you're feeling, or call our Helpline to find out about the support available to you.

How to appeal

Complete and return the appeal form **online** or **by post**.

You must do this within one month of the date on your mandatory reconsideration letter. If you're outside this time, you may still be able to appeal if you have a reason for applying late.

The form will ask you why you disagree with the decision and about your preferences for the hearing.

Explain why you disagree with the decision

When completing this section of the form:

- Refer to the most recent decision from the DWP. This is likely to be your mandatory reconsideration notice. This tells you the outcome of the mandatory reconsideration.
- It's important to explain why you disagree with the decision. Read through any assessment reports or other documents you have about the decision. Identify anything that's wrong and explain what your true experience is. If you can, provide extra evidence to support what you say.
- It's important that the facts you give are consistent across all your PIP documents.
- You can use the same examples and evidence that you included in your **mandatory reconsideration**, if they are still relevant.

- You can send more evidence after you have submitted your appeal application.

Needs and preferences for the hearing

The appeal application form will also ask whether you plan to attend the hearing and if you have any support needs:

- You do not have to go to the hearing, but attending usually gives you a better chance of being successful. It gives you the chance to explain how your Crohn's or Colitis affects you and why you think you should get PIP. If you do not go, the decision will be based on your application form and supporting evidence.
- Tell the tribunal if you are not available on certain dates.
- Include any accessibility needs you have for the hearing, such as an interpreter.

Getting help with your appeal

- You may be able to get a benefits adviser to help you through the process of appealing. See the end of this guide for **where to find an adviser**.
- A friend or family member may also be able to support you. They might help you fill in your application or go with you to your hearing.
- You can choose to have a representative at the hearing. A representative can speak for you and help present your case. This could be a professional adviser, a family member or friend. If you ask someone to represent you, make sure they fully understand Crohn's or Colitis and the difficulties you have in your daily life. If you think you would like a representative, **speak to a benefits adviser** about your options.
- Citizens Advice has more information about applying for a tribunal hearing:
    - **Citizens Advice England**
    - **Citizens Advice Wales**

Getting ready for the hearing

Review your appeal documents

You will be given a set of documents called an appeal bundle. This includes:

- Your claim forms
- The assessor's report
- The evidence you have already sent
- Any other documents related to your case

Read through the bundle carefully and check:

- That the information you have given is true and consistent
- If any details are missing
- If the information given by the assessor or the DWP is accurate, or if you disagree with anything they have said

You may want to use this information to prepare something to say during your hearing. See the next section.

Take the bundle with you to an in-person hearing, or have it available during a telephone or video hearing.

Preparing what to say

Some people may want to prepare some key points or a statement to summarise how you think you meet the PIP descriptors and why you disagree with the decision. You do not have to do this.

If you do prepare something to say, you can include:

- Which part of the decision you disagree with
- Why you disagree, and what you think the correct information is
- Which activity **descriptor** you think you meet
- Examples from your daily life that support what you are saying

You could use the same examples and evidence that you included in your **mandatory reconsideration** or in your appeal form, if they are still relevant.

Read more about writing a statement on the **Advicenow website**.

Submit any additional evidence

If you have supporting evidence, try to send it to the Appeal Service before the appeal. This gives everyone time to read it.

Make practical arrangements

- You may want to consider asking someone to go with you. If your hearing is by phone or video call, they could join the call with you.
- If you asked for any accessibility support, you could check that it has been arranged.
- You do not need to dress smartly for your hearing.
- If you are travelling to your hearing, it can be helpful to check how to claim expenses. For example, parking costs. Read more on **the government website**. Citizens Advice has a **PIP appeal hearing helpsheet**. You might find it useful when getting ready for your hearing.

You might feel nervous before a hearing. You do not need to worry about getting everything right. The panel is there to listen and understand your situation.

What happens at a hearing

- The hearing will be less formal than a court hearing.
- There will be a judge, two independent people and possibly one person from the DWP.
- The hearing may be in-person, online or over the phone.
- The panel may ask questions about your reasons for appealing and the difficulties you have in daily life.

- You can ask the panel to repeat or explain anything you do not understand.
- Speak honestly about your experiences.

Citizens Advice has more information about attending a hearing:

- **Citizens Advice England**
- **Citizens Advice Wales**

Getting a decision

- The tribunal panel will make a final decision. They may make a decision at the hearing, or you may receive a letter afterwards.
- The DWP may challenge the tribunal's decision. This is rare, but if this happens, they will write to you.
- If your appeal is successful, the tribunal panel will decide which rate of PIP you will get. The DWP will also pay you any money you should have been paid from the date your PIP claim started.

If you are unhappy with the decision made by the tribunal

Your decision letter will give you more information about what to do if you are not happy with the decision. You may be able to appeal to a higher court or have the decision cancelled. Citizens Advice has more information about this:

- **Citizens Advice England**
- **Citizens Advice Wales**

You may want to **contact your local MP** if you think you have been treated unfairly or if you have had to wait a long time to get a response. Your MP may be able to help you get an apology or help you get a decision more quickly.

RECEIVING PIP

How much you could get

See the current rates for PIP on the **government website.** You may want to use **this calculator** to work out how much PIP you might get.

How much you get depends on how your condition affects your ability to carry out the listed activities. Read about **how a decision is made about PIP**.

Your rate will be reviewed regularly to make sure you are receiving the right amount of help.

You do not pay tax on PIP.

When PIP is paid

PIP is usually paid every four weeks into your bank account.

How long you could get PIP for

Most PIP awards will be for a fixed amount of time. The length of your award will depend on whether:

- Your condition is likely to change
- You are likely to need less support in the future

For example, you could be awarded PIP for two years, five years or longer.

PIP reviews

If you are awarded PIP for a fixed term, you will usually be invited to renew your claim up to a year before it runs out.

You will need to complete a PIP review form. You may also need to attend another assessment.

However long you are awarded PIP for, the DWP may contact you at any time to see if your needs have changed or to invite you to another assessment.

Reporting changes that affect your PIP

You must tell the DWP if your situation changes.

Some changes can affect how much PIP you get. Read a full list of changes and how to report a change on the **government website**.

If your condition gets better

You must report if your health gets better. For example, if:

- Your condition or disability gets better or is not expected to last as long
- Daily activities become easier
- You need less help or support

This could be because of changes in medicine, treatment, or care.

If you do not report a change and you are paid too much, you may have to pay a fine.

If your condition gets worse

You must report if your health gets worse. For example, if:

- Your condition or disability gets worse or is expected to last longer
- Daily activities become more difficult
- You need more help or support

If your difficulties increase, you may be able to get a higher rate of PIP. You can ask for your claim to be looked at again.

Even if you report that your condition is worse, the DWP still has to assess your case against the original criteria. Depending on their findings, they could decide to:

- Keep your award the same

- Lower or stop your payments
- Increase your payments

You could **speak to a benefits adviser** about reporting a change in your condition to the DWP.

Going into hospital or a care home

There are special rules for getting PIP if you go into hospital or a care home. Citizens Advice has more information:

- **Citizens Advice England**
- **Citizens Advice Wales**

Tell the DWP if you go into, or leave, hospital or a care home.

Going abroad

You can usually continue getting PIP if you are going abroad for up to 13 weeks. If you are going abroad to get medical treatment, PIP may continue for up to 26 weeks.

There are other rules for claiming PIP when going abroad. Read more on the **government website**.

HOW PIP AFFECTS OTHER BENEFITS

You can get PIP at the same time as all other benefits, except **Armed Forces Independence Payment**. PIP may increase the amount of benefit that you, your family or your carer can get, such as:

- Extra support with council tax and discounted travel on local buses. Ask **your local council** about this.
- A **blue badge** for parking.

- **Exemption from vehicle excise duty**, known as road tax. You may be eligible if you receive the enhanced rate of PIP mobility component.
- A **50% discount on road tax** if you receive the standard rate mobility component.
- Payment for a car or powered wheelchair under the Motability scheme. This is only if you receive the enhanced rate of PIP mobility component for 12 months or more. For more information, **contact Motability**.
- If someone helps to care for you, they may be able to get **Carer's Allowance** or **Carer's Credit**.
- If you have previously been told that your income is too high for you to get means-tested benefits, an award of PIP may change this.

Read more about other benefits in our **disability and sickness benefits** resource.

If you get other benefits, you should tell the DWP if:

- You start getting PIP
- Your PIP stops
- Your PIP rate changes

You should also report these changes if they happen to your partner or a child included in your claim.

If you are claiming Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is being replaced by PIP, except if you are aged under 16 years old. Read more on the **government website**.

If you live in Scotland, DLA claims will be moved to a new benefit called **Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance**.

TERMINAL ILLNESS

If you have a medical condition that means you might have 12 months or less to live:

- The DWP will deal with your claim more quickly.
- You will automatically qualify for some PIP payments.
- You will be able to claim PIP straight away. You do not have to wait for the three-month qualifying period.

The government website has information on **how to claim if you might have 12 months or less to live.**

MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Find out more about PIP

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
The UK government department responsible for administering Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and other benefits. Information about eligibility, claims and support.
gov.uk/pip

AdviceNow
Independent legal and practical guidance on benefits, including PIP claims, mandatory reconsiderations and appeals.
advicenow.org.uk/get-help/benefits/personal-independence-payment-pip

Citizens Advice
Free, confidential and independent advice on benefits, debt, housing, employment and other issues. Includes detailed PIP guidance.
citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/pip

Turn2us PIP Helper Tool

Free online tool that helps people understand PIP eligibility, prepare applications and navigate the claims process.

pip.turn2us.org.uk

MoneyHelper

Government-backed service offering free and impartial guidance on money, benefits and financial support.

moneyhelper.org.uk

Benefits calculators

Directory of benefits calculators

Directory of free, independent and anonymous benefits calculators to help estimate entitlement and payments.

gov.uk/benefits-calculators

Turn2us Benefits Calculator

Free calculator to check what benefits, grants and financial support you may be entitled to.

benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk

Better Off Calculator

Benefits calculator that estimates entitlement and shows how changes in circumstances may affect income.

www.betteroffcalculator.co.uk

entitledto

Independent benefits calculator that helps estimate entitlement to benefits, tax credits and Universal Credit.

entitledto.co.uk

Speak to an adviser

Find an adviser on Turn2us

Search for local advice services that can help with benefits, grants, debt and financial difficulties.

advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk

Contact Citizens Advice

Get free, confidential and independent advice online, by phone or through local offices.

citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us

Find an adviser on AdviceNow

Directory of organisations and advisers that can provide specialist help with benefits and legal issues.

advicenow.org.uk/get-help

Law Centres Network

Provides free legal advice and representation for people who cannot afford legal assistance.

lawcentres.org.uk

Age UK Benefits Support

Free advice on benefits and financial support for older people, including Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance.

ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/benefits-entitlements

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HELP AND SUPPORT FROM CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

We're here for you. Our information covers a wide range of topics. From treatment options to symptoms, relationship concerns to employment issues, our information

can help you manage your condition. We'll help you find answers, access support and take control.

All information is available on our **website.**

Helpline service

Our helpline team provides up-to-date, evidence-based information. You can find out more on our **helpline web page.** Our team can support you to live well with Crohn's or Colitis.

Our Helpline team can provide support by:

- Providing information about Crohn's and Colitis
- Listening and talking through your situation
- Helping you to find support from others in the Crohn's and Colitis community
- Providing details of other specialist organisations

You can call the Helpline on **0300 222 5700**. Or visit our **LiveChat service**. You can read our information on **when the Helpline** is open for more details..

You can email **helpline@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk** at any time. The Helpline will aim to respond to your email within three working days.

Our helpline also offers a language interpretation service, which allows us to speak to callers in their preferred language.

Virtual Social Events

We offer people affected by Crohn's or Colitis the chance to join a virtual social event with others across the UK. The events will be a chance to chat, share experiences and potentially learn from others. Each event may have a specific topic but the overall discussion will be driven by what those attending wish to talk about.

Family, friends and colleagues are more than welcome to attend.

Visit our **Virtual Social Events** page to find out what is available.

Crohn's & Colitis UK Forum

This closed-group Facebook community is for anyone affected by Crohn's or Colitis. You can share your experiences and receive support from others. Find out more about the **Crohn's & Colitis UK Forum.**

Help with toilet access when out

There are many benefits to becoming a member of Crohn's & Colitis UK. One of these is a free RADAR key to unlock accessible toilets. Another is a Can't Wait Card. This card shows that you have a medical condition. It will help when you are out and need urgent access to the toilet. See **our membership webpage** for more information. Or you can call the Membership Team on **01727 734465**.

ABOUT CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

We're Crohn's & Colitis UK and we're changing what it means to live with these lifelong gut conditions. 1 in 123 people in the UK have Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis. These are unpredictable conditions that could flare up at any time.

No one should face that alone. That's where we can help.

We provide trusted information and support cutting-edge research. We also lead bold campaigns to get more people talking about Crohn's and Colitis. We help people understand these conditions, give them the attention they deserve and bring people together to create change.

This year, 25,000 people will be told they have Crohn's or Colitis. Once diagnosed, the obstacles continue. Today, there is no cure. People simply don't understand these conditions. So, we have listened. It's time for change & we're leading the way.

Our information is available thanks to the generosity of our supporters and members. Find out how you can join the fight against Crohn's and Colitis by calling **01727 734465.** Or you can visit **our website**.

About our information

We follow strict processes to make sure our information is based on up-to-date evidence and is easy to understand. We produce it with patients, medical advisers and other professionals. It is not intended to replace advice from your own healthcare professional.

You can find out more on **our website**.

We hope that you've found this information helpful. Please email us at **evidence@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk** if:

- You have any comments or suggestions for improvements
- You would like more information about the evidence we use
- You would like details of any conflicts of interest

You can also write to us at **Crohn's & Colitis UK, 1 Bishops Square, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9NE.** Or you can contact us through the **Helpline** on **0300 222 5700**.

We do not endorse any products mentioned in our information.

Claiming PIP, edition 5

Last review: June 2026

Next review: June 2029

Trusted Information Creator

Patient Information Forum

WORDS USED IN THE ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIPTORS

Aided - with help from an aid or appliance, or with supervision, prompting or help from another person.

Assistance - physical help from another person with part of, or the whole of, an activity.

Basic verbal information – information given in a simple sentence in your native language.

Basic written information - signs, symbols and dates written or printed in standard-size text in your native language.

Bathe - includes getting into or out of a standard bath or shower.

Communication support - support from a person trained or experienced in communicating with people with communication needs. This includes interpreting spoken words into written information, or written information into spoken words.

Complex budgeting decisions - decisions involving:

- Calculating household and personal budgets
- Managing and paying bills
- Planning future purchases

Complex verbal information - information in your native language spoken in either more than one sentence or in one complicated sentence.

Complex written information - more than one sentence of written or printed standard-size text in your native language.

Cook - to heat food at or above waist height.

Dress and undress - includes putting on and taking off socks and shoes.

Engage socially - includes:

- Interacting with other people in an acceptable way
- Understanding body language
- Building relationships

Manage incontinence - managing involuntary emptying of the bowel or bladder. This includes using a collecting device, such as a stoma bag, or self-catheterisation, and cleaning yourself afterwards.

Manage medication or therapy - taking medicines or having therapies that help your Crohn's or Colitis stay the same or get better.

Medication - medicines you take at home that are prescribed or recommended by a registered doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Monitor health - you can:

- Notice significant changes in your health that may mean your Crohn's or Colitis is getting worse, and
- Follow the advice of a registered doctor, nurse or healthcare professional. Without this advice your health is likely to get worse.

Orientation aid - a specialist aid designed to help disabled people safely follow a route.

Prepare - when talking about food, this means making food ready for cooking or eating.

Prompting - reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person to help you complete part of, or the whole of, an activity.

Psychological distress - distress related to an ongoing mental health condition or an intellectual or cognitive impairment.

Read - reading signs, symbols and words. This does not include reading Braille.

Reliably - safely, to an acceptable standard, as often as needed and in good time.

Simple budgeting decisions - making decisions based on the cost of goods and calculating how much change you should get when you pay.

Simple meal - a cooked one-course meal for one person using fresh ingredients.

Social support - support from a person trained or experienced in helping people to engage in social situations. This may be a family member or friend who has experience of providing support to you.

Stand - stand upright with at least one biological foot on the ground.

Supervision - the presence of another person throughout the whole of an activity, for your safety.

Take nutrition - either:

- Cutting food into pieces, passing food and drink to your mouth, chewing and swallowing food and drink, or
- Taking nutrition through a therapeutic source

Therapeutic source – this could be parenteral tube feeding, which means into a vein, or enteral tube feeding, which means into the stomach or small intestine, using a device. For example, a delivery system or feed pump.

Therapy - treatment at home that is prescribed or recommended by a registered doctor, nurse, pharmacist or healthcare professional regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council.

Toilet needs - includes:

- Getting on and off a standard toilet
- Emptying your bladder and bowel
- Cleaning yourself afterwards

Unaided - without using an aid or appliance or being supervised, prompted or helped.