

Benefits guide - Employment and Support Allowance



A brief guide to new style ESA

Who is it for?

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is payable to anyone who

- is aged at least 16 and under state pension age
- cannot work due to a physical disease, mental illness or a disablement – known as 'limited capability for work'.

However, it is ONLY available to people who have paid sufficient National Insurance contributions over the previous two tax years (for applications made in 2025, these will be 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024).

You cannot apply for this benefit if you are receiving Statutory Sick Pay, but it can be paid on top of any occupational sick pay paid by your employer.

What are the rates?

ESA is payable at the rate of £72.90 per week for anyone under 25 and £92.05 for anyone aged 25 and older. However, you may be entitled up to an additional £140 per week if you have chronic or severe ill-health/disablement – known as 'limited capability for work and for work-related activity' or 'the support group'.

For how long can I receive it?

ESA is usually payable for 12 months only, but this time limit may be extended indefinitely if you are found to have 'limited capability for work and for work-related activity'.

How do I claim?

You can apply online (www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/how-to-claim), or, if you cannot claim online, you can call the Universal Credit Helpline (0800 328 5644; textphone 0800 328 1344).

You will need to provide the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) with proof that you are unfit to work – usually a 'fit note' from your GP.

Read more...

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What happens next?

Once you have started your application, the DWP will contact you about what happens next. You may have to fill in a questionnaire form giving more details about your health problems and why you are unable to work. Once that form is completed and returned to the DWP, you may have to attend a face-to-face medical assessment – though at present these can be held by video link or by phone.

However, you may be exempt from completing the above form and from attending a medical assessment if you are waiting for, receiving or recovering from chemotherapy or radiotherapy; there are also special rules to 'fast-track' cases for anyone who is terminally ill (i.e. who may be expected to live for less than 12 months).

More help from Brain Tumour Support

The above information is only a very brief outline of ESA, and further help and advice on entitlement and in making a claim can be provided by Brain Tumour Support.

Please call 01454 422 701 or email support@braintumoursupport.co.uk and request a referral to the Welfare Benefits Service.

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I'm so grateful for the help and support offered to me with filling in forms. It's made a difficult situation a lot less stressful.

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**We are here
to help you**



Contact us: 01454 422701

support@braintumoursupport.co.uk

www.braintumoursupport.co.uk